

# Charter

Movement for  
politics and policy  
for unity



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for unity



MPPU International Center



# Politics for unity

Unity is the one word that can define Chiara Lubich's charism: unity, which translates into practical and unconditional love for other people. Unity, which means consideration for everyone - including our "enemy", and a commitment to meaningful two-way dialogue on all fronts. It contributes towards a more united world, one enriched by diversity and open to the common good.

It is clear from Chiara Lubich's writings and actions that the political implications of this vision of universal fraternity have been present from the start. Early on, she wrote: "One day, the peoples of the earth may learn to set aside the idea they have of themselves and of their own country ... recognizing that God asks for reciprocal love among States, just as he asks for reciprocal love among brothers and sisters. That day will mark the start of a new era" (Città Nuova, 30.8.59).

In the 1960s, together with Igino Giordani and other Italian politicians, Chiara launched the St Catherine Centre for those involved in politics and public life who were interested in experiencing the impact of the Gospel on political activity. The first statute of this Centre was hand-written by Chiara.

This area of activity received new vigour on 2nd May 1996 when Chiara met with a group of Italian politicians from both governing and opposition parties in Naples. This meeting led to the foundation of the Movement for Politics and Policy for Unity.

Twenty years of experience adhering to these ideas around the world have led to the compilation of this Charter. It encapsulates the key points that have emerged, drawing on the political culture founded on the ideal of unity and on the steps taken so far in the story of this movement.

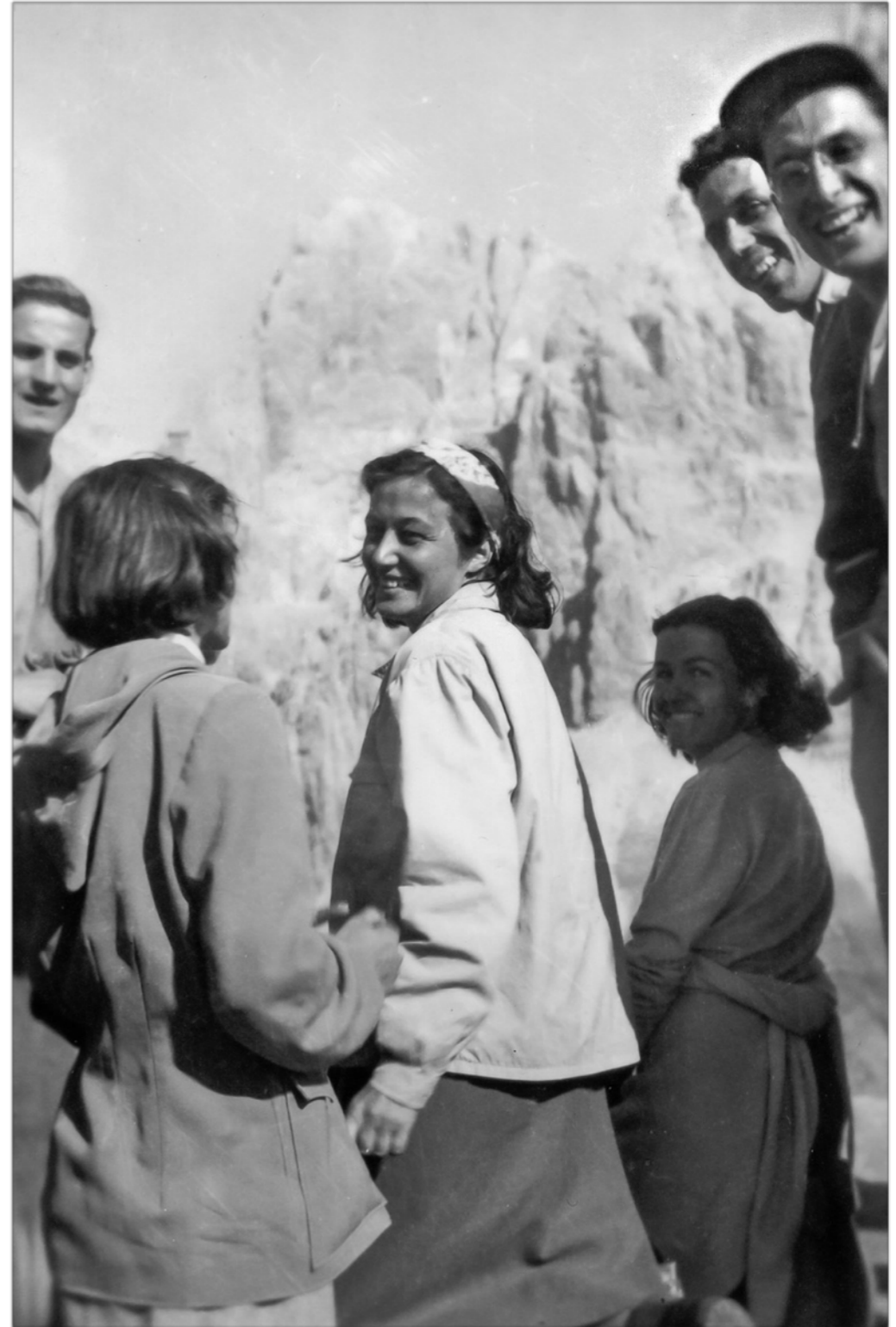
This slim volume contains a unique collection of some previously unpublished writings of Chiara Lubich alongside some of her better known public talks.



Igino Giordani and Chiara Lubich



# The roots





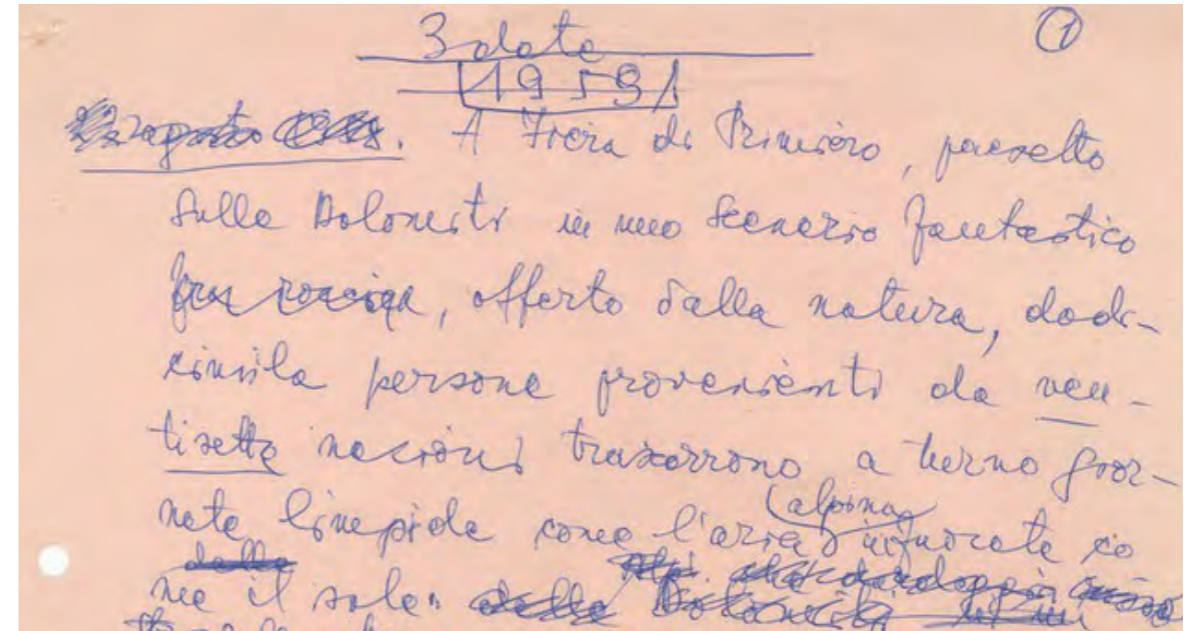
# Three significant dates



Chiara Lubich and Igino Giordani among the participants at Fiera di Primiero, 195x.

Every summer in the years from 1949 to 1959, Valle del Primiero in the north of Italy hosted a growing number of people who were embracing the ideal of unity. This “temporary city” (called a “Mariapolis”\*) welcomed young people, families, lay and religious men and women, workers and parliamentarians from Europe, Latin America and Asia. These have been described as years of “light and fire” which forged in many hearts the conviction that unity is possible, even in the social and political arena.

In 1959, the number of participants reached 12,000. On 22nd August that year, representatives of 27 different nations made a public declaration of their commitment to establish mutual love, not only among themselves as



Chiara Lubich's handwritten notes on the St Catherine Centre, 1962.

individuals, but also among their own peoples. A group of parliamentarians consecrated their political activity to the same aim.



Members of Parliament at the \*"Mariapolis" in 1959: Tomaso Sorgi, Igino Giordani, Enrico Rosselli, Palmiro Foresi.

1960  
1960 Friburgo in Svizzera  
dove si fonda il Centro S. Caterina  
interregionale del Centro S. Ca

Chiara Lubich's handwritten notes on the St Catherine Centre, 1962.

Looking back, Chiara Lubich recognized this date as a significant step ahead on the journey of contributing towards a renewal of politics and international relations.

In 1960 in Fribourg, Germany, the St Catherine International Bureau was established. Its aim, according to the Bureau's mission statement, was to facilitate social and political initiatives promoting a rapid and profound transformation of society into a new civilization founded on unity.

fonda il Bureau Internazionale S. Caterina  
composto da persone ~~che~~ direttamente interessate  
nella politica del loro paese ed inoltre  
socialmente riformate dello spirito che anima  
ma il Movimento.

Chiara Lubich's handwritten notes on the St Catherine Centre, 1962.

il Centro S. Caterina possa inserirsi  
come pietra in un mosaico ed essere  
per portare il proprio contributo a

Chiara Lubich's handwritten notes on the St Catherine Centre, 1962.

"Sono questi i tempi - e qui le forze delle tenebre, a conferma del Vangelo, lo stanno a dimostrare - in cui ogni popolo deve oltrepassare il proprio confine e guardare al di là; è arrivato il momento in cui la patria altrui va amata come la propria, in cui il nostro occhio ha da acquistare una nuova purezza. Non basta il di-

Transcript of Chiara Lubich's handwritten notes on the nascent St Catherine Centre, 1962.

In 1962 these activities were absorbed into the newly created St Catherine Centre in Rome.

Confoto del Centro S. Caterina particolare.  
Per al mondo ne interpretazione  
dei fatti secondo "L'ora in messo". È  
un servizio enorme all'umanità perché  
fatto con serietà, molto studio, grande  
ostacolo, perfetta verità.  
x x  
Il Centro si affermerà proprio con  
queste sue idee originali che saranno  
un risultato degli sforzi di alcuni  
compeltati, ma totalmente votati a  
Dio.

Transcript of Chiara Lubich's handwritten notes on the nascent St Catherine Centre, 1962.



# Igino Giordani



«In 1948, in the Chamber of Deputies, we first met the Honourable Igino Giordani. He was a prominent figure with extensive cultural, social and political experience» recalled Chiara Lubich.(1) «He was an active figure during the first years of the difficult post-war period, a scholar and a reference point for the generations that had longed for freedom during the years of dictatorship. Giordani was a co-founder of the Focolare Movement and for us he has always represented, due to a special plan of God, the dimension of humanity, with its history, its sufferings, its achievements and its quest for an authentic ideal.

He opened our heart outwards onto humanity, with all its problems and concerns: the rebuilding of Italy and the rest of Europe in the wake of World War II, the emergence of democracy, the division between East and West. In turn, from the spirit of the Movement Giordani received a new stimulus for his own political activity. We can see this in an address he made on universal peace, applauded by the entire Italian Parliament; in the first bill on conscientious objection, presented together with the Socialist, Calosso; in his dialogue on peace with the Communist, Laiolo.

Within a short time, a small but significant group of politicians began to gather around Giordani. They shared our ideal of life and sought to live it in Parliament.

There, for the first time in a political setting, they experienced what I call the ‘art of loving’. »

(1) cf C. Lubich, *The Movement for Unity and a politics of communion, Rocca di Papa, 9 June 2000, in “Nuova Umanità” 131 (2000)*

We don’t leave our Christianity behind us on the coat stand ...

Igino Giordani: «I recall an occasion in Parliament, when with a group of colleagues we were talking about our role as Christians involved in the political activity of Parliament. Suddenly one of the most senior of the group said: “Here in Parliament we don’t do religion, here we do politics!”

Nevertheless – I replied – when we enter Parliament, we don’t leave our religious conscience behind us on the coat stand and walk in only as politicians. I am a Christian twenty-four hours a day, which means also when I’m in Parliament. (...)»



The Honourable Igino Giordani addressing a meeting of his party, 1946

## De Gasperi: I found hope again

«Three or four months after getting to know Chiara, I was walking along the beach at Fregene, when I met De Gasperi. It was 1949, the winter of 1949. (...) [I asked him:] “Why don’t you come to lunch with us and we’ll explain to you what it’s all about?” He replied, “I’ve got so much to do, such serious issues that I really can’t allow myself to be distracted from them.” In fact, it was a time when (...) there was the threat of famine, and of revolution because of the famine, the communist revolution. (...) “Well, if you can’t come for a meal, just come for a coffee”. “I really don’t think I can, I have to get back to Rome; there are so many issues I have to deal with.”

Later, however, as we were drinking our coffee after lunch, De Gasperi arrived. Our conversation began. Despite all his rush to get back to Rome, he was still with us at 9 o’clock in the evening! I remember stepping out among the pine trees, it was dark as there was no electricity at that time, and he confided to me: “This morning I woke up feeling desperate, but this evening I’ll go to sleep feeling hopeful, I’ve found hope again. You have given it back to me. »

## Where two or more ...

«There was a debate on the North Atlantic Treaty. Everyone was polarized into two camps: one supported the United States of America, the other supported Russia. Both sides were beginning to prepare for war, a massacre, a conclusive war. One day we were debating the issue in Parliament in the most bitter of arguments. I remember we were so angry that I feared someone would pull out a pistol and start shooting, so great was the hatred being expressed between the two groupings.

I had asked to speak. Just before I got up, the Hon. Pacati came over to sit beside me (...) and said, “Let’s put Jesus in the midst now that you’re going to speak”. I stood up to take my turn. At first there was uproar, shouting etc. Gradually it quietened down, until at the end the Chamber seemed more like a church, so perfect was the silence. I was able to express the ideas we learn in our movement, namely that war achieves nothing, war is man’s greatest stupidity, war brings only death and we do not want death, we want



life and life comes from love, from trying to find agreement. What is stopping us from finding agreement rather than making war? I employed all the rational and Christian arguments you could think of. Gradually the Chamber fell silent. At the end everyone applauded, everyone, from the extreme left to the extreme right. »

*(Igino Giordani, speaking at Rocca di Papa, 1.5.1977)*

## Peace is achieved through peace

«War is murder on a large scale, dressed up as a kind of sacred ritual, like the sacrifice of the firstborn to the god Baal. This is because of the terror it inspires, the rhetoric surrounding it, and the stakes involved. When humanity eventually makes greater spiritual progress, we will see war classified among cruel rituals, superstition, witchcraft and other barbarous practices. It affects humanity in the same way as disease strikes down health, as sin strikes the soul: it is destructive, causes havoc and affects body and soul, individuals and society as a whole.



