

TOGETHER FOR EUROPE MUNICH 2016



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TOGETHER FOR EUROPE 2016

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TOGETHER FOR EUROPE 2016

Encounter. Reconciliation. Future.
Munich 29 June to 2 July 2016

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Selection of the texts:

Thomas Römer, Gerhard Proß

Translation from the German Version, French and Italian texts by

Marianne Clauß, Kerstin Birke, Celia Blackden, Beatrice Bleher, Koni Brand, Sebastian Eisele, Carla Gommel, Sr. Nicole Grochowina, Simone Grötz, Werner Hübner, Br. Franziskus Joest, Christian Krause, Maria Leicht-Rombouts, Christiane Lewerentz, Dagmar Ludwig, Sr. Marion McClay, Andrew Pettman, Dorothea Römer, Ruben Sill, Daniel Spokoinyi, Sr. M. Thomasine Treese, Dan Waggoner

Arrangement: Werner Hübner, Br. Franziskus Joest

Layout: Heinrich Brehm, PressOffice Schoenstatt;
Sebastian Barthel and Marvin Pönisch, YMCA Munich

Photos: Volker Graf, Christina Grill, Ursel Haaf, Pal Toth,
Heinrich Brehm, Maria Fischer

Title photo: Ursel Haaf

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FOREWORD

On the way towards the great reformation jubilee in 2017 the members of **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** have jointly set a sign of hope. After 500 years of separation they want to move forward in bold steps of reconciliation and continue witnessing their experience of a real and true reconciled diversity of denominations and cultures.

Therefore the network **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** for the third time invited responsible persons and members of Christian movements, communities, associations and initiatives for a Congress. 1700 men and women came to Munich on 30 June and 1 July 2016. The Congress ended up with a rally on 2 July at the Stachus in Munich. “We cannot separate these Christians any more, they belong together”, said Reinhard Cardinal Marx who was obviously moved by the atmosphere among the 5000 people present at the closing Rally of **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** in Munich. There, after two days of intense programme in Circus Krone, Christians of 200 communities and movements from 32 countries wanted to set a public sign of Christian unity.

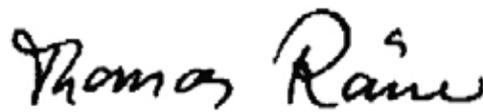
This documentation contains the speeches and presentations which were held during the Congress and Rally. We hope that they will be reflected and will be understood as an invitation for encounter and reconciliation. We are concerned about the future. As Pope Francis expressed it in his video message: **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** is a unifying power with the clear aim of translating the basic values of Christianity into concrete responses to the challenges of a continent in crisis.

We wish you joy while journeying with this documentation.

For the Steering Committee



Gerhard Proß*



Thomas Römer**



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* YMCA Esslingen, Steering Committee TFE

** YMCA Munich, Steering Committee TFE



Encounter – Reconciliation – Future

Introduction to the Documentation of the Congress

*BRO. FRANZISKUS JOEST**



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“500 years of separation are enough” – definitely so, most of us would say this. “Unity is possible” – indeed? How should that be accomplished? In the first moment, this may sound as though unity could be produced, as though we might just make it of our own accord. This makes one suspicious, and rightly so. But it is not meant in this way. Unity is possible because it is given by God, and we only give witness to that gift.

To explain this, we need to go back some years. See also the opening speech by Gerhard Proß. It was in the year 2000. There was a gathering of several responsible Christians from various churches, free churches, congregations,

and institutions. Bishop Ulrich Wilckens had talked about the loss of faith in the Western world which was rooted in the wars and quarrels of the different Christian confessions in the 16th century. Jesus had prayed: “Let them be one, so that the world may believe that you (heavenly father) have sent me” (John 17:21). But then the reverse is also true: Because Christians are separated and fighting each other, even waging war against each other, the world cannot believe and Christ seems to be unreliable. Chiara Lubich, the foundress of the movement of the Focolare, added that we left Jesus alone just as the disciples did in their time. The forsaken Christ at the cross is a reality today amongst us – and because of us.

In recognizing our failure as Christians – individually as well as in total – there was felt spontaneously contrition, sorrow, and repentance. Each one shedding tears asked the others for forgiveness in the name of his or her own church or movement regarding the wrong that we have done to each other in the course of history. This was not forced upon by men, or artificially produced, it came spontaneously out of the hearts. The participants experienced it as a work of the Holy Spirit. They realized: God has given us such a deep reconciliation, that nothing is to separate us anew. In the future, we will no more talk about each other but rather with each other. What we think is strange in the life of other Christians we will not use as pretext to separate us from them but rather as a challenge to ask them and to try to understand them. We will appreciate others in their respective piety without giving up our own.

Therefore, at the next big gathering in Munich in 2001 under the heading “Together – how otherwise?” a pact of mutual love was made as an answer to the work of the Holy Spirit. At the same time, these questions came into mind: Was

* Bro. Rev. Dr. Franziskus Joest, Jesus Brotherhood Gnadenthal

that which we had experienced only for ourselves? Aren't we obliged to our churches and to the world to give witness to what God had given us? That means to give witness to the fact that unity is possible? If these are not to be just rhetorical questions the answer to the second one is clearly: Yes. Yes, what God has done must be testified to in the world in order to achieve something there as well. Out of these deliberations the movement **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** came into being with its big congresses in Stuttgart in 2004 and 2007. This led to the Congress and the Rally in Munich in 2016, at the eve – so to speak – of the centennial of the reformation in 2017. The contributions and talks of this event are published in the present volume.

So there are no resolutions or demands addressed to the politicians or churches, or petitions what so ever. But rather

it is a testimony of many voices to the one and unique work of God amongst us and within his church. To our great joy, some bishops have let themselves be touched by it and allied with the will of God and the urgent prayer of Jesus to create unity amongst his people. This is a sign of hope: unity is possible; it can be more than a utopia, if we yield to the Spirit of God in our churches and congregations.

If real reconciliation happens by a true encounter of each other, then a way opens leading into the future to the benefit of ourselves as well as of our continent. Europe is just about to cut itself off from its spiritual roots and is in danger to lose itself. It is true, by "Europe" we don't mean the EU in the first place, nor the political institutions at Strasbourg, Luxemburg, or Brussels. We mean rather the peoples and the common culture in which we live

and which is rooted in the Judeo-Christian faith. Most of the accomplishments of our civilization could be traced back to these roots. If we cut ourselves off from them, we won't just lose some convictions of faith. We will lose humanity. **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** aims at keeping and cultivating it. ■



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WEDNESDAY NIGHT • 29 JUNE

The evening of Wednesday served as “warm up” for the participants. After the welcome and much music of worship, Sr. Anna Franziska from the Franciscan Convent of Siessen spoke. In her opening message she set the tone for the following days. Together for Europe has to fulfill a prophetic mission.

Prophets of Hope

A biblical impulse on Amos 7:15

*Sr. M. ANNA FRANZISKA KINDERMANN**



Dear sisters and brothers in Christ, tonight we come together to open our hearts for God and for each other and to join us in the great event that is to come: The Congress: Together for Europe 2016: encounter, reconciliation, future for Europe.

