

“Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life.” (Jn 6:47)

These words are part of a long dialogue Jesus had with the crowd around him. They had seen the sign that he had performed in the multiplication of the loaves and followed him, perhaps just wanting more material help. Starting from their immediate needs, Jesus gradually brings the conversation around to his mission: he was sent by the Father to give humanity true life, eternal life, which is the life of God himself, who is Love.

As Jesus walked along the roads of Palestine, he took an interest in all the people he met, not shying away from their requests for food, water, healing and forgiveness. On the contrary, he met all their needs and gave hope to everyone. That is why he could then ask all who heard him to take a further step, to accept the life he offered, to be in relationship with him, trust him and believe in him.

Commenting on this sentence of the Gospel, Chiara Lubich wrote in the magazine *Città Nuova* in 1991: “Here, Jesus responds to people’s deepest aspirations. They have been created for life and seek life with all their strength. But their great mistake is to look for it in other people and in things that, being limited and passing, cannot give a genuine answer to their aspirations ... Only Jesus can satisfy their hunger. Only he can give life without end, for he is the Life.”

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Christian faith is primarily the fruit of a personal encounter with God, with Jesus, who wants nothing more than to have us share in his very own life.

Faith in Jesus means following his example of not being wrapped up in ourselves, in our fears and limited plans, but rather to focus our attention on the needs of others. They may have real needs arising from poverty, illness and marginalization, and above all they need to be listened to, accepted and welcomed.

In this way, through the life we are living, we will be able to share the love we have received as a gift from God with others. To strengthen us on our journey, he has also left us the great gift of the Eucharist, a sign of a self-giving love that enables others to live.

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Often, during the day, we place our trust in people around us. It may be the teacher who teaches our children, the taxi driver who takes us to our destination, the doctor who treats us ... We cannot live without trust, and trust is increased by knowing one another, through friendship, by a relationship deepened over time.

How then can we live the Word of Life this month?

Continuing her commentary, Chiara invited us to renew our complete choice of Jesus: “We already know how to do this by putting his words into practice with fresh commitment. His words remind us of many specific aspects of life. For example, are we meeting a neighbor? ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself’ (Mt 22:39). Are we suffering? ‘If any want to become my follower ... then they should take up their cross’ (Mt 16:24), and so on.

(continued)

“If we do so, the words of Jesus will be a source of light, and he will come to us with his truth, his strength and his love. Our life will become more and more life with him, doing everything with him. We will no longer be afraid even of the physical death that awaits us all, because with Jesus true life has already begun in us, the life that never ends.”

— *Letizia Magri*

Read more:

Doriana Zamboni (ed.), *Glimpses of Gospel Life*.

New City Press: Hyde Park, New York, 2004.

Chiara Lubich, “The Word that Gives Life”, *Essential Writings*.

New City Press: Hyde Park, New York, 2007, pp. 120-128.

Next month:

“By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” (Gal 5:22–23)

Each month the Focolare offers a Scripture passage as a guide and inspiration for daily living. Focolare’s founder, Chiara Lubich (1920–2008), wrote these commentaries for many years. Now an international commission continues this tradition, faithful to her spirituality of unity. Letizia Magri, an expert in marriage and family from the John Paul II Institute in Rome, is head of this commission and part of the Focolare’s center for the family. This Word of Life is translated into 96 different languages and reaches several million people worldwide through the media. This monthly leaflet is also a supplement to *Living City*, the Focolare magazine (livingcitymagazine.com). For information and to subscribe to this leaflet or to the magazine, write to: Living City, 202 Comforter Blvd, Hyde Park, NY 12538; tel: 845-229-0496; e-mail: livingcity@livingcitymagazine.com. Visit focolare.org (international) or focolare.us (U.S.).

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