History confirms Christian logic, since the build-up of armaments leads to fear, mistrust and war. Those who say 'If you want peace, prepare for war' are false realists. Just open any history book to see where the accumulation of weapons and munitions leads. Peace is difficult. Just because we are Christians does not mean we are naive. We want peace, not an illusion of peace. We know peace does not drop down ready-made from heaven. Peace is a patient action that we have to engage in together. I am saying, peace is achieved through peace.

The root of war is fear. To avoid fearing someone, you must love him or her. Even if they are bad, even if they are ragged, even if they are dirty, we still have to see that beneath their appearance and rags and attitude, is the face of Christ. It is a matter of reviving the relationship described in that old Christian saying, 'See your neighbour, see the Lord'.

We are very far from this divinely inspired way of thinking if we cultivate the class divide on one hand and racism on the other, stirring up any pretext for fratricide within a people. Who is telling you that that brother is your enemy? Actually, the one telling you such a thing is your first enemy.

Hatred is war, war is wretchedness, and wretchedness generates hatred, which leads to war: death generates death. Isn't it time to think more about living?

Those who are fearful defend war. People go to war because they are afraid. If you are fearful, you instinctively lash out and shoot for your own survival. Real courage – rational courage – is called for in order to uphold peace. »

*(Igino Giordani, The pointlessness of war, Città Nuova 2003 pp. 7, 71-72, 82, 83)*



# Naples, may 2, 1996



*«This is the start of a Movement  
which welcomes politicians of all parties:  
the ‘Movement for Unity’.  
Let’s hope it flourishes.».*

*2nd May 1996 in Naples, Italy: Chiara met a group of politicians representing a variety of different viewpoints and backgrounds. In the context of this Camorra-ridden city, at a time of national political tension in Italy, the Movement for Politics and Policy for Unity was formally established as “a movement which welcomes politicians from all parties (...), to create a culture (...) at the service of those who seek what is good. (...) Let’s really hope it flourishes.”*

*At first it seemed only focused on Italy. However, it was not long before it developed into a strong current of ideas, meetings and initiatives reaching politicians of the most varied cultural backgrounds across all continents. Chiara referred to this in her 1998 speech in Strasbourg:*

*«In May 1996 in Naples, Italy, members of the Focolare Movement actively involved in various political parties asked themselves a question: how can we aim at unity together when we hold differing and opposing positions?*

*They found an answer.*

*Place mutual love at the basis of everything, as the apostle Peter recommended to the first Christian communities: ‘Above all, (before being politicians, before thinking and working as such) maintain constant love for one another’ (1 Pt. 4:8). Then go and be active in the political party of your choice.*

*The aim is not to come together to form another new party, but rather to remain fully loyal to one’s own political identity, while at the same time being willing to understand each other’s opinions in a spirit of unity. This spirit of unity must be present not only on exceptional occasions, but always, as the constant basic norm for political activity within each nation and on the international stage; a spirit of unity which helps us to take a common stand to safeguard shared human values.*

*That day in Naples marked the birth of the ‘Movement for Unity’, which is already taking shape across Italy. So far, over 200 people [linked to this Movement] have been elected either as town counsellors or as members of Parliament both in the governing parties and in the opposition; and about a thousand more are actively engaged in the political activity of various parties.*

*But it has not stopped in Italy. The ‘Movement for Unity’ is active in the rest of Europe, in the Philippines, as well as in Argentina and Brazil, and is already showing promising results».*

*(C. Lubich to members of the European People’s Party, European Parliament, Strasbourg, 15 September 1998. Published in ‘New Humanity’ 119 (1998) p.525, ‘The political and social dimension of the Focolare Movement’.)*



# The Movement for Unity and a Politics of Communion

«We are here today to open the International Congress of the Movement for Unity: an important step toward defining its identity, the ideals it pursues, its methods and its goals.

It is a fairly new Movement. In fact, its origins date back to 2 May 1996, on the occasion of a meeting I had with a group of politicians in Naples, Italy. But its roots sink deep into the history, spirituality and doctrine of the Focolare Movement that promotes it. Indeed, we have always given special attention to the world of politics because it offers us the possibility of loving our neighbour in a crescendo of charity: from interpersonal love to an ever-greater love toward the polis. Many of our people have committed themselves in politics on various levels, often holding positions of responsibility. [...]

Today, I would like to go over with you those events in our history that have had the greatest influence on the formation of our political thought, underlining in each of them what retains lasting value and, from my view point, what it might contribute to the heritage of the Movement for Unity.

In 1948, in the Chamber of Deputies, we first met the Honorable Igino Giordani, a prominent person with extensive cultural, social and political experience. He was an active figure during the first years of the difficult postwar period, a scholar and a reference point for the generations that longed for freedom during the years of dictatorship. Giordani was a cofounder of the Focolare Movement and for us, he has always represented, due to a special plan of God, the dimension of humanity, with its history, its sufferings, its achievements, its quest for an authentic ideal.

He opened our heart to humanity, to its problems and concerns: the rebuilding of Italy and the rest of Europe in the wake of World War II, the rise of democracy, the division between East and West. In turn, from the spirit of the Movement Giordani received a new stimulus for his own

political activity. We can see this in an address he made on universal peace, applauded by the entire Italian Parliament; the first bill on conscientious objection, presented together with the Socialist, Calosso; his dialogue on peace with the Communist, Laiolo.

Within a short time, a small but significant group of politicians began to gather around Giordani. They shared our ideal of life and sought to live it in Parliament.

There, for the first time in a political setting, they experienced the “art of loving” that I spoke about a few months ago on a special occasion in Campidoglio.

It is an art that requires that we love everyone, without exception, regardless of their party affiliation; that we be the first to love; that we make ourselves one with them in order to welcome them, emptying ourselves of all our worries and thoughts.

Christians are the first, but not the only ones, called to live this art of loving: everyone can and must love. It is a law for believers of all traditions of faith. In fact, it is written in the DNA of every human being.

Consequently, if love becomes mutual, according to Jesus’ commandment, “Love one another as I have loved you” (see Jn 13:34), Jesus himself is present among us. In fact, Jesus promised us: “For where two or three are gathered together in my name [in my love], I am there among them” (Mt 18:20). It is a presence of Jesus that transforms people individually and creates unity among them. It is not simply an agreement of opinions or choice to follow a certain course of action based on the same political choice. Instead, this human-divine unity bonds people in a deeper way, beyond differences of culture and political affiliation. On the foundation of unity, differences acquire their true meaning, and in mutuality, they become enrichment for one another.

Therefore, the basic principle is to live first of all as true Christians and then as people engaged in politics.

In view of the fact that people of other religions and cultures also participate in the Movement for Unity, the same commitment can be formulated as

follows: first, be people who believe in profound and lasting human values, and then take political action.

Just as the presence of Jesus among us, the effect of unity, is the heart of all our communities, it is likewise the heart of our political communities. Already in 1962, Tommaso Sorgi, a Member of Parliament, sensed the urgent need for this presence. He wrote to me from the Chamber of Deputies: “Those of us who live at the very core of this ‘blessed’ public life continually experience that, on a purely human level—even on the level of the most noble ethical values—there is not the slightest hope of redemption for this narrow-minded world full of insincerity, conflicts, and power struggles. And, unfortunately, we find that not even religious values are able to change the homo politicus, who accepts them only as long as they are expedient, and then sets them aside when they no longer serve his or her purposes [...] Individual efforts alone [...] seem to be insufficient. We need a lightning bolt of wisdom to reawaken all of humanity [...].”

And we can receive this light of wisdom especially from God present in Jesus who is drawn by our mutual love. He himself comes among us wherever we are engaged, and through us, takes political action.

This was the purpose of the group of politicians in our “parliamentary cell.” Its members, who after a while came from different parties, have changed since 1950, but not its goal: since our unity makes it possible, to bring Jesus into Parliament.

The presence of Alcide De Gasperi was also noteworthy because it underlined the political significance that our Movement could have. De Gasperi, like the first men and women Focolarini, was originally from Trent and was very close to the Movement.

He knew the spirituality of unity quite well. In fact, it fascinated him and reinforced his vocation to unity, that same vocation which eventually made him, together with Adenauer and Schuman, a founder of the European Union.

In fact, a documentary on the life of De Gasperi points out how, especially in the final years of his life, all of his thoughts seemed to come together in

Jesus’ testament: “May they all be one”—the same Jesus whose name he invoked three times before dying.

Our contacts with De Gasperi made us realize how much a politician who loves his country can accomplish and how much that love can cost him.

At a certain point, we began to correspond with one another. In one of my letters to him from 1950, I had written: “You are as important to us as is Jesus among us, because we are convinced that all authority comes from God [...]”

“You have all the grace of state necessary to govern Italy [...]. You should be the best and brightest expression of your own party and of the parties of others.”

This letter provides an opportunity for me to speak about the view that we have had of authority from the early years of the Movement.

We know that it is God who gives authority to human beings as his delegates in the world, an authority that should be used as an instrument of truth and love (see Jn 19:11). For this reason we have always had the highest respect for authority.

However, it is an authority given by a God who is Love and is Trinity and therefore takes on a meaning not always easily found in political theories and codes of law. For us, authority participates in the love of the Creator for each created being. It is the love of a Father for each and every person, even the weakest and most insignificant, who nevertheless bear in themselves the undeniable dignity of being children of God.

This authority given by God to every human being (see Gen 2:28-29) is then the source of the specific partaking in this authority conferred upon political leadership for the government of the “city of Man.”

However, it is important to keep in mind the great, the tremendous responsibility that those who govern have before God and before the people. We must never forget that citizens are the first partakers in God’s love for the city. They have a role to carry out in conscience and each one possesses inalienable rights and duties. Each citizen is an active subject in the political community, not simply a passive object, and is called therefore to behave

accordingly. Political power must put itself at the service of the citizen, as we hear so often from all sides.

But in order that this may be accomplished ever more fully, the political activity carried out by those who govern, as a service of truth and love, must be met by an ever-growing participation of its citizens in public affairs as an expression of the authority they have received from God. Only in this mutuality is it possible to build the well-being of the whole community.

This dynamic of mutuality reminds us of the Trinitarian relationship of the two parts, a harmonious relationship of unity in multiplicity.

In the Movement we certainly do not want to confuse religion and politics, as has happened and happens as a result of the extremist tendencies of some Christians and also non-Christians. It is necessary to recognize the precise role politics plays in society with its specific expertise.

On the other hand, Jesus is Life and he is Life in all its fullness. He is not only a religious fact. To separate Jesus from the wholeness of the life of human beings is a real modern-day heresy. It makes people slaves to something beneath them, relegating God the Father to a place far from his children.

No, he is the Man, the perfect Man who sums up in his person all men and women and every truth and drive that they may feel, in order to be raised to their rightful place.

At times it is thought that the gospel does not resolve all human problems and that, instead, it simply brings about the kingdom of God understood in a strictly religious sense. But it is not so. Certainly, it is not the historical Jesus who resolves today's problems. It is Jesus-us, members of his Mystical Body, Jesus-me, Jesus-you.... It is Jesus present in each person, in that given person—when his grace and love live in him or her—who constructs a bridge or builds a road. It is Jesus, the true and most profound personality of every person. And it is as another Christ that the Christian brings his or her characteristic contribution to all fields, whether in science, in art, in politics.

Our politicians' sense of commitment took this direction and in 1959 the St. Catherine Center was founded for them. Renewed in the spirit of unity and

reinforced by an ever deeper understanding of the principles of Christian social doctrine, for almost ten years this Center was the point of convergence for their many aspirations and concerns and the point of departure for their activities.

For the St. Catherine Center, however, political responsibility was not exhausted simply in the pursuit of the common good of citizens from a purely material point of view, which for the most part is useful. It had to work also toward building a society that is open to achieving more noble goals.

Politics was seen as having the possibility and the duty to encourage all individuals to assume their responsibilities as members of a body, the body of the whole of humanity, and to offer them the opportunity of reaching that self-fulfilment in this world and that happiness which is possible only in the context of universal brotherhood.

In addition, they also emphasized how Christians should never forget that what they accomplish, in common purpose with all those who seek the good of humanity, builds up the earthly city and thus continues the work of God the creator. At the same time, their work brings closer the “new heavens” and the “new earth” (see 2 Pt 3:13) because together with the cosmos, Christ has redeemed all human activity. Therefore, if these works are completed in conformity with the commandment of love, they will endure.

What is more, while broadening the commonly accepted view of political commitment and encouraging its members to set their daily choices in a wider historical perspective, the St. Catherine Center also examined, in the light of the truth present in the human heart, all the political laws that have withstood the test of time in order to confirm their validity. And our people involved in politics did not feel alone; they sensed the active presence and help of those who throughout the course of history have contributed to accomplishing the same objective. Moreover, they studied new laws inspired by relationships of mutual love among persons, among groups and among peoples.

There has always been a further conviction, confirmed and rediscovered in new forms every day, that the Providence of God is never lacking, but acts in human affairs and also, therefore, in political matters.

These are some of the ideas that the Movement for Unity has inherited from the St. Catherine Center.

But one basic idea lies at the foundation of everything and guarantees the success of our politicians as they continually strive to live the ideals they pursue. We offer it to those of you who are Christians, but not only, because Christ died for all people.

We have already affirmed that one must, first of all, be an authentic Christian and on this foundation, carry out one's activity in politics. Very well, to be an authentic Christian means to follow Christ by living what we have called "the art of loving," but also, as he himself said in powerful words, by denying oneself and taking up one's own cross.

One's own cross. What is the specific cross of those who move and work in the political world today? I think it is often the lack of unity, of harmony, that makes their task heavy and not very fruitful; the rigid and opposed positions between parties without understanding the others' motives; the divisions caused by clashes among ethnic groups within nations, divisions between nations....

We need to find the way to overcome these disunities, to restore unity.

Jesus himself came on earth to restore the unity that had been lost between humanity and God and of men and women with one another. He accomplished this through his passion and death, and above all—this is the conviction of theologians and saints — when he experienced within himself the greatest possible disunity: the disunity between himself and the Father with whom he was one. And he cried out: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mt 27:46).

This mystery is the key that opens the way to unity for the members of the Focolare Movement, and therefore also for that specific expression of the Movement, the Movement for Unity.