Some weeks ago, Gerhard Proß invited me to ask of God a word for us all at this evening. While I was phoning Gerhard, my fellow-sister, Sister Emanuela, who is also here today, was praying for Gerhard and me. Then she brought me a lectionary with a word of the Bible for 3 June, the official beginning of the Congress. The word warmed our hearts with

courage and hope and joy. First of all, we were happy that God had spoken to us in our being together – so to say in our “togetherness” for the **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** – and we both had a strong impression: it is that what God gives us this evening, encouraging us in our togetherness and sending us out one with another in friendship!

* Superior general of the Congregation of the Franciscans of Siessen

Go and prophesy to my people

On the lectionary is the word of calling that God addresses to the prophet Amos: Go and prophesy to my people (Amos 7:15).

We thought: Yes! That is our vocation as network of brotherhood at this congress: to speak prophetically to God's people. The first prophetic sign for Europe is the unity of the communities and movements themselves: the miracle that God, as different as we are, unifies us in the covenant of mutual love.

We are confident that this prophetic sign of unity is communicable, that the Holy Spirit in the brotherly encounter with the people moves and inflames the hearts and through us bears witness to the people of Europe, to the cultures and the churches that separation can be overcome and must be overcome, that reconciliation is possible in the church, in social and political life, because we are destined for unity by God. This is the heart's desire of Jesus for us!

God makes us prophets of his hope

God makes us prophets of his hope, prophets of his mercy and of his justice, his unlimited Yes for life, prophets of his solidarity with the fleeing people and with all the oppressed, prophets for the beloved church of Jesus Christ.

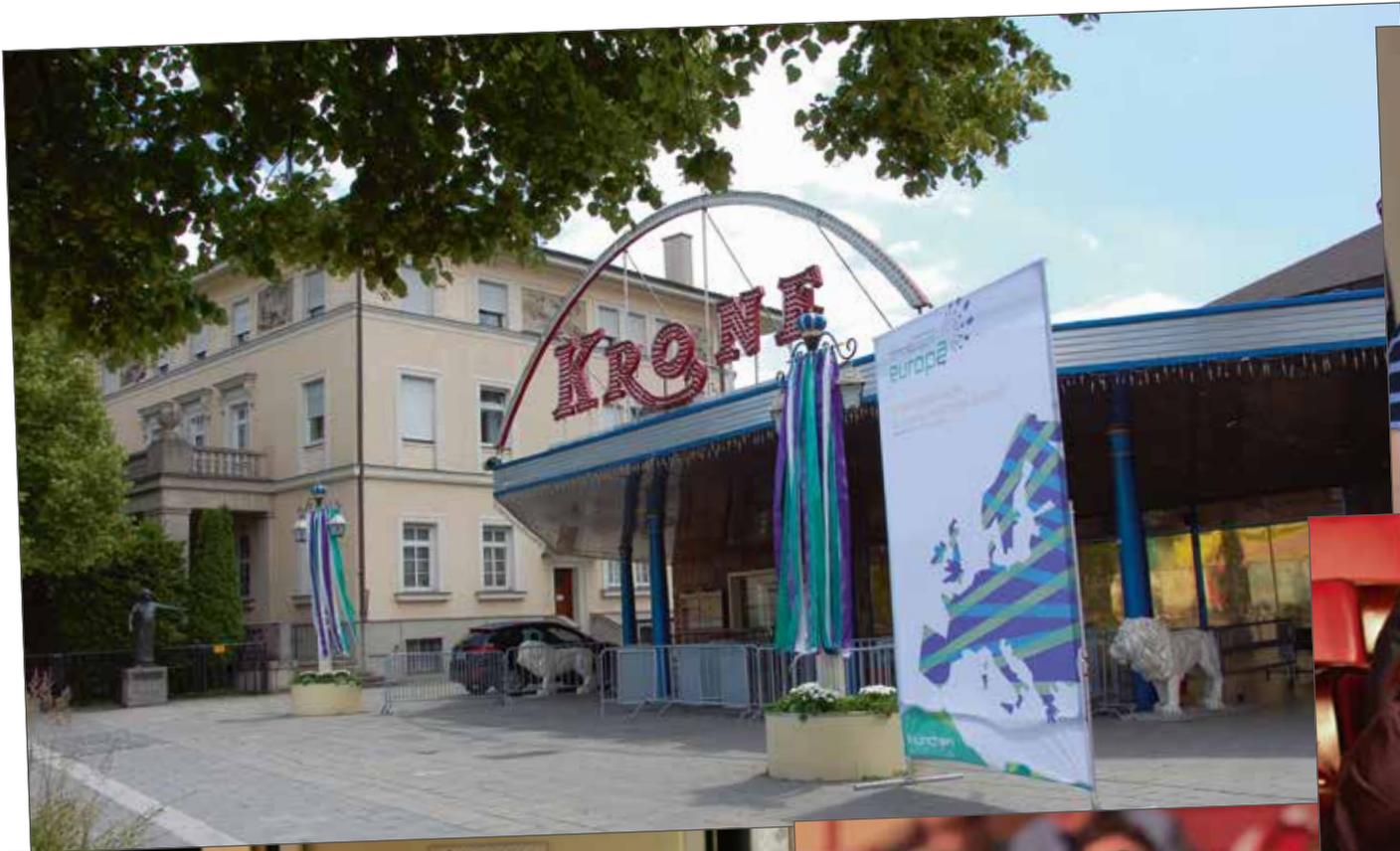


The Prophet Amos, who was appointed by God to lead his people to a fresh start in life, was a simple man, a herdsman and a dresser of sycamore figs, no professional prophet. He receives what he is to say, in the poverty of the spirit, in absolute availability. His only legitimation and his authorization is God's call to him: "Go and speak to my people as a prophet".

In these days of the Congress God gives his authority and power also to us in the humble knowledge, that everything has its start in him, that it is he who has put his Spirit in our hearts and says to us: go and speak to my people as prophets!

What is our message?

What is our message? Our message is Jesus Christ himself, his transforming, reconciling and healing power. As Peter and John spoke to the lame person near the beautiful door, we may promise Europe in its crucial test in the face of the Brexit: "We don't have silver and gold. However, what we have, we give you: Jesus Christ!" (Acts 3:5-6) Let's go and speak to God's people as prophets! ■



Impressions from the first night



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Worship with ANDREA ADAMS-FREY and ALBERT FREY



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CONGRESS TOGETHER FOR EUROPE 30 JUNE - 1 JULY 2016 MUNICH CIRCUS





ROPE
3



CUS KRONE BUILDING

1ST DAY



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THURSDAY MORNING • 30 JUNE

The Holy Spirit is acting in our days

The morning session was dedicated to our thankful amazement, what God has done to us until today and how the Holy Spirit has conducted us on our path.

Opening speech Congress 2016

THOMAS RÖMER*



Dear friends,

Encounter. Reconciliation. Future.

we invited you to come to Munich on the basis of these three words!

We are coming together in Europe at a pivotal moment.

We are facing major challenges. Our standing together is not a given fact at this time in Europe, but it's definitely necessary. After the dramatic experiences of the 20th century, peace was given to us – a precious gift we have to guard and preserve.

We come from different

countries in Europe and from different churches. We speak different languages. But the Gospel connects us. The Christian communities and movements are a reality today in Europe: in many places we can see the awakening of spiritual life.

I believe there is joy in

* Rev. Thomas Römer, YMCA Munich, Steering Committee TFE

heaven over our gathering. Because Jesus prayed, as recorded in the gospel of John, for us to be “one” as He is one with the Father (John 17: 20–23). What we experience in here during these days is a the fruit of Jesus’ prayer, it’s an answer to prayer!

The apostle Paul writes in the letter to the church at Ephesus: Jesus Christ “is our peace”, and he continues: “He has broken down the dividing wall of hostility between us.” (Ephesians 2:14)

Encounter. Reconciliation. Future.

These three words express the hope that motivates us during these days.

We need times of encounter!

“God gathers His people” – this has been a central hope of our “gathering” from the beginning. It is important to see one another, to talk to one another, to experience one another – and thereby appreciate both the things we have in common

as well as the diversity among God’s people.

We need reconciliation!

We each have a history from which we come which has shaped us. In the past many things separated us, divided us. Through guilt and failure, through unrighteousness and evil much division has taken place in Europe. Especially between us as Christians.

Our shared hearing of the Gospel has brought us together. We have experienced reconciliation. This is one of our basic experiences in “Together for Europe”. During these days we want to make room for the reconciliation and for overcoming divisions. Here in the middle of Europe, we want to be and become “ambassadors of reconciliation” (see 2 Corinthians 5:19–20).

We have a future!

This future is not uncertain, it is not a program or an idea. Our future bears the face of Jesus. It is Him we love although

we have not seen him (see 1 Peter 1:8). It is Him in whom we trust, and we will not be disappointed (see Romans 9:33b). We are eagerly awaiting Him, He is our hope (i.e. Titus 2:13).

We have just seen pictures of the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin. As a teenager I was pretty sure that this wall between East and West would be there for my whole life. The gate will stay closed. But one night the wall fell and the gate stood open. Until today this is still a miracle for us.

I believe that such a miracle can also happen concerning Christian unity. And we are already experiencing it: the dividing wall is broken. The hostility has come to an end. It is now the time for us to live as friends, with Jesus in our midst. He is our peace. In His name we are gathered here.

I wish every one of us a blessed time during these days in the “Circus Krone” and in the city of Munich. ■



The Movement of the Holy Spirit among us

GERHARD PROSS*



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reconciliation the further way would have hardly been possible for me.

Reconciliation and pact of mutual love

Dear Friends, we are here as responsible persons of **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** and we are simply astonished about the dynamism among us. None of us in our keenest dreams could ever envision such a movement in which we were led step by step.

We live in a movement of God's people becoming one and we are deeply convinced that the Holy Spirit is the director of this process. We are part in His history.

"The score will be written in heaven"

"The score will be written in heaven", said Chiara Lubich, the founder of the Focolare Movement spontaneously on 31 October 1999. This foundation date of **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** displays a deep inner correlation with the event of

that day – the Joint Declaration of the Doctrine of Justification between The Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church. In order to find out the next music bar of the symphony – the score written in heaven – we invited Chiara Lubich together with Bishop Ulrich Wilckens to our Leaders Encounter in Germany. The message of Ulrich Wilckens on how much the division of the church affected the credibility of the Gospel in the 16th century touched our hearts. The living God touched our hearts and led us in a deep process of repentance and reconciliation. Reconciliation smoothed the way for togetherness. All 100 leaders who were present at that time – and most are still with us – can witness about it. For me this meeting has set new parameters in my inner life. Without the dynamics of

But the Holy Spirit pushed forward. In our next meeting – a really big meeting in Munich in 2001 – we were led to a mutual pact of love. What followed was really beyond everything I experienced so far. With Jesus in our midst, the pact of mutual love and on the basis of the Word of God, we experienced a tremendous change of our attitudes. As reconciled people, we suddenly were able to see the other person – also as a very different person – in a new light and could recognize the richness of the other charism, of the other movement and the other denomination. With changed attitudes the way towards the two big congresses in Stuttgart in 2004 and 2007 became a real expedition discovering riches.

These days in 2004 and 2007 in Stuttgart were vir-

* CVJM Esslingen, Leitungskomitee MfE

tually historical events: both because of the outside political effect as well as inside the movement. Even today I can hear some people wondering-ly talking about how suddenly the presence of the Holy Spirit could be felt in the hall when Albert Frey started the song “Can you see the lamb there on the throne”. God led us into a deep togetherness. Jesus made us one in heart and in spirit. We are sisters and brothers; we became friends and experienced the differences as richness. And immediately we were also led together with the bishops. I remember the special moment at the Congress 2004 when 50 bishops came to the closing session at the Liederhalle and we all were gripped by the deep unity along with the episcopacy Cardinal Kasper and Bishop Krause spontaneously shared their “dream of unity” with us and from then onwards we are together on this path to unity.

Together for Europe

“Assemble my people to me”, so did I hear the passionate call of God 15 years back and the people of God came together from very different communities, denominations and nations.

But this movement did not remain inside. Through Romano Prodi, the President of the EU Commission at that time and many other politicians, our view was widened. **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** means: to lift our eyes beyond the borders of our

own associations and bring in our gifts and strengths in our society. We phrased a seven-folded Yes which helps us since to serve our society together.

In a very special way Andrea Riccardi, the founder of Sant’Egidio, guided us regarding Europe and repeatedly drew a great picture: “If Europe does not walk the way of unity it will bid farewell to the world history”, he challenged us impressively. At the same time he led our view to Africa, just like the parable of the poor Lazarus. “Europe has to learn to share!” The history went on. We realize how prophetic this speech was and in today’s challenges it is more important than ever if Europe wants to have a future.

“May hope be at home in Europe”, was the summary of Helmut Nicklas at the end of the first meeting **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** at Schleyer-Halle in Stuttgart and we all felt how we were caught by this hope. For this hope we stand and we are here to affirm.

It is not my intention to tell the whole story of **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** but to show us in few minutes that God himself directed us on this way. We are an expression of the movement of the Holy Spirit in our time. He made us moving, he guided us, he has changed us and transfigured us.

We are astonished about it and therefore want to praise God at the end of this part. We are looking forward to the next steps he wants to lead us and we can already see the contour.

And one day we together will stand in front of the throne of God as we can read in John’s Revelation. A people of all languages and nations – and I add: of all denominations. May this congress be a small foretaste of that future time. ■

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Cardinal Kasper and Bishop em. Krause have cared for everything concerning TOGETHER FOR EUROPE. In the following, they are explaining what they regard as important concerning TOGETHER FOR EUROPE, and what they stand for with us.