Only those who keep the image of Jesus crucified and forsaken ever before them, who recognize his face in every division, who love him and know how to embrace the cross of division out of love for him, are capable of recomposing unity.

And in loving Jesus crucified and forsaken they receive the gift of a light that the mind does not produce on its own and a strength that is more than common.

Little by little, the Focolare Movement is spreading throughout the world. In 1956 the Volunteers of God were born: men and women radically committed in the life of society. Faced with the invasion of Hungary by the troops of the Warsaw Pact, we felt urged to promote another kind of invasion. It would be an invasion with similar determination but aimed in the opposite direction: to bring a revolution of love into everyday life, into families, into the workplace, and into all cultural, social and political endeavours.

The Volunteers are the moving force behind the so-called New Humanity Movement, which coordinates all the members of the Focolare Movement with regard to their participation in the affairs of society.

Throughout these last decades, this movement has given rise around the world to a people in the true sense of the word. They are the people of unity, which today numbers more than five million members, and which is beginning to offer its original contribution in various fields of human learning and activity: in economics, politics, art, justice, communication, and so on. It is a people made up of adults and young people, even children, people of all cultures, professions, and countries. The academic, civic and political recognitions that prestigious universities and international bodies, such as UNESCO and the Council of Europe, have conferred upon me are, in reality, recognitions given to the life of this people and to its presence in this moment of history.

We have always been aware, since the earliest days of our Movement, that the charism of unity also contains its own culture. On the one hand, it is the offspring of Christian tradition, but at the same time, it is new, because it is enlightened by this charism. But it was the growth of the people of unity, the spreading of their Ideal outside the structures of the Focolare Movement, that highlighted the specific characteristics of this culture and that led to the studying of its doctrine: in theology, philosophy, politics, economics, psychology, art, and so forth. A group we call the Abba School, which in addition to myself is composed of experts in various disciplines, has brought these studies ahead for some ten years now.

And now the latest innovation: the encounter between the people of unity and its doctrine has given rise to what we call “inundations” or “torrents of living water,” using an expression taken from St. John Chrysostom. In other words: the development of authentic new movements, particularly in the field of economics, through the Economy of Communion, and in politics, continuing the work of the St. Catherine Center, through the Movement for Unity.

Thus the Movement for Unity is bringing about a new political culture.

But its vision of politics does not give rise to a new party. Instead, it changes the method of political activity: while remaining faithful to his or her own genuine ideals, a politician of unity loves everyone, as we said, and therefore in every circumstance searches for what unites.

Today we would like to present a vision of politics perhaps as it has never before been conceived. We would like to give life—forgive my boldness—to a politics of Jesus, as he considers it and where he acts through each of us, wherever we are: in national and regional governments, in town councils, in political parties, in various civic and political groups, in government coalitions and in the opposition. This unity lived among us, then, must be brought into our political parties, among the parties, into the various political institutions and into every sphere of public life and into the relationships among nations.

Then the people of all nations will be able to rise above their borders and look beyond, loving the others’ country as their own. The presence of Jesus will become a reality also among peoples and states, making humanity one universal family. It will be a family that goes beyond a limited concept of international society, because within it relationships among persons, groups, peoples are conceived of in a way that dismantles all types of divisions and barriers.

This is the goal of the Movement for Unity which is beginning to blossom all over the world. It is a Movement that is capable of giving rise to new political projects and that appeals to politicians at every level and position. Through their profession and social commitments, members of the Focolare Movement are present in it, together with many others who know the Ideal of unity and live it, without necessarily belonging to the Focolare.

Now, in order to have a better understanding of this Movement let us look more closely at what is specifically characteristic of it.

We know that the redemption brought about by Jesus on the cross transforms from within all human bonds, imbuing them with divine love and making us all brothers and sisters.

This has profound meaning for our Movement, if we consider that the great political plan of modernity was the attainment, as summarized in the motto of the French Revolution, of “liberty, equality, fraternity.” While the first two principles, however, have been partially achieved in recent centuries, despite numerous formal declarations, fraternity has been all but forgotten in the political arena.

Instead, it is precisely fraternity that can be considered as the hallmark of our Movement. What is more, by living out fraternity, freedom and equality acquire new meaning and find greater fulfilment.

In order to conclude this part of my talk, I would like to explain now the importance that the figure and role of Mary have had in the history of our Movement.

In 1959, as was customary during those years, all the people of our community spent their summer holiday together. During that time, in the little town of Fiera di Primiero in the Dolomite Mountains, some twelve thousand people from twenty-seven countries came and went. And in a solemn act, representatives of these nations consecrated themselves and their nations to Mary. Members of parliament who were present consecrated also their political commitment to her.

Why this special love for Mary, and why do we consider her as the Queen of all nations and leader of our Movement?

Mary is the one who sings: “The Mighty One has done great things for me” (Lk 1:49). God has placed his plan for humanity in her; in her he reveals his mercy for humankind, destroys the false projects of the proud, casts down the powerful from their thrones and lifts up the lowly, re-establishes justice and redistributes riches.

Who, then, is more a politician than Mary?

The task of the Movement for Unity is to contribute toward fulfilling in human history what Mary announces as already accomplished in herself.

I will leave to others the task of narrating the many compelling and practical experiences lived by the Movement for Unity in recent years. But I would like to share one in particular with you myself.

It is an example I was able to witness first-hand a few weeks ago during a two-week trip to Africa. It illustrates how the fraternity characteristic of the Movement for Unity has political influence on the community that lives it.

For the sake of clarity, I must tell you a short story, which seems almost a fairy tale, about the Bangwa people, in the English-speaking part of Cameroon.

In 1966, we Focolarini were invited to offer our assistance to a native people dwelling in the heart of the forest. They lived in very primitive conditions and were affected by many illnesses, with a ninety percent infant mortality rate.

Desperate because their own assiduous prayers to the god of their traditional religion had obtained no results, they brought an offering to the closest Catholic mission and entrusted themselves to their prayers.

Having been told of these circumstances, Focolarini came to their aid and soon opened a makeshift clinic in a run-down shack, which at times was also visited by snakes.

During one of my first visits there in the sixties, while groups of Bangwa, subjects of their wise and prudent king, Fon Defang of Fontem, took turns performing dances in a large clearing in the forest, I had a strange impression. It seemed to me that God, like a sun, was enveloping all of us, Focolarini and Bangwa together; and that the sun, almost like a divine sign, made me foresee the rising of a city that we would build together, there in the midst of the tropical forest.

In the years that followed, with the help of funds collected by the youth of the Movement around the world, the Focolarini built a modest hospital, opened schools, scaled a mountain to channel a spring of water in order to generate a bit of electricity for the hospital, and with bricks made from pota-

pota, or wet earth, they were able to erect a few houses. Later on, they built a church.

But first of all, and most importantly, having been formed by the spirituality of the Movement, the Focolarini loved. They set out to love all those brothers and sisters who were in dire need, sick, and illiterate, seeing Christ in them. And they loved one another: they themselves were the living words they could offer to that tribe.

The Bangwa observed them carefully for months; they wanted to see if those white people truly loved them or if their actions were motivated by personal interest.

Eventually, convinced of the sincerity and honest openness of their new guests, they worked side by side with them as much as they were able. And thousands converted to the Catholic Church. Thus, Focolarini and Bangwa found themselves together in the Focolare Movement, joined as brothers and sisters by mutual love constantly renewed in the midst of inevitable difficulties.

Years passed and everything grew: the hospital was expanded; the infant mortality rate was reduced to two percent; the plague of sleeping sickness was controlled; a school for children of all ages was built; twelve roads were opened to connect the nearest villages; the Focolarini, with the help of the Bangwa, built sixty houses; the Bangwa, with the help of the Focolarini, built many others. Local Church authorities set up a parish.

Then, more than thirty years later, I returned to Fontem and the attractive, large town is there for everyone to see. I saw what love can do, what fraternity can build when it is lived among people of two different continents who have become one.

In the meantime, the government opened elementary schools and a high school. It installed a long aqueduct.... In 1992 the district that includes Fontem and other locations became a region of local government, and in 1999 power lines for electric light arrived.

It does not matter that many of the Bangwa continue to profess the traditional religion and that the underlying structure of their culture still rests upon an ancestral system regulated by thousands of ancient norms.



Fraternity, which in any case is inscribed in the heart of each person like a seed of the divine word, prevails and works miracles.

The new king, Dr. Lucas Njifua Fontem, son of the previous king, saw and understood. All those who follow this way, he told us, are upright and just and they work together for the good of the community. Indeed, during my recent stay there, as head of the Bangwa people and in a determined and fervent manner, he officially invited everyone to adopt the spirit of the Movement, whose statutes provide that among its adherents are included people of every religion as well as non-believers of goodwill.

While the nation of Cameroon is said to be plagued by rampant corruption, the king openly declared that there, in Fontem, the inhabitants who follow the spirit of the Movement never present any problems. They resolve everything among themselves with love; they do not fight over land boundaries but settle them in harmony with one another. They live in absolute peace.

No one steals, they do not harm much less kill one another; they seem to have no need for police. They find solutions to all problems having to do with their families because they uphold the institution of the family with the fullest solidarity. Their children do not cause them serious economic problems. They defend life in all its stages, something that has always been highly valued by the African culture. They respect authority and, again in accordance with their culture, they hold their elders in high esteem. They care for public health meticulously. They are incredibly generous; the “culture of giving,” an effect of fraternity, shines out among them. Illiteracy is in decline.

Clearly, brotherhood creates a new style of life. It unites the community but at the same time differentiates the various roles and tasks. In this way, by means of fraternity, individual persons, families, small businesses, traditional and state institutions set out to meet their own goals while respecting and working together with all the others. By doing so, society as a whole is able to achieve its political goal: the common good.

Church and government authorities encourage us there by saying: “What you have done in Fontem, you must do all over Africa and in Madagascar.” In observing what has happened, others speak of a kind of miracle: an entire

people, including its king, is carrying out a revolution of love similar to what was seen in the times of the Roman Empire. Thoroughly corrupt though it was, the early Christians, “born yesterday,” as Tertullian said, quickly invaded the whole known world of that time.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this is what a spirit of fraternity has been able to accomplish and continues to accomplish in an African tribe become a people, a tribe we met before they had come into contact with so-called civilization.

And we ask ourselves, what could this attitude of fraternity do if it were to fill the rest of the world with its spirit?».

*(cf C. Lubich, The Movement of Unity for a politic of communion, Rocca di Papa, 9 June 2000, in “Nuova Umanità” 131 (2000), pp.603-616)*



# Mppu Charter

Charta **Mppu** Charter

*Movimento politico per l'unità - Movement (politics&policy) for unity*



# Mppu Charter

The Right from the first draft statute for the St Catherine Centre, handwritten by Chiara Lubich in 1962, several criteria were clear:

- Who is involved? “Those with roles in public life”
- The radicality of the choice: “those who want to live the Christian Ideal fully in political life”
- The democratic nature of the Centres: “with a president elected by the members”
- The seriousness of the commitment: “they must accept the statute”
- The international Centre’s role as guarantor and coordinator: “convey their acceptance to the international Centre”.

When the 2001 draft statute was looked at again in 2013, it became clear that the Movement for politics and policy for unity had grown significantly. Chiara had talked about MPPU on 12 further occasions after the foundational talk given at Castel Gandolfo in the year 2000, referred to earlier.

Since then, Chiara Lubich has written and spoken extensively to promote peace, fraternity and the concept of unity among peoples, most notably:

- 1996 December 17th, Acceptance speech for the Unesco Prize for Peace Education, Unesco, Paris
- 1997 May 28th, “Toward a Unity of Nations and a Unity of Peoples”, Symposium, United Nations, New York

Essential to the development of this Charter are a series of key talks by Chiara which relate specifically to the MPPU:

- 2000 June 9th, “The Movement for Unity and a Politics of Communion”, Castalgandolfo, Italy
- 2000 December 15th, “Towards a Politics of Communion”, address to Italian parliamentarians, Palazzo San Macuto, House of Deputies, Italy
- 2001 May 10th, Bratislava Parliament, Slovakia
- 2001 June 8th, “Fraternity and the City”, Trento Local Council, Italy
- 2001 November 9th, address to the “1000 Cities for Europe” convention, Innsbruck, Austria



- 2002 May 9th, address to the “Europe Fest”, Protomoteca Hall, Rome, Italy
- 2002 June 2nd, “The Movement for Unity and Fraternity in Politics (Characteristics of the Politician for Unity)”, Turin, Italy
- 2002 June 22nd, “Fraternity and peace for the unity of peoples”, Rimini, Italy
- 2002 November 29th, address to the Catalan Parliament, Spain
- 2002 December 2nd, “United Europe for a United World”, address to the European Movement Conference, Madrid, Spain
- 2003 March 23rd, address at Martigny, Switzerland
- 2004 June 22nd, “Liberty, Equality ... whatever happened to Fraternity?”, House of Commons, London, UK
- 2004 September 4th, “Universal Brotherhood in Politics: Utopia or Imperative?”, Bern, Switzerland
- 2004 September 12th, address to Interdependence Day Forum, Rome, Italy.

Through these interventions, we can trace the development both of the nature of MPPU and of the figure of the “politician for unity”, in the vision and project of a “politics for unity”.

In the light of this material, the need to incorporate a wider dimension into the ‘statute’ became clear. Chiara herself had indicated such a process in 2001 when she proposed drawing up an initial statute to correspond to the life of that time. As the life developed, so too would the statute.

Hence from June 2013 to January 2016, MPPU’s international centre facilitated a participatory process in the various countries where the MPPU is active, and with the international Centre of the Focolare Movement.