Amazed about a Movement of God's Spirit in our Time The Spirit of God is Mighty in our Time

WALTER CARDINAL KASPER*



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Dear friends, lovely to see you again and even lovelier to see what has become of you since Stuttgart 2004. The dream of that time is becoming reality. The Spirit of God is mighty in our time. We have reason to give thanks.

Our Dream

It began on 31 October 1999 in Augsburg. Protestant and Catholic Christians officially and collectively determined this: together we acknowledge

that Jesus is our Salvation. Many have said that this declaration means nothing, that it has remained unresolved. No, it is not unresolved. You are the result; your movement is the fruit. Pope John Paul II was right, the declaration was a milestone.

A milestone is one stretch along the way, not the goal. The next stretch stands before us: Autumn 2016 in Lund, October 2017 in Wittenberg. Again there are doubters. We say, five

hundred years of separation is enough. It cannot remain thus. It would be a betrayal of Jesus Christ and a disgrace before the world, if we just leave it at nice words.

We have a dream. We know that ecumenism is a channel of the Holy Spirit throughout the Church. Upon him is our reliance. It was he who initiated the ecumenical Movement; he will lead it to its end. Unity in reconciled diversity is possible. Tell the hesitant experts of

* Cardinal Emeritus of the Roman Curia and President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity

division: “We are the experts of unity.” We have seen, it is more possible today than you think! Everyone must get up; everyone must change their thinking and repent!

Together in Europe

The unity of the Church is all the more important as today the unity of Europe is in danger. **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** is more important than ever before. When I was young, after the catastrophe of the Second World War, Europe was a peace project for us youth: from enemies friends would arise, and it came to pass – seventy years of peace and prosperity that our forefathers could never have dreamt of. That is no dream; that is reality. That is our future.

For that reason, we need a flourishing economy. No one disputes that. The economy is an indispensable basic principle of life and survival. It is, however, a basic principle not the meaning of life itself. That is why Europe needs more than an economical system. Europe is not just an economical community. Europe is a community of values. It has many Christian foundations, without which Europe cannot be Europe. Many have forgotten that. So, advocating for it again is our task.

It cannot be that the ghosts of a nationalistic egoism – long believed dead – should rise again from their graves spreading fear and terror. Each of us loves his homeland, his language and his culture. We do not want uniformity. The diversity of Europe is the wealth of Europe. But love of one’s country has nothing to do with nationalism, which builds walls and fences. Nor does it mean that we should withdraw to some national “Island of the Blessed.” Love of country is open; it allows itself to be enriched and desires to enrich others. Whoever pulls up drawbridges against it will soon starve.

Pope Francis recently said that Europe is a “work in progress.” Europe was simply never finished; it has always been “in progress”. It has always been its strength to integrate other cultures: the Celts, the Germanic tribes, the Normans, the Slavs and the Muslims, whom we are not encountering for the first time.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall we were swooning, hoping for borderless communication, universal democracy, universal human rights. Now the problems of the globalization are upon us. They do not come as abstract figures, rather as people with concrete fac-

es. They are children of God. They put new challenges before us, that we should demonstrate to them the attractiveness of Christianity – to show them that being a Christian is a good thing. We can only do that together as Protestants and Catholics, if we set aside our differences.

Is that possible? Yes, it is. As Christians we believe in the resurrection and the work of the Spirit of God. We believe that life is stronger than death and that love is stronger than hate. Jesus is in the midst of us; he goes before us. As Christians we are witnesses to the hope for a new cooperation between Christians and a new cooperation in Europe. Not fear, but hope is proclaimed. We should not be fearful doubters, but bridge-builders and those who carry hope about. ■

Amazed about a Movement of God's Spirit in our Time

An Ecumenical Milestone: The Joint Declaration

*BISHOP CHRISTIAN KRAUSE**



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ed that this could become true when we met for our first large congress in Stuttgart: from building the tower of Babel to experiencing the feast of Pentecost in the power of the Holy Spirit! This has also become possible despite all the differences that we may have in our traditions of faith and piety, because we have turned towards one another and have carefully listened to one another within Christ's love given to all of us.

Dear sisters and brothers of the spiritual movements, fellowships and communions; first of all, I wish to thank you most cordially for your invitation to be with you again today as it was when it all began. At that time it has still been an uncertain departure towards a **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE**. Now you have again invited Cardinal Kasper and myself as witnesses for what has happened at the time of the turn of the millennium. Even at this point we must not forget these events when we try to shape our togetherness for the future.

The miracle of what we are used to call simply "the change" has presented Europe

with an almost unlimited freedom with consequences for the whole world. However, we have also learnt that there is hardly anything more difficult than to handle freedom and to shape it responsibly. Precisely at this point, dear sisters and brothers, you have been able to point out a clear direction towards a togetherness in the discipleship of Jesus. I recall the "Sevenfold Yes" stating the essentials for a responsible life in freedom as well as the joint statement "Vision for the Unity of Europe". Both documents are impressive affirmations of our togetherness within one spirit and one determination. I have to confess my little faith by saying that I had not expect-

A milestone on the road towards full unity

It is also part of our movement Together for Europe what Pope John Paul II has called "a milestone on the not easy road ... towards full unity among the Christians", namely the "Joint Declaration of the Doctrine of Justification" (JD). The global Roman-Catholic Church and the global Communion of the Lutheran Churches have jointly signed this declaration of a common understanding of the basic truths of the Christian faith. No more condemnations and rejections against one another! Forward towards a new commitment to a universal communion, "par cum pari" as

* Dr. h.c. Christian Krause, Bishop em. of the Lutheran Church of Braunschweig and President of the Lutheran World Federation 1997–2003

stated in the declaration, i.e. as equals among equals in the common discipleship of Jesus! At the same time, this has been a clear renunciation of all forms of nationalism or confessionalism and thus also a renunciation of a withdrawal of the churches merely to their national or confessional identities. In contrast to that, it is our direction within our togetherness: from conflict to community! And: Unity in a united witness to Christ!

United Witness

What has often been contested or silenced within the

ranks of German Protestantism has globally generated a strong dynamic – like also in the spiritual movement of **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE**. It is in this spirit that Pope Francis will travel to Lund in Sweden on this year's Reformation Day for a joint worship service at the place where the Lutheran World Federation had been founded in 1947. Then and there we will again express our common witness to what we have jointly expressed at the brink of the new century on Reformation Day 1999 in Augsburg: "Together we confess: By grace alone, in faith in Christ's saving work

and not because of any merit on our part, we are accepted by God and receive the Holy Spirit, who renews our hearts while equipping and calling us to good works." (JD 15 b)

Yes, together we confess! May this always be granted to us by our merciful Lord, dear sisters and brothers, – to us together! ■

Coming from a Catholic perspective, Sr. Lioba (Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary) portrays the very different stages **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** has been through since 1998. Afterwards Hartmut Steeb, Stuttgart, General Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance in Germany, is giving an interview.