The following criteria emerged:

- not a “statute”, because of the intentionally non-judicial nature of the Movement (Politics and Policy) for Unity, which must always be an ‘open space’ of dialogue and political activity. Instead it will be a **Charter** which better reflects the nature and juridical standing of the various centres around the world;

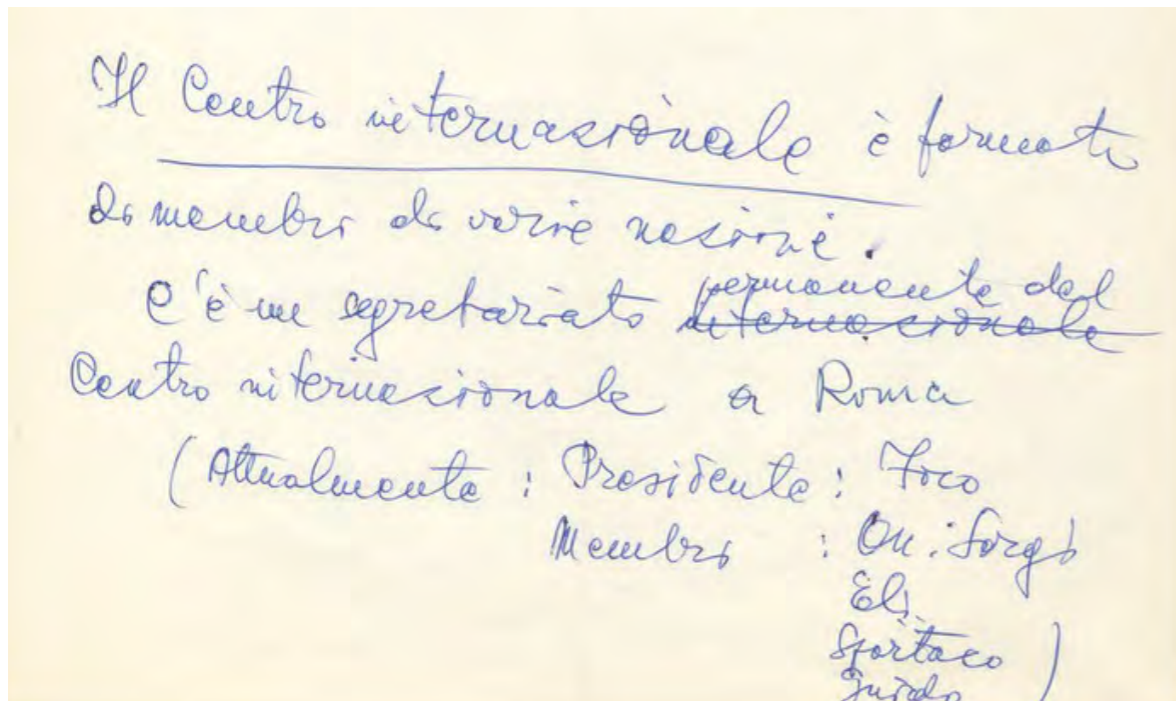
- not simply a representative democracy but a **relational participatory democracy**. Not only because the former would be impossible due to the absence of a stable electoral base, but principally because of the conviction that representative democracy is no longer adequate for today’s world which demands a more inclusive, more participatory and more consolidated democracy. The intention would be to practice it in MPPU’s own internal governance, then to be able to offer it as a **contribution towards the renewal of democracy** in various local and international contexts;
- approval ‘*ad experimentum*’ for 3 years, in order to encourage:
  - ▶ further reflection and comparison between the current life and culture of the MPPU and its sources in the charism of unity
  - ▶ a wider capillary engagement with the Charter
  - ▶ a greater “world” perspective in its content.

## 1962: the original idea for international and local MPPU centers

It is interesting to note how the internal organization of MPPU was already outlined in the St Catherine Centre Statute.

The very same elements were contained in the draft MPPU Statute of 2001, which also clarified the need for a presidency composed of 3 figures: the President, Co-President and Secretary. Chiara specified that the Secretary would not be an executive role, but rather a facilitator who “brings wisdom” to the work and to the organizations’ internal and external relations. This is in keeping with the quality of unity that should characterize the activity of all MPPU centers.

Three years later, while meeting with the International Centre on 28 May 2004, Chiara highlighted three points: ‘fraternity’ as a constituent part of politics, the potential of the Focolare Movement’s publications to spread MPPU’s ideas, and the contribution of MPPU to a dialogue with contemporary culture.



## Unity, or let's call it 'fraternity'

Fraternity, according to Chiara Lubich, is a crucial element of politics, a prime objective that could be said to contain all others. In this context, the word 'fraternity' is often interchangeable with the word 'unity'. The name chosen in 1996 for this political initiative was "Movement for Unity", a term which sums up the whole ideal and aim of the Focolare movement she founded. In this sense, "universal fraternity" can be understood as unity to be realized with everyone, including those who would not associate themselves with a religious interpretation of the word "unity".

«Tell the truth with love, the whole truth, without giving offence»

Chiara Lubich valued the publications of the Focolare Movement very highly, and she saw in them a means to give voice to the political thought emerging from the ideal of unity in practice. This political thought would be given voice by going beyond personal political allegiances and safeguarding

all that is good - from right, left or centre, speaking the truth with clarity while not giving offence to anyone!

She encouraged people involved in politics and public life to engage in dialogue in an atmosphere of mutual love that allows all concerned to focus on the greater good. Chiara advised what to do when a published article led to complaints from readers with left or right leaning viewpoints. Her suggestion was to scrutinize whether or not a particular political viewpoint had taken precedence over seeking the common good, which incorporates good ideas from all political persuasions.

While well aware of the delicate balancing act called for, Chiara remained convinced it would be possible in an environment where political fraternity was active and where it could make a significant beneficial contribution to political communication.

When writing on international politics, Chiara emphasized the importance of obtaining the viewpoints of people from the countries being written about.

## The organization of MPPU

MPPU has a two-fold character.

It is a cultural trend/approach that engages in dialogue with other cultural trends.

It is also an operational organization of people aspiring to facilitate a politics for unity.

Because of this, there is synergy between MPPU and one of the specific goals of the Focolare Movement: dialogue with contemporary culture. MPPU therefore has a dynamic relationship with individuals and groupings within the Focolare Movement who are:

- specifically engaged in the field of academic study and cultural life (such as the Abba School Study Centre, the Sophia University Institute);

- or dedicated to social, civil and professional action in society (New Humanity) and among young people (Youth for a United World).

The Statutes of the Focolare Movement confirm this in the note regarding Article 6,e): «This refers to the so-called 'inundations' (a term borrowed from St John Chrysostom: In Joannem Homilia 51: PG59, 284), namely "doctrinal trends that emerge when the Focolare Movement's charism is in contact with the surrounding human reality and culture. They may lead to the creation of specific movements such as the Economic Movement, the political Movement for Unity, and others". »

(Sono coloro che vogliono vivere l'Isola  
cristiana totalmente e nella vita poli-  
tica e svolgono attività in pubbliche)

— I membri si riuniscono in centri  
locali con un dirigente presidente (eletto  
da loro)

— Svolgono attività Questi centri deb-  
bono ~~essere~~ accettare lo statuto, mandare  
la loro adesione al Centro Interius.  
cd per riconoscimento da esso, <sup>debbano</sup> ~~essere~~  
per formare almeno da 4 membri ~~di~~

# Mppu Charter



## PREAMBLE

Politics, at local and international levels, is under enormous pressure today, caused by global issues which are often unprecedented. At the same time the world is increasingly interdependent and shows a new awareness of the dignity and rights of individuals and peoples. As often happens in history, it is precisely in these complex scenarios, when facing great challenges, that new ideas, new approaches, and new perspectives develop.

This is what happened during the Second World War in relation to the initial ideas put forward by Chiara Lubich who began promoting mutual love among peoples, having perceived that it was possible, thus bringing light into the darkness of the strife ridden 20th century.

This ideal of unity sees political action as "the love of all loves". It brings together both personal dreams and hopes for a better society into a common project and encourages people to give of themselves for the sake of humanity. Out of all this emerged the Movement for Politics and Policy for Unity (Mppu) an international experience in political innovation that aims to:

- **contribute to a future** that does not bring about unfair or uniform globalization, but **a world united by political relations** that express respect and mutual love between social groups, cities, states, and peoples, in which all recognize a rotating authoritative body for matters concerning the whole world.
- **promote and defend the fundamental values** of the person and of peoples, favouring the weak, implementing universal brotherhood politically, supporting economic policies based on the social use of goods and the global sharing of resources, respect for the environment and the paths of justice and freedom;
- **support institutional structures** that respond to the dynamics of unity and distinction between the various levels of political communities, and support shared and **relational decision-making models** which are based on well-functioning social networks and institutions and ongoing participatory procedures which uphold democracy in every nation;



Interdependence Day Forum, Rome, 12 September 2004

## Is unity, and the peace that comes from it, relevant today?

«As we all know and can observe, the world today is characterized by tensions between south and north, in the Middle East and in Africa; by wars and the threat of new conflicts; and by other typical evils of our age. This is true. And yet, in spite of all these tensions, our world paradoxically seems to be moving towards unity and therefore towards peace. It is a sign of the times.s.

In the religious field, for example, we can see this thrust towards unity in the establishment of the "World Conference of Religions for Peace." In the Christian world, it can be seen by the fact that the Holy Spirit is urging the different churches and ecclesial communities to unite after centuries of indifference and struggle. Unity is underlined by the World Council of Churches and the documents of the Second Vatican Council repeatedly return to this idea. The world's thrust towards unity is evidenced by ideologies which, in part, have collapsed, but which also aimed at resolving the problems of the world in a global manner.

In the political world, as in Europe, unity is affirmed by the reality of countries working to join together. It can be seen in the numerous international bodies and organizations. Likewise, modern means of communication foster unity by bringing the whole world into communities and families. Yes, the world is tending towards unity».

*(Cf. C. Lubich, UNESCO in the awarding of the Peace Education Award, Paris, December 17, 1996, in "Nuova Umanità" 108 (1996), p.640)*

## Each nation will learn the best of the other.

«... a mutual esteem among countries and peoples. This is not usual. In fact, it is much more common to find strongly enforced borders between one people and another, to fear the might of the other or, at best, to forge alliances for each nation's own advantage. But it is difficult to think of acting solely out of love for another nation; popular morality has not reached such heights.

When, however, the life of the Mystical Body among individuals has been developed to the point that all truly love their neighbours — be they black or white, red or yellow—as themselves, it will be easy to transplant this law to the relationship among nations. And something new will happen. For love brings us to find similarities or to make them. Each nation will learn the best of the other and each one's virtues will be made to circulate for the enrichment of all.

Then, there will truly be unity and variety. A people will rise up that, even though a child of this world, is guided by the laws of heaven. It will be able to call itself "people of God.»"

*(C. Lubich, Spiritual Writings / 1, The Attractiveness of Modern Time, Città Nuova, Rome 2003, p.158)*

## Today the world is moving towards unity.

«Today the world is moving towards unity. Unity is a sign of the times: many religious, social and political factors demonstrate this. But we need to specify that today, the world is tending towards a universal unity, towards a global unity.

Important situations, needs, and aspects of today's world enable us to understand this.

The communications media make people and nations, materially very distant, present to one another; to the point that what happens in Asia or in Africa can have a decisive impact on the personal choices of a western youth. No one is foreign to us any longer because "we see" him, because we know about her.

Furthermore, the economic and financial globalization has interlaced all our interests. They are no longer separated from one another: what happens in one country can have immediate material repercussions in many other countries.

Along that same line, some problems pertain to humanity as a whole, problems that no nation can face isolated from all the others. This becomes clear if we consider the wide-ranging issues involving the international



"1000 Cities for Europe", Innsbruck, 9 November 2001  
Romano Prodi, Chiara Lubich, Thomas Klestil



community in this period, such as the environment and, in particular, human ecology, development, nutrition, and the problems concerning the genetic heritage of different peoples.



Parliament of Catalonia, Barcelona, 29 November 2002  
Chiara Lubich and Joan Rigol i Roig

It is no longer the time of individual rights alone, or of the social rights of one category: ours is the time of the rights and duties of peoples and all humanity.

We live in a world that has truly become a village, complex and new, but a village. Today, humanity is living as if it were a small group. But, unlike the small groups of the past, it has not yet succeeded in adequately developing a thought capable of respecting diversity, while at the same time embracing the fundamental role of unity. The traditional ideas of race, religion, culture or state, break down before the complexity of the situation.

Well then, brotherhood is precisely the category of thought capable of embracing that unity and distinction longed for by contemporary humanity.

John Paul II, in speaking to the Diplomatic Corps on January 10, 2000, chose brotherhood as the criterion for judging the century which just ended. After having pointed out the remarkable advances in science that characterized the twentieth century, he asked: “Was this century also the century of ‘brotherhood’?”

And he underscored “the persevering action of farsighted diplomats” in the attempt to build an authentic “community of nations.” This would be the sign of “a real desire to build a world based on brotherhood, in order to create, defend and spread peace all around us.».

(cf C. Lubich, *Fraternity and peace for the unity of peoples*, Rimini, 22nd June 2002 in ACL (AGMF))

### At the service of those who seek the good.

«We noticed an advantage in not taking a stand as a Movement. It has allowed individuals [...] to choose and register with the party you wish. [...] and this is wonderful [...] also made it possible for each one of us to meet people outside of our own environments where we believed we had to stay. [...] these contacts are already providential, because we want to widen our horizons, to open our hearts [...]

Generally speaking, given the present-day situation, you hear of the urgent appeal that Christians be united among themselves, despite the different positions, [...] and we feel that we are in a privileged position, for this reason: our collective spirituality, all this life of ours, has urged us to dialogue, to make ourselves one with others, to understand the other person, to identify with the other person, to make his thoughts our own, to make our thoughts his, and to reach a certain unity of mind. [...]

Now we should really take advantage of this technique, of our collective spirituality, in order to start first of all among ourselves, among ourselves, [...] even if we work here or there, we must take advantage of it in order to be one heart and one soul. We must remember that we are first of all Christians and then members of a political party. [...] And since the Ideal, as we live it, is a type of Christianity [...] we must love one another, and try to understand one another, etc.

Here we could lay the foundations for something wonderful, that is, to reach the point of having common ideas, under many aspects, in very many ways,

so as to be able to pass these ideas on almost by osmosis, to all the others in your parties, for example, little by little. You can say to them: “Well, the others... say this; and we can understand why, because things are like this and like that...” because you yourselves have understood it. “But we too have our demands, but they, too, would probably understand... Let’s try to explain...” [...]

But why do we need this unity among all? Above all, it is needed to save values, because they are not guaranteed today, neither by one side nor by the other... they are not really guaranteed.

So since the best values are rooted in Christianity, and they could be threatened, like justice, peace, freedom, life, ecology, unity, we must be united [...] in order to save these values, in order to save them among yourselves, among yourselves also as adherents of the different parties, and with others.

To tell the truth, we have something wonderful in this regard. I don’t know if you realize it. We bring into Parliament [...] a powerful force that creates a revolution [...] which is very important if we love Italy; otherwise, there’s no point in going there and doing anything. But if we love our country, our homeland, then the possibility we have of saving values is extremely important. We have the possibility of understanding one another, of discussing, of reaching unanimity, and if possible, one thought, which might not even come from us Christians. It might come from the others, and then we make it our own.

Therefore, a Movement should begin that embraces politicians of all parties. In my opinion, they should - and this is very important - meet regularly, as we are meeting today [...], regularly, if possible, in order to help one another to take common stands.[...] and spread [...] the culture which the charism of unity has brought about and developed in the Movement throughout these years... culture which is now exploding, it’s emerging. [...] the culture of giving, of obeying the law, of human rights, of unity, of all that you think of in the Ideal - it’s all part of our culture; our experiences, the events of our life, of our history. We should reach the point that this culture passes from you to the others, that little by little, it also spreads to others.