The Principle of the Open Door

*SR. M. LIOBA RUPRECHT**



door signifies a greater quality of life, an unfolding of our charism.

From 1998 until today, time and again God had opened doors to us through the togetherness of the Spiritual Movements. In the following, I will mention some of the most significant ones:

© Hoaf **First open door: Pentecost 1998**

"We are endeavouring (as Paul) to investigate God's plan according to the 'Principle of the Open Door' and to make it

the guideline of our own planning and action," writes Father Kentenich, the founder of our Schoenstatt Movement. Each

For the first time, Pope John Paul II gathers together members and founders of various movements in Rome. We discovered

* Schoenstatt Movement

the workings of the Holy Spirit not only in our own movement, but in the diversity of charisms.

Second open door: Munich 2001

We have just heard about it. Beyond the confessional boundaries, a covenant of unity and love was spontaneously concluded, which will form the basis for the common path in the future. As movement, we initially went through this open door with some hesitation. But the conviction of our founder that precisely Mary and the covenant of love is capable of creating an ecumenism of hearts has since come true. This gives our movement a new dimension.

Third open door: Together for Europe

After the first and second world war, we as Schoenstatt Movement have considered ourselves to be especially commissioned by God to engage ourselves for Germany and Europe that they may be sustained by Christian values. We experienced Stuttgart I and II as moments of profiling one's own identity and of solidarity with many others. The common vision strengthens everyone: to give Europe a Christian soul again.

Fourth open door: growing proximity to each other

This is the phase of getting to know each other since 1999. Visits of Chiara Lubich and other communities in Schoenstatt and

visits of members of Schoenstatt to other movements.

The initial strangeness changes into the joy of diversity, appreciation of the richness of each charism, a language of mediation.

Fifth open door: Increasing effectiveness as "salt and leaven" of society

Precisely one hundred years ago, Father Kentenich incorporated the vision of Vincent Pallotti of a federally structured apostolic World Federation as one of the goals of his foundation. Our commitment to working **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** is a way to strengthen the power of

Christian movements. Being salt and leaven in various social spheres has found the expression of "covenant culture" within our movement. The various areas begin to take on their own shape. The congress for the family, which took place in the Schoenstatt centre of the Liebfrauenhöhe close to Stuttgart 2011, was an important landmark. Together we experience: We have not arrived at the end with the Christian Europe - we are at the beginning, a new beginning. We unite ourselves with the woman of the beginning, with Mary, and trust that the prayer of Christ will also be fulfilled today: Father, let all be one, so that the world may believe! ■



“Living the Gift of Unity”

MARTIN WAGNER* talks with HARTMUT STEEB**



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I came to see that we are all brothers and sisters, whom Jesus loves. They belong to Christ; they are filled with his Spirit. That is when it became clear that if they belong to Jesus and I belong to Jesus, then we are simply brothers and sisters, whether we like it or not.

Würzburg November 2009 – *TOGETHER FOR EUROPE* at the Cathedral – Picture it: We are there. Which barriers have fallen?

Martin Wagner: *The Evangelical Alliance is a federated network. It is estimated that 1.5 million people agree with its basic principles. At the first conference in 2004, your response to Gerhard Proß' invitation was that you could not come, as you felt it would divide the Evangelical Alliance. What was the reason for this?*

Hartmut Steeb: We cannot create unity. Jesus prayed for it. Now, we simply cannot issue the command, “You must be one”.

There were undoubtedly, at that time, many reservations in the Evangelical movement about anything which seemed Catholic. It was important to me not to act hastily, as if we could smooth over our past differences in one fell swoop. If one wishes to win new brothers and sisters, it would not be worth the cost to throw these past differences in their faces, so that they could

no longer walk with us. Then I would not be creating more unity, but less.

In what way did you facilitate cooperation?

After the political reunification of Germany in the early 90s we had this experience: one must ask questions often, compare notes in conversation, get to know one another and examine our prejudices. This is how a lot of the perceived rejection between the Pietistic-Evangelical and Charismatic-Pentecostal movements were overcome.

And that is how we have tackled it now. We invited the responsible parties of each movement to Bad Blackenburg. There we facilitated acquaintanceship, open dialogue and listening to one another.

What changes came about as a result of this encounter?

That is where we realized that unity is not some optional exercise; it is the main program for the people of Jesus. If it was so important to Jesus that he prayed for it so intently, then we cannot be indifferent to it. The goal of unity is that people should come to believe in the coming of Jesus into this world. We cannot maintain those obstacles after all. When we emphasize what we have in common in our faith, then that which divides us loses its power.

A whole “World” was changed by wise and dauntless measures. Cooperation was made possible. What for decades was unthinkable has occurred.

And we have yet to finish unpacking and living out this gift of unity. Let's stick to it. ■

* Volunteer in the YMCA Munich

** General Secretary of the German Evangelical Alliance

How God's People is Shaped in Future

Unity doesn't mean love, peace and harmony. This has been clear ever since the penitential act at the beginning of TOGETHER FOR EUROPE (see introduction, p. 8f).

In her Biblical meditation, Sister ANNA-MARIA AUS DER WIESCHE points out that it is the Cross that opens the gate to the discipleship of Christ.

The Gate is Open

SR. ANNA-MARIA AUS DER WIESCHE*



The gate is open. And within the gate, we find the Cross. All those who walk through the open gate have to come before the Cross before new spaces open up for them. What does it mean “to come before the Cross”? It is about realising existentially, the length, width, height and depth of what has happened by Jesus' offering himself on the cross and through his resurrection. And it is about allowing this to shape our own behaviour. Paul describes this process in his letter to the Philippians where he quotes the Christian song:

“Although he was like God, the Messiah Jesus. Yet, he did not cling to his likeness to God... he did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death – even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee

should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Philippians 2:6–11)

To arrive under the cross

The all-creating, all-encompassing, all-sustaining Triune God comes to us as human being in Jesus. Jesus gives up every claim to divinity – he empties himself, it says in the original text – and as a human being, he lives in complete obedience to God, the Father. The first man Adam wanted to be like God. In haughtiness he turned on God. However Jesus loves the Father. His hands are open in trust and confidence to him, even when men nail him to the cross and he dies. God, the Father raises Jesus to new unperishable life. In his all-encompassing mercy, he decrees that from now on all men will find healing and forgiveness in the name of Jesus. Thereby, through God's work on the cross, the place of hate, of

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* Prioress of the Fraternity of Christ Selbitz

pride and of destruction, becomes the place of repentance, love and new communion.

Amongst ourselves, we have experienced much of this transforming dynamic of the cross. For everyone of us carries in ourselves those images and ideas about Christians from other denominations that depreciate them. Sometimes they stem from our own experiences, more often they have been passed on over centuries and are rooted in our collective memory. “We speak frivolously of the ... unbelieving Protestants, the chaotic Pentecostals, the power-obsessed Orthodox, untrue Catholics and affected Pietists...” so it says a liturgy of reconciliation of the churches in Saxony-Anhalt. In that regard, we have experienced much healing from wrong images and prejudice amongst us during the passed years – this is a lasting miracle of God. Here, beneath the cross, we have released old things, and we have experienced that forgiveness was granted. That means: the fountain for the healing of our memories amongst us lies in the transformative power of the crucified and risen Christ. Let us remain open to the work of the Holy Spirit especially in these days together, when our hearts are asked of our hearts again to release old experience and to start forgiving.