Our Movement, because it cannot belong to any one party, will belong to all. Our Movement places itself at the service of those who, like you, seek the good of our country».

*(Chiara Lubich to a group of politicians: "The Movement of Unity is born" Naples, 2 May 1996 in ACL)*

## Everything changes.

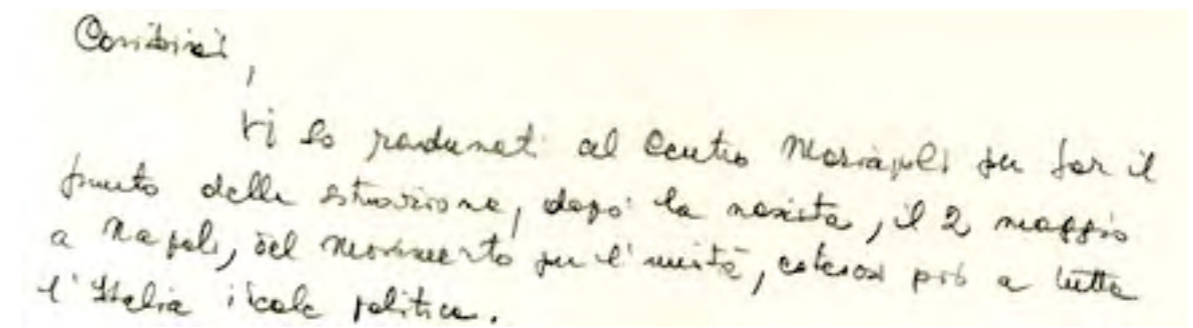
« In this way, opening my eyes to what is outside of me, I see humanity with the eyes of God who is all-trusting because he is Love.[....]

Then everything changes, politics and art, education and religion, private life and recreation. Everything.».

*(C. Lubich, The Resurrection of Rome, in "La Via" 1 (1949), p.5- cf. "Nuova Umanità" 102 (1995) pp. 7-8)*

## To think of politics as perhaps no one has ever conceived it before.

Message to the politicians, London, 12 November 1996.



Cominciò,  
ti lo ricordavi: al Centro Mariapoli fu per il frutto della situazione, dopo la nascita, il 2 maggio a Napoli, del movimento per l'unità, esteso poi a tutta l'Italia ideale politica.

« Dear Friends,

You are meeting at the Mariapolis Centre to take stock of the situation after the birth of the "Movement for Unity" at Naples on 2nd May; it has already spread to all parts of Italy where the Ideal is known and lived by persons engaged in public service.

It is not my job to draw your attention to the pressing and urgent topics that I imagine you will be dealing with at this meeting. That lies outside my competence (though I am very interested in it). The purpose of this message is rather to stress once more the spirit in which everything should be done.

Working for our "Movement for Unity" is certainly not an easy pastime: it is a serious, hard and demanding undertaking, though it will also bring you great joy, drive and fresh daring.



In the Houses of Parliament, London, 2004 – The Speaker of the House of Commons, The Right Honourable Michael J Martin MP meets Chiara Lubich with Giuseppe Gambale

What we have to do in fact is to think of politics as perhaps no one has ever conceived it before.

The Abba School provides a useful example of what I mean. As you know, the School is trying to translate the spiritual patrimony of our Movement into terms of doctrine, and it does so above all by living that patrimony, putting into practice what it demands of us and continually renewing what it proposes.

And what has come out of this? What is still coming out? We have seen that the result is not so much a - doctrine (primarily a theology) about Jesus, but the doctrine of Jesus, that is a doctrine elaborated by Him. Again and again we discover that He is the one who is evolving this theology through the intermediary of the Abba School.

Why? Because He wants to be always present among us, which also means present in each one of us, so that each one can give the others what His Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus, suggests to him. You realise what a fantastic adventure this is, how exciting and rewarding.

The question that now comes to me is this: Why not transfer this divine technique, this system that commits us all to constant mutual love even to the point of being ready to die for one another, giving up our thoughts and ideas too, so as to have Jesus among us - why not transfer this to other fields too?

Why not start a new type of politics, the kind of politics that Jesus would lead if He were here in our place?

Do you remember Foco's idea that politics is love in the public sector? So it is still a question of love, that kind of love that does not exclude the presence of the divine but demands it.

Just let us try to imagine what Jesus would do if He were here in our place; what service He would perform for the country, what benefits He would bestow, what miracles! Yes, miracles too, indeed, why not? Didn't He promise that if we follow Him we shall do greater things than those He did Himself?

Courage then, courage, for the sake of all those who are expecting something from us. Let us try to establish His presence among us by making a mutual pact of willingness to die for one another so that the life of Jesus can be among us.

This is the way we must act, letting Him work in us, letting Him speak in us, listen in us, communicate with Himself among us, so that the result is not my thought or project or that of someone else, but His, a project that we must then defend with all our strength, though with respect for others, with the burning desire to "throw open the doors for Christ" as our Pope puts it».

*(cf C. Lubich, Message to Politicians, London, 12 november 1996 in ACL (AGMF))*

*Chiara's last public address was written in 2006. In it she focused with surprising strength on the MPPU, together with the Economy of Communion and NetOne. The final section is set out below*

## A Culture of "Resurrection"

«At times people think that the Gospel brings about the Kingdom of God only in a religious sense without actually solving human problems.

But this is not true. Now, it's not that all these human problems will be resolved by the historical figure of Jesus, nor by Jesus as the Head of the Mystical Body. But Jesus – when his grace is at work in us – is present and acts in us.

He becomes the truest, most profound personality of every person. It is Jesus in a given person who builds a bridge, who opens a way ahead. Jesus-us, Jesus-me, Jesus-you ...

Every Christian is, in fact, more a child of God (= another Jesus) than they are a child of their own father. It is as another Christ and member of his Mystical Body that each person can give his or her particular contribution in all the different fields, whether in science, the arts, politics, communications, and so on. And each one will be more effective if they work together with others united in the name of Christ.

This is the continuation of the incarnation; the complete incarnation that concerns all the members of the Mystical Body of Christ.

This gives rise to and spreads in the world what we could call the “culture of the resurrection”: the culture of the risen Lord, the new Person, and in Him, a “new” humanity.

## Inundations of light

The Focolare Movement is a spiritual reality that enlightens the world around it through individual persons, but also as a whole. It does this through inundations of light – to borrow a term from St John Chrysostom - whereby this light is brought into the various aspects of today's culture.

The inundations are the result of a particular form of dialogue – the dialogue with aspects of contemporary culture – which the Focolare Movement has engaged in for years now. It is a dialogue between the wisdom which the charism of unity has to offer and the various fields of human knowledge and endeavour, such as politics, economics, sociology, the natural sciences, communication, education, philosophy, the arts, health, ecology, law, and many others.

Clearly, these inundations of light remain such only if they are constantly animated and inundated by the light that emanates from the gift of God, so as not to fall back into ways of thinking and acting which are merely human.

## Economy of Communion

The spirituality of the Focolare (its “charism”) conveys a powerful sense of the divine and spreads mutual love among all. So, in the field of economics, for example, this charism spontaneously brings about a worldwide communion of goods among those who live it, a communion similar to that practiced by the first Christians about whom it is written, “there was not a needy person among them” (Acts 4:34).

Our project of an economy of communion, in freedom of course, came about to achieve this goal.

The firms that adhere to the project seek to apply the principles of Christian social doctrine, and even more, to bring about the presence of Jesus in the midst among all those who work in the company.

When Christ takes the lead in the world of economics – and this will happen as an ever greater number of people wisely place their life at his service – we



United Nations Symposium, New York, 28 May 1997

can surely hope to see justice flourish and to witness the massive mobilization of goods that the world urgently needs.

“He has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty” (Lk 1:53).

This is the social revolution that our charism foresaw from the very beginning.

## Net One

As for the field of communications, we have always seen the current development of powerful means of social communication as a sign of God’s providence, enabling the human family to be more united just at the time when God placed in our hearts a charism aimed at this lofty goal.

At the same time, it is obvious – and the facts confirm this – that these means on their own are not enough to unite peoples and individuals or to improve the quality of their life. Technology should be put at the service of the common good and those who use it need to be inspired by love.

Our charism has much to say and much to offer here. It spreads true love in people’s hearts and consequently a real interest in each person and in all that concerns humanity. It teaches people to build lasting, constructive and creative relationships. Above all, it instils in the heart of people the art of communicating which is the art of “not existing”, so as to receive (to welcome, make our own, the other person, the news, everything) and also give (by speaking and writing at the right time and in the right way), by being love.

All this creates sharing, participation, communion.

When an increasing number of professional communicators silence their ego in order to make room for the Spirit of God within them, as is already being done by those who work with this spirit (in the group we call Net One), the media will show their capacity to multiply infinitely all that is good; the voice of God will resound more clearly and those working in the media will carry out their vocation to be instruments of unity at the service of the whole of humanity.

## Political Movement for Unity

Then there is the world of politics. The charism of unity sheds light on this field as in no other.

Is it not the task of politics to bring the multiplicity of people and the legitimate aspirations of the different components of society into unity in a single harmonious design? Shouldn’t politicians, given their role as mediators, excel in the art of dialogue and of “making themselves one” with everyone?

Our spirituality, which is eminently collective, teaches the art of loving to the point of generating unity.

Politicians who make this their own, whatever party they belong to, choose to put love for one another before any personal interest or commitment and, because they do so, they are able to establish – albeit not without sacrifice – the presence of Jesus in their midst.

Jesus, who is light for the world, appreciates all that is true in the different viewpoints; he enlightens them, underscores the common good and gives the strength to pursue it.

The experience of our “Movement for politics and unity” bears witness to this, in various parts of Europe and Latin America and elsewhere.

But the good that will emerge from this charism will be even greater when many politicians have the courage to put themselves and the powers conferred on them at the service of the ultimate goal, which is God.

Then we can really hope to see the realization of the mutual love among peoples that brings peace and solutions to the many problems that continue to afflict humanity.

These are some examples that could also be applied to other fields.

If we continue to journey along these ways, we will truly be able to say with Lawrence, a Roman deacon of the third century, “My night has no darkness, and all things are full of light to me. »

*(C. Lubich, Jesus Forsaken and the ‘dark night’ of contemporary culture, in “Unità e carismi” 3-4 (2007), pp 6-9)*



# Praxis, thought, formation, cooperation, dissemination.

## ART. 1 - POLITICAL ACTION

**Those who adhere to MPPU** – openly and freely, and who hold office in institutions or in parties, or in public office at any level, or who work in the field of social and political research, or are committed to active citizenship – **endeavor in practice:**

To **build relationships inspired by universal fraternity:** among themselves, in their own parties and among different parties, in institutions, in all spheres of public life, in relations between States;

To understand in depth the history, role and purpose of their own political project and that of others; the institution in which they work and other institutions; their own city and other cities; their own people and other peoples ... by **acting toward others as they would like others to act toward them;**

To constantly renew genuine political love towards their city, their region or their own country, while knowing they are working in and **for a global political horizon;**

To make their own the present sufferings and as yet unhealed wounds of persons and peoples; to take part in action aimed at **healing divisions and conflicts,** by promoting pathways to reconciliation;

To put forward fair programs in which **the most disadvantaged citizens and peoples are given priority** in political agendas, by promoting the culture of giving, knowing that this can give rise to positive and unforeseen events which **multiply the expected results a hundredfold;**

To consider **political engagement as a backdrop to the political role of the entire social body** and to promote dialogue with and among economic, social, and cultural realities, in order to direct all their efforts towards the common good;

To renew constantly **the pact that binds elected officials and voters** well beyond election day, paying attention to ethical, participatory and programmatic aspects of the mandate to which everyone must contribute, **being detached from any personal gain,** according to their duties and responsibilities;

To develop **responsibility and expertise in political, technical, or diplomatic action, or in research** and to seize every opportunity to make their contribution to the renewal of political style, of individual policies, international relations, laws, and local and international institutional structures;

To exercise their political role, or their technical role, at the service of the common good and shared goods, placing themselves above every partial interest, **being accountable for their actions and their use of resources** with regularity and transparency.



Constituency Office, Dublin, Prime Minister Bertie Aherne and Chiara Lubich

## The specific goal.

«The specific goal of the Movement for Unity, in which members of the most varied parties participate, is this: to help one another to be first of all people who, in the spirit of fraternity, believe in the profound, eternal values of the human person, and then to be involved in political activities.

So it is not a question of a new party; nor of wanting to confuse religion with politics, as happened and happens in the case of Christian and non-Christian fundamentalists. This is simply a proposal and the witness of a lifestyle which best enables politics to reach its goal: the common good in the unity of the social body».

(C. Lubich, For a policy of communion, Palazzo San Macuto, Chamber of Deputies, Rome, December 15, 2000, in “Nuova Umanità” 134 (2001), p.215)

## Politicians for Unity

«But how can fraternity be lived? Moreover, how can it help in the execution of all the responsibilities and tasks in politics? In order to explain this, I must consider a few aspects of fraternal love and see how they are lived within politics.

Firstly, for politicians of unity, the choice to be politically active is an act of love. Through their commitment, they respond to an authentic vocation, a personal call. They respond to a social need, to a problem in their city or to the suffering of their people and the needs of their time. Those who are believers sense it is God calling them through these circumstances. Those without a religious faith respond to a human question resonating within their conscience. Both imbue their actions with love and both find their home in the “Movement for Unity”.

Secondly, the politicians for unity are aware that, if politics is love right down to its roots, this means recognising that even one’s political opponents can have made their own choices out of love. Therefore they must be respected, and the essence of their commitment understood, seeing beyond any aggressive attitudes which hopefully may improve in future. Politicians for unity have at heart the hope that their adversaries too may fulfil their own good plans, because, if they too are responding to a call and to a real



House of Deputies, Library, Italian Parliament, 15 December 2000

need, they too play an integral part in achieving the common good that can only be built up together.

Politicians for unity therefore love not only those who vote for them, but also their adversaries; not only their own party, but also the other’s party; not only their own country, but all humanity. Loving everyone makes them understand and live the universal dimension of politics. Furthermore, the politicians of unity cannot remain passive in the face of those bitter conflicts that can cause a great rift to open up between politicians and citizens. On the contrary, they must be the ones to take the first step, even with just a simple greeting, in order to reach out to others, re-establishing any broken lines of communication.

Creating personal relationships where they do not exist, or where they are damaged, may at times lead to unblocking a political stalemate. For the ‘politicians for unity’, taking the initiative in loving is an act which both honours the dignity of the human person and transforms into genuine and real political initiatives; it helps overcome prejudices and partisanship, which all too often paralyzes politicians, locking them into ineffective forms of opposition.