Take new steps together

On the basis of mutual forgiveness, we are able to take

new steps together: “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mind set as Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 2:3–5)

In this new space that has opened up for us, it is important to practice a new way of thinking and acting; for our conduct is to follow Jesus Christ with all our desire. His love is our source of life, and it will clean and change our hearts; because here, right in our hearts, we learn to live and act in a new way.

We need to honour others more than we respect ourselves; and we need to pay attention not only to that which benefits ourselves, but what helps others. We all sense that this command approaches our core, our innermost desire and being. On the one hand, we desire to act in that new way, but on the other hand, the mere command tempts us to rebel against it. Now, we fear to miss out something or to come out badly. And to win through, to appear as confident and self-assured, to fight any competition, and to eliminate others – these are the ways of acting we are used to when it comes to answering fears. Moreover, these ways of acting are being promoted by society. However, these attitudes destroy and kill

any living community, because they make it impossible to breathe and to act freely.

Fellowship in Christ

In our days, we realize that the community of peoples in Europe is starting to get chapped. Some political groups use this fear to provoke repulsing attitudes towards strangers. Today, here, we are called to outgrow these attitudes and to bring about an attitude of respect that pays more attention to others than to ourselves. Our friendship here may correspond with the fellowship we have with Jesus Christ. It is a process that will bear flowers in our hearts and we will discover its fruits while watching how we treat each other. This will have a great impact on our society too.

God’s wonderful Spirit will guide us on our way reaching this new attitude. We rely on his strength, so that we may not be infected by the fear occurring in society. His power will come to us in worship, when we jointly sing and confess “that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God, the Father.” ■

What will the “church of the future” look like, if the testimony of unity really gains a foothold? Gerhard Proß presents a vision which he sketches in delicate strokes, and invites Father Lothar Penners, Brother Franziskus Joest, Hilde Kieboom, Dorothea Römer and Martin Steinbereithner to colour the sketch. Cardinal Vlk, the former archbishop of Prague adds a testimony to that.

Outlines of a Future Design of God’s People

GERHARD PROSS*



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A sentence from Hubertus Blaumeiser, a priest of the Focolare Movement, electrified me and did not let me go. He said to me: “There at the Congress of **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** in 2004 in Stuttgart, I saw the profile of the future church”.

At every time, the Holy Spirit affirms the conformation which enables people of God to live in their own time and to reach the people of their time. So we are enabled to live in the presence of today. In five decent lines I want to draw a design of the People of God, which will receive more colours through the following articles.

1 “The Kingdom of Heaven is like a net”

This is a quotation of Jesus from Matthew 13:7. We live in a time of networks, which means: not hierarchy is highlighted, but togetherness. Very different forms of expression, different forms of spirituality and traditions will be combined with each other. There are different knots in such a net: smaller and bigger ones – that combine the diversity without hierarchy into a reconciled unity.

Could it be that similar things are true for the development of the church just like the

development of a person? Dependence, independence, interdependence. As a child we live in a family and are secure – and dependent. Then starts adolescence – the independence begins. But the ripe form to live does not exist in independence, but in a voluntary mutual dependence**.

Out of prayer I am moved by a picture from modern architecture. I saw a picture (as below) how different churches become combined through a joint glasses. The churches are no more separated but connected with each other.

The different buildings are not demolished and replaced by a big modern building, but they are organically connected with each other. The joint of glass means to me the trust, that we live and transparency we share.

2 “Europe needs places of hope”***

How do they look like, these places of hope? Besides the area-wide structure of churches,

* YMCA Esslingen, Steering Committee TFE

** Stephen Covey: The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People (dependence – independence – interdependence) page 201 ff

*** Dr. Markus Müller, Congress Together for Europe 2007 Stuttgart

other places shine up where the people of God draw hope from. Places with radiance where authentic Christian life is lived in an inspiring way.

- The Gospel is in the centre
- The power of encounter with God leads to the people
- Towards the needs of our time

At these places, in these fellowships, a design of God's people shines up and radiates hope.

Besides these both outside elements I want to disclose three more, which are more related with the inner being.

3 Communio – the design of community of God's people

The three persons of God live together in a dynamic association of love. The nature of Trinity seeks its form among its people too. Of course, altar and pulpit are still important today.

But yet the aspect of fellowship shines in a special way in our time. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them". Chiara Lubich repeatedly emphasized on this word of Jesus and underlined exactly the new outline of church.

4 The friendship dimension

"You are my friends", highlights Jesus in John 15:14. Of course he remains the Kyrios – but yet he calls us friend. It is not an idealized friendship, because Jesus gives his life for his friends: Church as friends and responsible persons as friends. We experience the beauty of this dimension of Gods people among us. People find friendship and home.

5 The togetherness of charisms in a serving way

The variety of charisms – of gifts of grace – finds new room for development. The

clergy and the mature members each contribute their gift to the body of Christ, and a picture of beauty and fullness lights up. The sound of this combination cannot bear claim to authority and use of power. The key in that togetherness lies in serving each other.

Already the outline of the future of God's people shines up among us. Let us fill the profile with colour and life. ■



© Photomontage Michael Proß

New Perspectives – a New Shape of Church Emerges

FATHER LOTHAR PENNERS*



gelisation means passing on life, by taking what is essential and therefore inside and turning it out.

However, there is more to *communio* than the intimacy of ‘small groups’. Irenaeus of Lyons has coined the word: the Son and the Spirit are the hands of the Father, which he stretches out to bring the whole world home to the Father’s house. Therefore being a *communio*-church urges us to address the Gospel as such. This means, we all need to be literally dragged into the missions of Christ and of the Holy Spirit. The more we do this in a wide perspective, the more important it will be to reach out for each other with a vigorous sense of openness and sensitivity. In every friendship, we do not pass on objects of friendship. but we do give ourselves. And we do not receive simple objects; rather, we entirely receive our friend.

Dear sisters and brothers, the Icon of Trinity by Andrei Rubljow allows us to guess what the secret of the one God in three persons is all about: the original communion of togetherness and church. The icon shows the very moment when Jesus – wearing the mantle of the passion, red as blood – fulfils his word to the disciples: “I will ask the Father to send you the helper who will remain with you always.”

The “helper” is shown as the “Spirit-Angel” clothed in green-blue: fully humble in his readiness to be sent out and to bring hope. After experiencing the catastrophe of separation, this hope offers life, unity and a future. Unity grows from humbleness and hope: the humbleness of the God-servant and the hope of the Spirit who heals anything that was shattered during history.

On our journey, we have ex-

perienced the reality of true communion. We have experienced that “church” primarily is not an organisation and hierarchy, rather it is experienced in a new way, i. e. as a living “us”. So we experience unity in diversity that strongly relies on uniqueness deriving from very different roots and containing an originality that is capable of sharing itself. This unity entails that we treat each other respectfully; we freely offer closeness, while permitting encounter and new beginnings.

So at first, *Communio* as a new form of Church stands for the following: Church is a living expression of what it actually believes, expressed through what it lives out. That means Church reveals itself as being “in, with and for each other” (Josef Kentenich) which appears to be a kind of Triune life, and it passes on what it actually lives (Klaus Hemmerle). Evan-

Let me remind you once more, that on our journey, we have been led by the Triune God. He offers us an idea about the coming shape of Church which we are about to reach. A Triune life that leads to the unity of our church, that is our vision provided by the Triune God. Here I would like to remind of the “Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification”, Augsburg

* Father Prof. Dr. Lothar Penners, Schoenstatt Movement



Andrei Rubljows Dreifaltigkeitsikone Troiza – Abrahams Gastmahl mit den drei Engeln in Mamre (um 1425)

1999. This was the initial spark of our journey.

“God gathers his people”, this idea, this option of life became true. All we wanted was to follow the foreseeing hand of the Father: “The musical score is written in heaven” (Chiara Lubich).

But firmly, the finger of God actually made us aware of to the situation of our continent, its capabilities, but also the threats of its unity. We responded by announcing the “seven yes” that

should speak into our societies in Europe. Moreover, the question concerning the “Togetherness” of cultures arose. We are shure that Communion is growing among us, as long as we are ready to allow the guiding of the Father to drag us, into the calling of Christ for our times. So we are talking about *Communio* that depicts the mystery of Christ. Many times, he was present among us in his Word and in the “unanimity” of our praises, worshipping the infinity of God.

In a “pact of mutual love” that

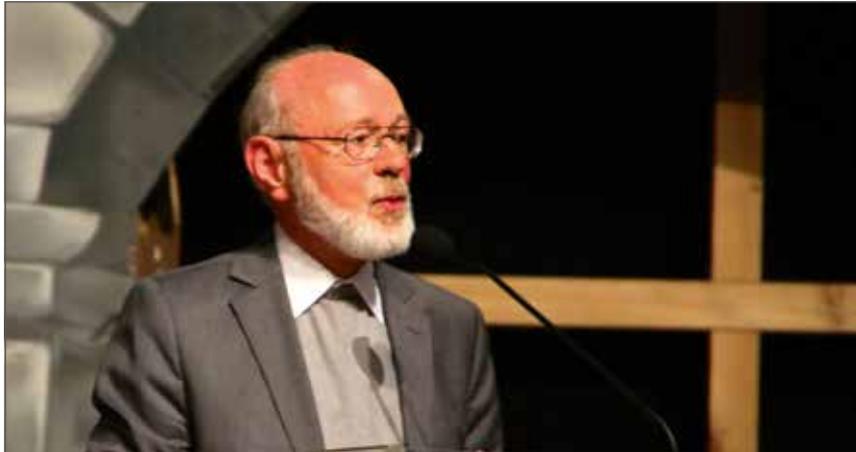
was somehow pre-sacramental, a bond of unity was formed. This bond created real communion among us and carried us forward, without levelling the desire to reach full unity of the church. The diversity given among us sharpen our vision for what an ecumenical Catholicism could look like (Walter Cardinal Kasper) or how integrative ecumenism, comes to life. Both are an indispensable part of coming mystical body of Christ.

Communio that depicts the mystery of the Holy Spirit. Looking back, this mystery comes into sight. That means, we are looking back at fruitful processes of life. The Holy Spirit not only is the living bond of love between the Father and the Son; he is also evidently active in our life together as a “bond in motion”. As **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** we do not establish a new church, instead we see ourselves as a mobile “movements” between churches and communities. Being at “school” of the Holy Spirit, who is “quicker to move than any motion” (Wisdom 7:24), we would like to stretch the tent of his sanctuary far above all peoples and the cultural clashes and tensions.

There is a unique beauty in the dynamic harmony of the Icon of the Trinity by Rubljev – it is a gift of the Eastern Church to Christianity as such. During these day in Munich this beauty may inspire us and it may grant us the power of a humble and bold hope for encounter, reconciliation and future. ■

Sketch of a Future Shape of the Church

BRO. FRANZISKUS JOEST*



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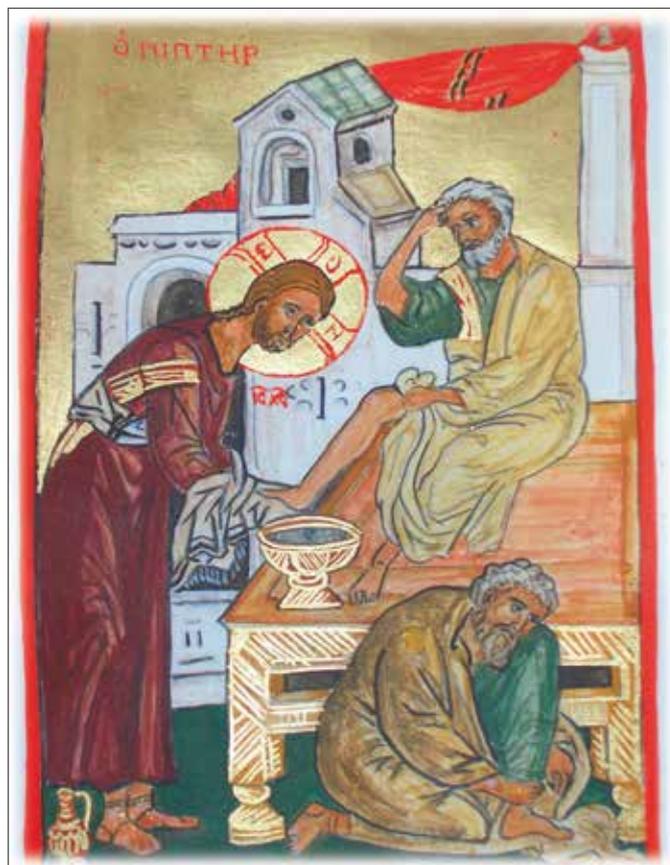
“God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us.” This is what the Apostle Paul wrote to the Romans (Romans 5:5). The Holy Spirit will be given either completely or not at all. He will not be given in pieces. Love is there either totally or not at all. So we credit each other that he or she has the Holy Spirit just as we do, and we trust each other to have the love of God. And: “through love be servants of one another” as Paul puts it (Galatians 5:13).

This means to forsake the use of power, it means a withdrawal of ruling one over the other, also of one part of the people of God over another part. It means to renounce any claims of rights to something or someone. But this is not about the smallest common denominator. It is about Jesus Christ, about his gift and his claim on us.