Another aspect of fraternity in politics is the ability to set yourself aside to make space for the other person, to remain silent to listen to your opponents. It is a “losing yourself” which every day refreshes your initial

political commitment when you first decided to dedicate yourself to the wellbeing of others, not just yourself. In this way, you “make yourselves one” with others, opening yourself up to how they see life. Making ourselves one helps us to see beyond our own personal viewpoint, to understand aspects of the other person, their life and their reality that also open up wider political horizons for us. Politicians who learn to make themselves one with everyone are better able to understand and make valid proposals. The art of “making ourselves one” is true political realism.

Finally, fraternity finds its full expression in reciprocal love. Democracy, if understood correctly, really needs it: both charitable love between politicians, and between politicians and citizens. Politicians for unity are not satisfied with their own efforts in this, but try to encourage others, whether colleagues or opponents, to love too. This is because politics is all about relationships; it is a common project and not just about acting as an individual.

Politics is in real need of reciprocal love like this, not only at the level of inter-personal relationships, but also on an institutional level. At the heart of all the different tasks assigned within a democracy is the shared goal of fostering mutual love. Government can express love through its policies and decisions; while the opposition can express love by supplying the necessary checks and counter-balances.

However, all the aspects of political love that can bring about fraternity also require sacrifice. All too often political activity is accompanied by solitude, a sense of abandonment and a lack of understanding even on the part of those closest to you! Is there anyone engaged in politics who has never felt hurt, isolated or betrayed, even to the point of contemplating giving it all up?

Well, Jesus too experienced all of this. When he reached the height of his passion, he cried aloud the fathomless separation he felt from the One who had always been closest to him throughout his life: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” With this cry, Jesus sank into the depths of our human condition; he came to us, men and women, precisely in our state of failure and separation from God.

We were all disconnected from the Father and divided among ourselves. It was necessary for the Son to become like us in order to gather us together and bring us back to the Father, to transform us into brothers and sisters. He had to feel he was no longer Son, so that we could become children of

God. However, turning again to God he said, “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit,” and Jesus went beyond the abyss and recomposed unity with God and among us.

The forsaken and risen Jesus is the model for every human being. He is especially the model for politicians, because politicians are the ones who embrace all divisions, all separations and all the wounds of their own people, to find solutions and to recompose unity among them. This is the price of fraternity required of politicians: a very high price for a very high vocation. However, the reward is also great. In fact, Jesus is human, the complete and perfect human being; and politicians who live the ideal of fraternity wholeheartedly can become so. Their proven faithfulness can make them a model, a reference point for their fellow citizens, and the pride of their people.

This type of politician is what the “Movement for Unity” wants to generate, nourish and sustain. It’s not a dream. The exemplary lives of some who have gone before us prove it. People like Joseph Lux, former vice-prime minister of the Czech Republic, who knew how to win the admiration of both colleagues and opponents alike. Domenico Mangano, who spent his political



Campidoglio, Rome, Honourary Citizenship



career in the city council of Viterbo, Italy, in constant service to his fellow citizens. Iginio Giordani, whose recently begun process of canonization is shedding light on how he lived not only the theological virtues, but also the civil ones. These are all signs that we can become saints not “despite” politics, but “through” politics.»

*(C.Lubich, The Movement for Unity and Fraternity in Politics, Turin, 2 June 2002 in ACL (AGMF))*

## A “Fraternity Pact” for our own country

«We would like to invite all those who are active in politics to live in this way, formulating something like a pact of fraternity for Italy, which places the good of the nation over and above every partial interest, whether it be of the individual, of the group, of a class or of a party.

Fraternity offers surprising possibilities. For example, it enables us to understand and identify with the viewpoint of the other person so that no interest or need is foreign to us.

Fraternity re-builds the social fabric. Through it, liberty and equality too acquire new meaning, with all the political orientations and choices that proceed from them.

The politicians of the Movement have this profound conviction: fraternity makes it possible to reconcile and value human experiences which would otherwise risk developing into implacable conflicts, like the still open wounds of the South [of Italy] and the new legitimate demands of the North [of Italy]. Fraternity harmonizes the demands of the re-established regional authorities and of municipal governments that greatly contribute towards mature democracy, with a sense of full allegiance to the country. Fraternity illuminates the growing awareness of being European in a Europe that – because of its history and culture – extends from the Atlantic ocean to the Ural mountains. It heightens the importance of international organizations and the efforts undertaken to overcome barriers and achieve important steps towards the unity of the human family.

Fraternity is a commitment that fosters the authentic human development of the country without segregating the weaker sectors in an uncertain future; without excluding others from wellbeing or creating new forms of poverty. It safeguards the rights of citizenship and access to citizenship itself, giving

hope to those who seek a dignified life in our country, which can show its own greatness by offering itself as a home for those who have lost their own. It promotes scientific research and the invention of new technologies while it safeguards the dignity of the human person from the first to the last instant of life, always providing the conditions so that each person may freely exercise his or her freedom of choice and assume growing responsibilities.

In a word, fraternity can set into motion the specific capacity to love inscribed in the DNA of every man and woman, and which fulfils each one as a unique person.

Furthermore, fraternity – it seems to us – would make it possible to introduce new principles into daily political activities: it would exclude the possibility of governing against anyone or of being the expression of only one part of the country».

*(C.Lubich, Towards a Politics of Communion, cit., pp.215-217)*

## Wounds in need of healing.

«The vocation of Europe lies in this model of universal brotherhood and sisterhood, which creates unity while respecting distinction. It is a work in process. Wars, totalitarian regimes and injustices have left open wounds in need of healing. However, to be truly European, we must succeed in looking at the past with mercy, acknowledging as our own the history of my nation and that of other nations. We need to recognize that what we are today is the fruit of a history lived together, of a European destiny that we must take into our hands fully and knowingly.

Today, the unity of Europe requires that European politicians interpret the signs of the times and formulate, as it were, a pact of brotherhood and sisterhood with one another, a pact that commits them to consider themselves as members of Europe, just as they are members of their own nations. It urges them always to seek what unites and to work together to find solutions for the problems that remain as obstacles to the unity of the whole of Europe. Without a doubt, it is worthwhile dedicating one’s life to such a lofty goal».

*(C.Lubich, “1000 Cities for Europe”, Innsbruck, Austria, 9 November 2001 in La dottrina spirituale, Città Nuova, Rome 2006, p. 247; cf. “Nuova Umanità” 139(2002) p.28 )*

## Politics that stimulates a spirit of initiative

«Fraternity can be effective in generating real equality in a city, by creating the conditions needed for every citizen, family, association, business or school to express themselves and fulfil their own vocation, giving the best of themselves. For this to be achieved, the city council must, of course, possess all the necessary competencies, from technical skills to managerial abilities. However, at a deeper level, what is asked of those governing a city is to know how to stop and listen to the ordinary citizens and take on board their problems.

This is what “love” is, “making yourself one” with others. It may cost us effort, but it eases their burden, and can help to discover the right solution to those problems, which will never be found without taking into consideration the point of view of the person actually experiencing the problem.

In this way, local government does not impose itself but is respectful of all the different groups within the population and their roles in society. It is

swift and flexible, ready to move with the priorities of the present moment. In this way, a city is not governed from on high, but rises from ground level, and politics takes on the role of the stalk or stem which supports the flowering of initiatives by or together with its citizens. Politics becomes true service, unifying everyone’s efforts towards the common good.

This “fraternity” approach has far-reaching consequences. Not only does it promote readiness to listen resulting in a valid assessment of the available needs and resources, but it can also lead to a profound appreciation of the city’s civil and religious history, of its cultural and social heritage. Gradually the true vocation of the city becomes clear, within which every citizen has the opportunity to follow their own vocation and by living a fulfilled life, they contribute to the development and wellbeing of the whole city».

*(C.Lubich, Fraternity and the City, Trento, 8 June 2001, in “Nuova Umanità” 137 (2001), p. 588-589)*

## Politics as loving service

«Igino Giordani, an Italian member of parliament and co-founder of the Focolare Movement, wrote in his own unique style: “When we cross the threshold of our home to plunge into the world, we cannot leave our faith hanging on the back of the door like a worn-out hat.” Shortly afterwards he added: “Politics is charity in action, handmaid not ruler.”

One day I seemed to understand in what sense politics could be considered to be love. If we were to give a colour to every human activity, to economics, health, communications, art, culture, the administration of justice ... politics would not have a colour. It would be the background, it would be black so as to highlight all the other colours.

Politics should seek to be in constant dialogue with every other aspect of life, in order to provide the conditions for society itself, in all its expressions, to achieve its design completely.

Of course, in this constant attention towards dialogue, politics must reserve to itself certain areas: promoting fair, unbiased policies; prioritising those in need; fostering participation at all times, which means dialogue, mediation, responsibility and practical action. »



Prague, 2001, President Václav Havel with Chiara Lubich

(cf. C. Lubich ,House of Commons, Westminster, London, 22 June 2004 in *La dottrina spirituale*, cit. p.368)

## The dream.

«I'll tell you something that is close to my heart. I have an idea that I would like to see accomplished before dying, or at least see the first signs of it happening.

We have such a precious experience. For example, we see Providence comes day after day in an incredible way, which is then distributed either to the poor, or for buildings [to provide formation in this spirit of unity]. So living the Gospel experience of “Give and you will be given” is really a proven fact in the Focolare Movement. We started from Piazza Cappuccini, where we slept on mattresses on the floor, and in front of us was only the image of Jesus forsaken, because we wanted to start from nothing... God inspired us to do this.

And now there is this immense Movement, which is immense also from a concrete viewpoint, not only looking at the number of people: four million as you know, but also the buildings and centres.



Councillor Domenico Mangano addresses a committee meeting of Viterbo Council, Italy

I asked myself: is this true only for a Movement like ours? Why couldn't a head of state, for example, reason in this way: “Give and it will be given to you”, “Strive first for the kingdom of God, ... and all these things will be given to you as well”: the hundredfold in this life” [...]

Why can't the leaders of our countries reason things out in this way and solve the problem of poverty, for example? Why do people turn always and only to international institutions and not to the Eternal Father? He sent all this to us, starting from nothing, so why couldn't He send it to Italy, why couldn't He send it to Europe, why couldn't He send it to Africa? Why not?

It has been said that I have a secret; I have a key that makes it possible to solve these big problems. To whom can I hand it over? To whom can I give it? Certainly, in the meantime, we must go ahead and constantly give an example; but who knows, maybe this Movement ... will make it possible in future and people will acquire our mentality.

« But even children can live this. When we were just starting out on this evangelical adventure, we had the experience of the shoes, size 12. Someone asked us – a group of girls - for a pair of men's shoes, size 12. We went in front of the Blessed Sacrament and asked, “Give us a pair of shoes for you, Jesus” - because they were for Jesus and we had faith – “Give me a pair of shoes for you”. As we left the church, a lady handed us a package containing a pair of shoes, size 12.

Someone else needed a jacket, we went into church and asked: “We need a jacket for you.” We went outside and someone gave us a jacket.

Why can't we find the solution to the problem of hunger, for example, to the problem of developing countries, at least in part? We must really make this culture known, grow and develop; we must defend it and spread it. [...]

In a municipality there might be the need for a road – but the council doesn't have the money; there might be the need, for example, to paint a building - the council doesn't have the money. “We don't have the money!” If you don't have the money, ask for it, if the council doesn't give it to you, the Eternal Father will give it to you. “Ask and it will be given you.” We ask and receive, why can't others ask and receive?

Why don't others think of bringing God into politics? Why don't they bring God in and then all the rest will come in abundance? The rest, the

hundredfold. The hundredfold also means the “thousandfold”, and with that we would be able to feed many people. »

*(Chiara Lubich to a group of politicians: "The birth of the Movement for Unity" Naples, 2 May 1996 in ACL)*



Town Hall, Palermo, Italy, 20 January 1998, Honourary Citizenship

## ART. 2 – A NEW POLITICAL CULTURE

**The political culture** which MPPU brings and wishes to spread, develops in the encounter and dialogue between the ideal of unity, with its good practices, and political thought at work in history and contemporary reality.

**Its commitment to research and study** occurs mainly in collaboration with Abba School and the Sophia University Institute – both of which, like the MPPU, are expressions of the Focolare Movement – through university and post-graduate courses, with research groups and scholars dedicated to approaching various fields of knowledge in the light of the ideal of unity.

To this end the MPPU prefers **interdisciplinary and intercultural work**, in the belief that mutual enrichment can help shed light on the values of individual nations, towards a shared understanding of the world situation, which can be a reference point **for a new humanism founded on the culture of unity**.

## A truly authentic political trend

*During a trip to Argentina and Brazil in 1998, Chiara met several people who in their youth had worked energetically in favour of a united world and who now held positions of responsibility in society. They wished to meet her and to stay in contact. Chiara realised how important it is for the Focolare Movement to be a place where everyone together can fully develop their own human and professional vocation.*

«How? By enabling the two realities we already have, the Movement for Unity in the field of politics and the Economy of Communion in the social field, to become true and authentic political and economic trends. As such, they would have: a valid philosophy, a valid political science both in theory and in practice, a valid approach to politics, to political activity and a valid viewpoint of the world of politics. Many people would come together in all nations, to practice this new form of politics, organizing occasional meetings or conventions, using today’s means of communication to make it known, forming new politicians ...

Aware that all this must be an expression of the “ideal”, that is, the spirituality of unity underpinning the whole initiative.

If it develops into a strong all-encompassing political trend, our politicians will not find it too difficult to let it define their actions as they carry out their important responsibilities with a true sense of vocation.

As regards the Economy of Communion, this must not limit itself to setting up new businesses inspired by it or to the commentary of those who may be more or less expert in the field. No, here too it must become a field of knowledge involving well qualified economists able to define theory and practice, and produce comparative studies with other currents of thought in the economic sciences, leading not only to individual doctoral theses but also to schools capable of informing many people.

A discipline which bestows dignity on the practitioners and represents a true “vocation” for those who make some form of commitment to it.

The political and economic movements already in the Focolare Movement can now be expanded on a larger scale. These political and economic movements imbued with the spirit of unity could potentially spread beyond the Focolare, if structured in the right way by appropriate experts and by the Holy Spirit who makes “all things new”.

*(Cf C. Lubich, Letter from Mariapolis Araceli, São Paulo, Brazil, 7 May 1998, in CL (AGMF))*

## The good of the country needs the input of all.

In addition, brotherhood would make it possible to live fully the relationship between the elected, from the moment they are candidates, and the citizens of their territory, the privileged place for a dialogue which gives rise to programs of collaboration between civil and political society. Thus the candidates would more easily maintain their commitments and give an account of their achievements; and the citizens would accompany them in their work through supportive actions during the course of their mandate. In this way, the separation between society and politics would be overcome,

and the elected would never find themselves alone, but rather, the expression of a community in which they remain profoundly rooted; a community which, through the election of its representatives, is open to the dimensions of the nation.

Likewise, through fraternity which gives peace and serenity, the parties would find it easier to renew themselves. In doing so, they would re-discover the greatness of their task, because each party was born from an historical demand, from a shared need to affirm a value. Thus they would be urged to highlight their own original inspiration and basic values. At the same time, each party would recognize the values and tasks of the other parties, stimulating them, also through a cordial and respectful critical analysis, to express their true identity and to carry out the action which the common good expects from them. These are the main lines of the ideal of the Movement for Unity, which proposes and seeks to practice the apparent paradox of loving the country of others as our own, because the good of the country needs the input of all.

*(cf. C. Lubich, Towards a Politics of Communion, cit. , p.127)*



Seoul, Korea, 2010, Certificate Presentation after the Mppu Course, with Marco Fatuzzo, second President of Mppu International

### ART.3 - FORMATION

The Mppu promotes **political formation based on the testimony and the culture** it brings, valuing experiences, ideas and sound political achievements which have developed in different historical, geographical and cultural contexts. To this end it organizes:

- **periodic meetings** where politicians, diplomats, civil servants, students and active citizens can share experiences, ideas and projects in relation to a) the ideal of unity; b) its implications for life and political action; c) best practice;
- **conferences, seminars, panels and forums** addressing specific subjects and enabling discussion in an atmosphere of mutual listening and cooperation, respecting different viewpoints and affiliations, with the purpose of evolving ideas and shared solutions, which can be made available within their spheres of action;
- training courses and debates **for young people** interested in studying and renewing politics and policies; interdisciplinary and intercultural **formation opportunities in communities**, workshops on ideas and concrete initiatives for active citizenship and political participation in local realities or in international and national institutions

### ART.4 - COOPERATION

MPPU constantly cooperates with similar organizations in the Focolare Movement involved in **dialogue with contemporary culture** in various social fields and disciplines and thus expresses one of the specific aims of this movement.

It acts in synergy with the New Humanity Movement and Youth for a United World which, inspired by the same ideal of unity, set up **active citizenship projects** or contribute to awareness raising, or seek to renew individual human activities and social structures in order to enhance the effectiveness of these activities.

The international Center collaborates with the **NGO New Humanity** in regard to its contacts with international institutions.

It also supports shared activities promoted with or by other associations **or by organizations and institutions that have aims similar to its own.**



### ART.5 - DISSEMINATION

To make available and **disseminate its ideas and experiences**, MPPU uses public initiatives, studies and publications, suitable and effective current means of communication, and any other appropriate initiative.



# The network of Mppu Centres and relations with the Focolare Movement for Mppu's internal organization, presidency and resources.



Members of the Mppu Int Centre - 2001

## ART. 6 - THE INTERNATIONAL CENTER

The activities of MPPU in the world are coordinated by a **minimal service structure** that consists of an International Centre made up of three to nine people. All its members undertake a personal commitment to engage actively and appropriately in the tasks of the Centre and to attend regular meetings. They are chosen with an open and transparent deliberative and elective process, according to Articles 8, 9 and 10 following.

## ART. 7 - THE PRESIDENT OF MPPU, Co-PRESIDENT, GENERAL SECRETARIAT

The President **supports and facilitates the work of the entire MPPU network worldwide**. He/she ensures that the goals of this Charter are always pursued at all levels. He/she is responsible for the relationship between the Mppu Centre in the world and between the MPPU and the Center of the Focolare Movement with its branches. He/she officially represents Mppu International.

He/she commits to be based at the International Centre. He/she ceases to exercise his/her political office in institutions and political parties while in office.

He/she carries out this task in close collaboration with a Co-President and a Secretary who have general organizational roles. The President, Co-President and Secretary work **to ensure that the basic principles of MPPU are applied in internal and external relations and in any initiative**.



International Mppu Center 2013

## ART. 8 -THE PARTICIPATIVE AND DELIBERATIVE PROCESS

During the six months prior to its expiration (see Art. 13), the International Centre shall prepare a final report on its mandate to be sent to the National Centres and the President of the Focolare Movement. Within the same month, every National Centre, established or under development (see Art.12), prepares and sends to the Secretary at the International Centre **a list of no more than five candidates for the renewal of the International Centre**, accompanied by photos, with brief curriculum vitae and other presentation materials which can be disseminated with prior informed consent.

The Secretary of the International Centre checks that these applications meet the essential criteria expressed in Articles 6 and 7. He/she arranges for the translation of the curriculum vitae in the main languages used by the National Centres and within the fifth month before the expiry of the mandate, sends that list **to all National Centres (established and under development)** and, for information, to the President of the Focolare Movement.

The National Centres organize, follow and collect the results of a participative and deliberative process, which has at least the following characteristics: a) an in-depth dialogue within the National Centre and each local centre; b) an extensive and open involvement of MPPU adherents in different territories (see Article 1); c) a well prepared deliberative phase in which an international plan of action might be identified and the list of three candidates as indicated in the following paragraph.

Within forty-five days of the expiry of the mandate of the International Centre, **the National Centres** (established and under development) send **their programmatic indications and proposed list of three candidates** to the Secretary of the International Centre. The three candidates must include at least one candidate with a different nationality and a different geographical origin to the ones who currently form the National Centre. No more than one candidate may be nominated in addition to those on the list sent from the International Centre. In this case, the National Centre must furnish appropriate explanation and all relevant background information concerning such a candidate.



Centro del Movimento dei focolari, Rocca di Papa, 4 febbraio 2015

## ART. 9 - APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE CENTRE

At least thirty days before its expiration, the International Centre sends the results of a participative and deliberative process, as indicated in the previous article, to the President of the Focolare Movement. The President, taking account of these, and being able to choose another person, **appoints the members of the International Centre** (see

## ART. 10 - THE FIRST MEETING AND ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENCY

The International Centre composed as such is convened by the senior member for a programmatic work session lasting no less than three days. Preceded by a thorough discussion, the first act of this session is **the election, by a two thirds majority, of the next President and Co-President**. They choose the **Secretary** from among the remaining members of the new International Centre.

At the end of this session the following documents will be sent to all the centres (both established and under development): a) the **composition** of the International Centre; b) the **programmatic document of their term of office accompanied by a three-year budget** of expenditure; c) the **programme for their first year** in office. The same will be delivered to the President of the Focolare Movement.



## ART. 11 - THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL CENTRES

**The Mppu National and Local Centre** are composed following political geography and in coordination with the International Centre. They are composed, according to the development of MPPU in a place, **in a way similar to** that of the International Centre in accordance with Articles 8, 9, 10 and 13 of this Charter, except that the appointment of the members, as provided in Article 9, takes place by mutual agreement between the International Centre (or the National Centre when it comes to centers of regions or cities) and those who represent the Focolare Movement, at every territorial level,.

Where such centers are not yet established, the initiatives of MPPU may be entrusted – by the International Centre, or by the National Centers, depending on the territorial level, with the agreement of the delegates of the Focolare Movement in that place – **to a person who coordinates its work on a temporary basis in that developmental phase.**

The Local and National Centres, and the International Centre, while maintaining their independence and different tasks, keep up ongoing mutual contacts, thus contributing to the agenda and **taking shared responsibility** for major decisions affecting the development of MPPU worldwide.



Lucia Crepaz, first President of Mppu International, addressing a national convention in Brazil

## Dynamic, not static

Any contribution towards new forms of local and international governance cannot be only on a theoretical level, it must be exercised practically within our own organisation.

Centralism is not appropriate, nor is decentralisation or simply coordination of its various sections. It is at the same time both unity and distinction. Mppu is a single world reality, but with distinct separate entities at the national or regional level, each with its own cultural and political characteristics. Mppu always strives to remain deeply rooted in local life, acting in accordance with the political culture of the place.

What characterizes the unique internationality of Mppu is not only the shared objective of a more united world. It is much more, based as it is on the capacity to maintain a wide range of interweaving reciprocal relationships; on recognising and valuing the other's autonomy while at the same time associating with a shared identity and common responsibility on the international scene.

Unity is certainly not a static or permanent state. On the contrary, it is dynamic, driven by a constant generation and regeneration of relationships. Without this dynamism, it quickly fizzles out.

When different local communities come under a regional authority covering a wider geographical area, this must never neutralize the unique characteristics of individual cities and local authorities. On the contrary, they must be able to act independently of, and detach themselves, so to speak, on occasions, from the structure of governance above them, to develop all the realities they contain and which, in turn, are like a polyhedron with very many faces, each one having its own distinctive qualities.

When different local political communities meet together to decide on issues wider than their immediate locality, their contributions will be enriched by the internal dynamics of each component town or city, allowing the region as a whole to improve on all institutional, social, cultural and economic levels.

The same analogy could be applied to states in a particular region or continent and indeed to the entire international community. A continual

interplay of unity and distinction like this may prove to be a valid guarantor of stable relationships between peoples, and hence of peace.

This dynamic concept of unity within and among political communities arises from Chiara Lubich's spirituality of unity that Mppu has already started applying and studying. We trust that it can assist and inspire all those already striving to reinvigorate local and international governance and to reform institutional structures. We trust, too, that it may help guide nations towards a new world order, not one imposed by force, but one which expresses the dignity and participation of all; not static but always dynamic.

#### ART. 12 - THE QUALIFIED MAJORITY

In case of decisions to be taken by majority vote, each of the governing bodies, referred to in Articles 6 and 11, acts on the basis of **a two-thirds** majority of the members. The votes that may occur during the participative and deliberative process, under Article 8, should reach a two-thirds majority of those present.



Castelgandolfo 2006, Members of the Mppu International Centre report on their term in office

#### ART. 13 - DURATION OF MANDATES AND REPLACEMENT OF MEMBERS

All members of the International, National and Local Centres remain in office for three years and may be reappointed for not **more than two consecutive terms**. In case of resignation or impediment, the President of the Focolare Movement, or whoever represents her at the National or Local Centres, makes new appointments in agreement with the International Centre (or with the National Centre when it comes to the Centres of regions or certain cities). If those resignations or impediments concern the President, Co-President or Secretary of the MPPU Centres, the process indicated in Article 10 is followed. In this case, it is possible to vote by correspondence, or by other means of telecommunication.

#### ART. 14 - PROJECTS AND RESOURCES

The International Centre can take advantage of collaboration with New Humanity or other appropriately identified NGOs, as entities through which it may also apply for appropriate institutional funding. The National and Local Centres can, in their countries, make use of similar organizations and associations at national and regional levels.

The MPPU subsidizes its activities following the principles of **sobriety, transparency and public knowledge**, also with contributions freely given by those who share its aims and/or projects. Reports of activities carried out by MPPU, including balance sheets, will be drawn up by the individual Centres and published on their own websites or other sites they are associated with.

The participation of the members of the Mppu Centers, at all levels, is free, except for the figure of the General Secretary, whose collaboration can be free of charge or for consideration.

The Centres can benefit from voluntary or paid collaboration which, in cases where they require the partnership with NGOs or other organizations, must be agreed beforehand.



Representatives of the Focolare Movement



of the Y4UW



and New Humanity at Seminar 2016

#### ART. 15 - APPROVAL AND REVISION

This Charter, drawn up after a participatory process across Mppu worldwide, was presented to the General Council of the Focolare Movement on 3rd May 2016 which approved it. It came into force after being signed by the representatives of the Mppu Centres gathered at Castel Gandolfo, Rome, Italy, on 24th June 2016. All revisions proposed by MPPU or by the General Council of the Focolare Movement, must follow the same approval process.



# Signing up to the Charter

The 20th anniversary of the launch of Mppu was marked by an international seminar in Castelgandolfo, Italy from 23rd to 26th June 2016. The formal signing of the Charter took place at this meeting, as reported below.

In her wide-ranging message, the President of the Focolare Movement, Maria Voce indicated a new step ahead for Mppu.

The full text of the Charter follows below.





06/24/2016

## MPPU: TWENTY YEARS OF A POLITICS FOR UNITY

It is enough to watch any television news broadcast to see that the world is not at peace. We are in a dark moment of history, but it is not the end of the world: it is the painful gestation period of a new era and it is on this “new era” that we must set our sights and our energy and work for a new creative kind of politics.

For this reason the 20th anniversary of the Movement for politics & policy for unity was not a celebration, but rather a preparation to face this challenge, in the light of the charisma of unity. In her message to the seminar, Maria Voce, president of the Focolare Movement, urged us to take that commitment.

The seminar, which was streamed live, was accessed by Mppu Centres, elected members of several national parliaments, diplomats and interested young people. A variety of different faiths, languages and political cultures were represented.

Contributions from the Focolare Centre dedicated to “Dialogue with contemporary culture”, provided additional content which opened up further dimensions of action and thought (in the fields of economics, law, sociology, communication etc.) to which politics must serve as an active background as society faces ever new challenges.

The Mppu Charter was formulated with everyone’s full participation and with input from the writings of Chiara Lubich. It is composed of two parts: 1) the commitment towards a politics for unity; 2) the Mppu organization – participatory, transparent and modest in nature.

The first steps were immediately taken to set it in motion. First and foremost an entire afternoon was devoted to the formation of the international Agenda of Mppu, which identified the city or town as the primary venue of politics.

The Mppu International Centre presented a report on its three year term of office. Finally an inclusive process was proposed that will lead to the renewal of Mppu Centres on all levels and in three stages: widespread participation; synergy with the centres of the Focolare Movement; election of the president and co-president of each Mppu Centre.

The presence of representatives of New Humanity and Youth for a United World, and of Sophia University Institute, indicated a more robust synergy, which hopefully will increase even more into the future.

Mppu schools for young people were proposed and some innovative experiences from the world of politics shared. For example, a Korean Buddhist is researching links between the teachings of Buddha and the politics of unity. Two representatives of the Democratic Republic of Congo, still shaken by the turmoil of the postponement of their elections, both committed to transparency and democracy, declared: “We come from two different parties and everything points to our division. But we remain united for the good of our country.”





A moment of the conclusion of the international meeting of the Mppu. Castel Gandolfo, 12/25/2017

To the international meeting of representatives of the Mppu Centres, Castelgandolfo



Rocca di Papa 24<sup>th</sup> June 2016

Dear Everyone,

You are meeting at a particularly important time for the Movement promoting Politics and Policy for Unity, on the 20th anniversary of its beginnings, a time which is certainly stimulating for those who are committed to peace and universal fraternity.

I send my heartfelt greetings to all of you and those you represent in the most varied cultures, but who share Chiara Lubich's dream for unity which she showed us as something real to which all of us are dedicated.

Chiara's ideal of unity, which began during the Second World War, was from the very start a social reality, which set in motion new resources in order to help heal the wounds of humankind divided by war and violence, hatred and injustice. From that time onwards, when faced with any type of conflict, Chiara tenaciously put forward the gospel logic of love, the culture of encounter, of dialogue, lawfulness and human rights, to be practised in all spheres of life in society. This is the path she continues to put before us today too in the face of great conflicts which do untold harm to people and nations the world over.

If the members of our Movement are known as "apostles of dialogue", it must be the same and even more so for the Movement promoting Politics and Policy for Unity.

You are well aware of the great national and international challenges in the political scene of our day, and you have come here on this 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary to confirm once more your commitment to spend your lives for unity. Your thought and action is strengthened by the guidelines contained in the Charter.

I trust that in collaboration with all those in the Focolare Movement who are committed to dialogue with contemporary culture according to their various disciplines, and in collaboration with the New Humanity and Youth for a United World Movements, your commitment may bear witness to the very high vocation of politics to be the "love of loves" and that the dream of a united world may one day become reality.

Be sure of my closeness and my support, together with that of the whole Movement.

Affectionately,

*Emmanuel*

Letter from the President of the Focolare Movement to the participants



# Charta Mppu Charter

## PREAMBLE

*Politics, at local and international levels, is under enormous pressure today, caused by global issues which are often unprecedented. At the same time the world is increasingly interdependent and shows a new awareness of the dignity and rights of individuals and peoples. As often happens in history, it is precisely in these complex scenarios, when facing great challenges, that new ideas, new approaches, and new perspectives develop.*

*This is what happened during the Second World War in relation to the initial ideas put forward by Chiara Lubich (1) who began promoting mutual love among peoples, having perceived that it was possible, thus bringing light into the darkness of the strife ridden 20th century.*

*This ideal of unity (2) sees political action as "the love of all loves" (3). It brings together both personal dreams and hopes for a better society into a common project and encourages people to give of themselves for the sake of humanity. Out of all this emerged the Movement for politics and policy for unity (MPPU), an international experience in political innovation that aims to:*

- **contribute to a future** that does not bring about unfair or uniform globalization, but **a world united** by political relations that express respect and mutual love between social groups, cities, states, and peoples, in which all recognize a rotating authoritative body for matters concerning the whole world.
- **promote and defend the fundamental values** of the person and of peoples, favouring the weak, implementing universal brotherhood politically, supporting economic policies based on the social use of goods and the global sharing of resources, respect for the environment and the paths of justice and freedom;
- **support institutional structures** that respond to the dynamics of unity and distinction between the various levels of political communities, and support shared and **relational decision-making models** which are based on well-functioning social networks and

*institutions and ongoing participatory procedures which uphold democracy in every nation;*

*The Centres of the Movement promoting politics and policy for unity - Mppu on behalf of all those who adhere to it in the whole world, meeting on 23rd and 24th June 2016 at Castel Gandolfo, Italy committed themselves to put this present Charter into practice:*

## PART ONE

### PRAXIS, THOUGHT, FORMATION, COOPERATION, DISSEMINATION

#### Art. 1 – POLITICAL ACTION

Those who adhere to Mppu – openly and freely, and who hold office in institutions or in parties, or in public office at any level, or who work in the field of social and political research, or are committed to active citizenship – endeavor in practice:

To build **relationships inspired by universal fraternity**: among themselves, in their own parties and among different parties, in institutions, in all spheres of public life, in relations between States;

To understand in depth the history, role and purpose of their own political project and that of others; the institution in which they work and other institutions; their own city and other cities; their own people and other peoples ... **by acting toward others as they would like others to act toward them** (4);

To constantly renew genuine political love towards **their city, their region or their own country**, while knowing they are working **in and for a global political horizon**;

To make their own the present sufferings and as yet unhealed wounds of persons and peoples; to take part in action aimed **at healing divisions and conflicts**, by promoting pathways to reconciliation;

To put forward fair programs in which **the most disadvantaged citizens and peoples** are given priority in political agendas, by promoting the culture of giving, knowing that this can give rise to positive and unforeseen events which **multiply the expected results a hundredfold**;

To consider political engagement as a backdrop to the political role of the entire social body and to promote dialogue with and among economic, social, and cultural realities, in order to direct all their efforts towards the common good;

To renew constantly **the pact that binds elected officials and voters** well beyond election day, paying attention to ethical, participatory and programmatic aspects of the mandate to which everyone must contribute, **being detached from any personal gain**, according to their duties and responsibilities;

To develop **responsibility and expertise in political, technical, or diplomatic action, or in research** and to seize every opportunity to make their contribution to the renewal of political style, of individual policies, international relations, laws, and local and international institutional structures;

To exercise their political role, or their technical role, at the service of the common good and shared goods, placing themselves above every partial interest, **being accountable for their actions and their use of resources** with regularity and transparency.

#### Art. 2 – A NEW POLITICAL CULTURE

The **political culture** which MPPU brings and wishes to spread, develops in the encounter and dialogue between the ideal of unity, with its good practices, and political thought at work in history and contemporary reality (5).

Its **commitment to research and study** occurs mainly in collaboration with Abba School (6) and the Sophia University Institute (7) – both of

which, like the MPPU, are expressions of the Focolare Movement – through university and post-graduate courses, with research groups and scholars dedicated to approaching various fields of knowledge in the light of the ideal of unity.

To this end the MPPU prefers **interdisciplinary and intercultural work**, in the belief that mutual enrichment can help shed light on the values of individual nations, towards a shared understanding of the world situation, which can be a reference point **for a new humanism founded on the culture of unity** (8).

#### Art 3 - FORMATION

The MPPU promotes **political formation based on the testimony and the culture it brings**, valuing experiences, ideas and sound political achievements which have developed in different historical, geographical and cultural contexts. To this end it organizes:

- **periodic meetings** where politicians, diplomats, civil servants, students and active citizens can share experiences, ideas and projects in relation to a) the ideal of unity; b) its implications for life and political action; c) best practice;
- **conferences, seminars, panels and forums** addressing specific subjects and enabling discussion in an atmosphere of mutual listening and cooperation, respecting different viewpoints and affiliations, with the purpose of evolving ideas and shared solutions, which can be made available within their spheres of action;
- **training courses and debates for young people** interested in studying and renewing politics and policies; interdisciplinary and intercultural formation opportunities in communities, workshops on ideas and concrete initiatives for active citizenship and political participation in local realities or in international and national institutions.

#### Art. 4 - COOPERATION



MPPU constantly cooperates with similar organizations in the Movement involved in **dialogue with contemporary culture** in various social fields and disciplines and thus expresses one of the specific aims (9) of the Movement.

It acts in synergy with the New Humanity Movement (10) and Youth for a United World (11) which, inspired by the same ideal of unity, set up **active citizenship projects** or contribute to awareness raising, or seek to renew individual human activities and social structures in order to enhance the effectiveness of these activities.

The international Center collaborates with the NGO New Humanity (12) in regard to its contacts **with international institutions**.

It also supports shared activities promoted with or by other associations or by organizations and institutions that have aims similar to its own.

#### Art. 5 - DISSEMINATION

**To make available and disseminate its ideas and experiences**, MPPU uses public initiatives, studies and publications, suitable and effective current means of communication, and any other appropriate initiative.

## PART TWO

THE NETWORK OF MPPU CENTERS AND RELATIONS WITH THE FOCOLARE MOVEMENT FOR MPPU'S INTERNAL ORGANIZATION, PRESIDENCY AND RESOURCES.

#### Art. 6 – THE INTERNATIONAL CENTER

The activities of MPPU in the world are coordinated by **a minimal service structure** that consists of an International Center made up of three to nine people. All its members are committed to a personal and appropriate commitment to engage actively in the tasks of the Center and to take part in

regular meetings. They are chosen with an open and transparent deliberative and elective process, according to Articles 8, 9 and 10 following.

#### Art. 7 – THE PRESIDENT of MPPU, CO-PRESIDENT, AND GENERAL SECRETARIAT

The President **supports and facilitates the work of the entire MPPU network worldwide**. He/she ensures that the goals of this Charter are always pursued at all levels. He/she is responsible for the relationship between the MPPU Centers in the world and between the MPPU and the Center of the Focolare Movement with its branches. He/she officially represents MPPU International.

He/she commits to be based at the International Centre. He/she ceases to exercise his/her political office in institutions and political parties while in office.

He/she carries out this task in close collaboration with a Co-President and a Secretary who have general organizational roles. The President, Co-President and Secretary work **to ensure that the basic principles of MPPU are applied in internal and external relations and in any initiative**.

#### Art. 8 – THE PARTICIPATIVE AND DELIBERATIVE PROCESS

During the six months prior to its expiration (see Art. 13), the International Centre shall prepare a final report on its mandate to be sent to the National Centres and the President of the Focolare Movement.

Within the same month, every National Centre, established or under development (see Art.12), prepares and sends to the Secretary at the International Centre **a list of no more than five candidates for the renewal of the International Centre**, accompanied by photos, with brief curriculum vitae and other presentation materials which can be disseminated with prior informed consent.

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the translation of the curriculum vitae in the main languages used by the National Centres and within the fifth month before the expiry of the mandate, sends that list **to all National Centres (established and under development) and, for information**, to the President of the Focolare Movement.

The National Centres organize, follow and collect the results of a **participative and deliberative process**, which has at least the following characteristics: a) an in-depth dialogue within the National Centre and each local centre; b) an extensive and open involvement of MPPU adherents in different territories (see Article 1); c) a well prepared deliberative phase in which an international plan of action might be identified and the list of three candidates as indicated in the following paragraph.

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**election, by a two thirds majority, of the next President and Co-President.** They choose the Secretary from among the remaining members of the new International Centre.

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majority of the members. The votes that may occur during the participative and deliberative process, under Article 8, should reach a two-thirds majority of those present.

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## NOTES



1. Chiara Lubich (1920-2008), who founded the Focolare Movement in 1943, is considered one of the most significant spiritual personalities of the twentieth century. She was at the forefront of ecclesial communion, ecumenism, interreligious dialogue and dialogue with people without formal faith, a tireless promoter of a culture of unity and brotherhood among peoples. ([www.centrochiaralubich.org](http://www.centrochiaralubich.org))
2. "... the ideal of unity that animated my existence and that of the Focolare Movement, which I represent, is an ideal that we recognize as a gift that God wanted to make to the people of our time. It is a free gift, intended for all. It does not require registration and memberships. It does not divide people according to their culture, religion or political affiliation, but rather illuminates each on what unites him or her to others, emphasizing the appropriate distinctiveness and originality of the contribution that each person can bring to the common design of humanity ... what Jesus prayed before his death: "Father ... that all may be one" (Jn 17:21). "(Chiara Lubich, United Europe for a United World, European Movement Conference, Madrid, December 3, 2002).
3. No "In reality, the task of this manner of "political love" is to create and preserve conditions which enable all other types of love to blossom: the love of young people who want to get married and who need a house and job; the love of those who want to study and who need schools and books; the love of those who have their own business and who need roads and railways, clear and reliable rules.... Thus politics is the love of all loves, which gathers into the unity of a common design the resources of persons and groups and provides the means for each one to freely fulfill his or her own vocation. Politics also fosters collaboration among all, bringing together the needs with the resources, the questions with the answers, instilling mutual trust among all. Politics can be compared to the stem of a flower which supports and nourishes the renewed budding of petals in the community." (Chiara Lubich, Innsbruck, 9 November 2001. "A Thousand Cities for Europe" European Conference).
4. There is a universal law, expressed in the sacred books of the major religions and wisdom texts of many cultures. It's so precious that it is called the Golden Rule: "To do unto others what we would them to do to us and to not do unto others what we would not like them to do to us." (cf. Luke 6:31)
5. The inundations are a result of a particular form of dialogue – the dialogue with the world of culture – which the Focolare Movement began some years ago. It is a dialogue between the wisdom which the charism of unity has to offer and the various fields of human knowledge and endeavor, such as politics, economics, sociology, the natural sciences, communication, education, philosophy, the arts, health, ecology, law, and still others. (Chiara Lubich, Message to the Voluntaryfest, Budapest, 16 September 2006)
6. Study Centre of the Focolare Movement, active since 1991.
7. The Sophia University Institute is a centre for academic research and formation, in which life and thought, diverse cultures and disciplines meet in a strong relational context. It is based at Loppiano - Incisa in Val d'Arno (Florence). In future it is envisaged that local branches will be established in other countries, with specific research objectives. <http://www.iu-sophia.org>

8. I dream of greater encounter and mutual enrichment among the various cultures in the world, so that they may give rise to a world culture that highlights those values which have always been the true wealth of individual peoples, and I dream that these values will be seen by all as global wisdom. ... I dream of a united world in which the various peoples all recognise one another in the rotation of a single authority. In a word, I dream of already witnessing the new heavens and new earth, as far as this is possible here on earth. I am dreaming of many things, but we have a millennium to see them come true." (Chiara Lubich, New City 2000, No.1)
9. Cf. General Statutes of the Focolare Movement, Specific end, Art. 6
10. New Humanity – the social dimension of the Focolare Movement, wishes to contribute to the renewal of relationships, structures and the life of cities through professional and civic commitment (or active citizenship) by seeking courageously, and together with others, concrete solutions to the great questions of humankind. [www.umanitanuova.org](http://www.umanitanuova.org)
11. Youth for a United world (Y4UW) are present in 180 countries, with different cultures, religions and nationalities. They are united by their choice to live for universal fraternity and to prepare themselves, - through study and civic engagement – to make this a key element of politics, economics, work, safeguarding the environment, sport, communications, science and the arts. [www.y4uw.org](http://www.y4uw.org) [www.unitedworldproject.org](http://www.unitedworldproject.org)
12. International NGO, active in over 100 countries. Since 1987, New Humanity enjoys Special Consultative Status with ECOSOC of the UN and General Consultative Status since 2005. Since 2008, it has been recognized as an NGO partner of UNESCO. It takes part in the programs of the European Commission.

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# About the author

The Mppu operates as a network, both at regional and global level. Its nodes are local, national centers and an international center. They are realities of light, coordination and service, which have only the task of promoting, of being a knot of contacts, of facilitating initiatives and, last but not least, of keeping the course on the goal of a united world.

The specific task of the International Center is to keep all centers in relation with each other and always open to the global dimension; to cooperate with other world-class bodies, which aim to renew politics and specific policies, in view of coexistence and peace; to decline the principle of universal fraternity in proposals for international politics.

MPPU International Secretariat  
Via Piave, 15  
00046 Grottaferrata (Rome) - Italy  
E-mail: [info@mppu.org](mailto:info@mppu.org)  
Telephone: + 39-06945407210

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