The one true Church is there within and among all types of real existing churches. It is but one people of God within all denominations. The true Church is not invisible. It is hidden. But it appears wher-

ever God will be loved with all one’s heart, with all one’s soul, and with all one’s might. Together we are the people of God. Such people has the call to serve. It cannot be otherwise since Jesus Christ, the Lord of the Church, has become a servant as he himself said (Luke 22:27), and has washed the feet of his disciples (John 13:1–17).

This people will be an apostolic serving people, be-



© Br. Eila Beaver, Jesus-Bruderschaft, Laifun

* Bro. Rev. Dr. Franziskus Joest, Jesus Brotherhood Gnadenthal

cause it is sent into all the world, especially to the poor. It will be a prophetic people, because it will listen to the word of its brothers in faith, and it will speak the word of God into its own time. It will be a cross-bearing people that agrees to suffering which results from the resistance of the world to its message. Thus it will stand close up to Jesus abandoned, but it will live out of the power of his resurrection in spite of all contradiction.

It will be a people in which all charisms are exercised, because the church is in need of them and will be edified by them (Ephesians 4). Ministers and laypeople as the one unified people of God, the young ones and the old ones, women

and men alike, working together in mutual appreciation and commendation, and in serving each other mutually. It is a communion in gifts and charisms, also of the gifts and charisms of the variant churches and communities.

It will be a people which declares its believe for its roots, i. e. Israel from which it sprang forth. For Christ is the King of Israel, this is the meaning of His title: “Christ”, “Messiah”, “The Anointed One”. A people which builds itself up by love (Ephesians 4) will be a people in which the two: believers out of the Jews and believers out of the nations, will have become the one new man through Christ (Ephesians 2:15).

We do not deny our history with its ruptures and violations and all the guilt. But we can view them in a new light. What men have broken by sin and failures that God by his grace and mercy has brought to fullness, to great variety, and to mutual enrichment. If we live in the spirit of mutual service, this fullness can unfold to the benefit of all members. This is possible wherever Jesus Christ is the pivot point around which everything is revolving. ■



Friendship, an Old Recipe

HILDE KIEBOOM*



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In these days, we have gathered in Munich as new communities and ecclesiastical movements from different denominations to renew and

reinforce our commitment for a strong Europe united in solidarity.

It seems to me that an old

recipe needs to be rediscovered: friendship. I am not saying that friendship does not have a social status in our societies but it should also regain its spiritual and ecclesiastical status; also in our communities, which have grown up in the meantime. Andrea Riccardi says that friendship has a theological status taking into account that the Lord calls his

* Vice-President of the Community of Sant'Egidio
** Andrea Riccardi: La paix préventive, p.152, Salvator 2005



disciples no longer slaves but friends**.

Through friendship, Christians can live their sense of responsibility towards the poor, the men and women of other religions, and towards people in distant countries. Friendship becomes a way of being community and church: as friends of God, we want to develop a friendship with the men and women of our time, a friendship lived as service to promote living together and peace. Abraham, who is called friend of God in the Bible, sets out with confidence towards a new future. Friendship with an elderly and weak person will develop my inventiveness to find the resources to support her; friendship with a person,

who had to flee, will arouse my curiosity for his culture and broaden my horizon; friendship with a person from another church will lead me to the essence of my faith believing in the Gospel. Friendship is not only something for very young people as we often think. It is not a weakened form of love or secularized. Friendship is a way to live our faith as laymen in a diverse world. Friendship opens up the doors towards new worlds.

In this globalized world, we witness an increase of self-centeredness or a way to think only about oneself. This happens out of fear, missing curiosity towards the other person, missing vision, forgetting the fact that we are destined to live to-

gether in peace. Therefore, friendship – together with prayer – is a weak weapon of the humble, who do not possess means to impose themselves, but have this attractive force at their disposition, which allows to include the whole world in a common destiny of peace and unity and to nourish the dreams and ideals of the young generations. ■



Places of Hope

MARTIN WAGNER* talks with DOROTHEA RÖMER**



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Martin Wagner: *Dorothea, you studied Political Science and you are about to finish a Master in History. Over the past years you travelled quite a lot. And in all these places you have experienced Christian communities. Can you tell us a little bit about it?*

Dorothea Römer: Yes, over the past years I travelled a lot abroad – for my studies and internships.

I have been to the USA, Scotland, Berlin, Brussels, Israel and Columbia. In some of these places there were communities that I knew from [TOGETHER FOR EUROPE](#). In others there were not. But, no matter where I have been, I experienced having a worldwide family. In all these places I have been received by Christian Community. Very practically they helped me to find a new home. Whether visiting

friends for a short time, or staying from three months to a year abroad. Each time I have experienced how Jesus unites us, overcoming cultural and confessional differences. In all these places I experienced how God acts in and through communities. They were always engaged to serve the people locally. These communities are places of hope.

Places of hope – can you describe it a little more.

I have experienced how Christians in these communities have hope for their cities and countries they live in. I have seen how they invest in different ways into society – where they are using the means available to them.

One example would be Scotland: during exams the student group that I was part of gave out free dinner in front of

the library. Or a church which started to hold prayer weeks. One day they felt that they should pray for freedom from drugs – that same night the police discovered a drug cartel. And I experienced how people are attracted to communities because they see them as places of hope. Places, where things are different, where they are welcome as humans.

What does this experience mean for you today?

I have experienced how God meets me in the other, in foreign places: as my home, as my friend, as the hope that joins us together. Meeting with the ‘other’ makes me hopeful, shows me new perspectives and possibilities, how to witness about God’s love and to live his love. And I am so thankful for the common walk of different denominations and communities in Europe. [TOGETHER FOR EUROPE](#) became a place of hope for me: unity is possible. I am part of the big family of God. ■

* Volunteer of the YMCA Munich

** Volunteer of the YMCA Munich

Networking

GABRIELE DEUTSCHMANN* talks with MARTIN STEINBEREITHNER**



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Gabriele Deutschmann: *Martin, your friends and colleagues often describe you as a networker. Can you recognize yourself in this description and if yes, how did this description come about?*

Martin Steinbereithner: For 36 years I am part of the Sword of the Spirit, an international, ecumenical network of charismatic, covenanted communities. And above this I have been a “professional networker” for 15 years. Besides my tasks to regularly visit our 15 own groups in Europe and the Middle East, I was responsible for the contact with about 20 other organisations and movements in Germany. Another dozen groups I regularly visited in Europe and Africa. Doing this one develops very own convictions and skills.

Could you share what according to you makes networks what they are? And why are they so important for our time?

Networks are flat, egalitarian and non-hierarchical. I can decide who I want to network with and there is no institution that tells me how to do it. Fast “viral” processes – which spread out like viruses – are the norm instead of long bureaucratic processes. Networks are inexpensive, because they do not need a central coordinating point, and networks jump across political, geographical and cultural barriers. The exchange of resources and information is multilateral instead of “top down”. This is why I see networks as an adequate organizational form within our fast-paced, globalized world.

And why should we as the Church of Jesus be actively involved in networking?

The picture of a net is as old as the Gospel. The early church, build on the Jewish diaspora was a network of semi-autonomous communities and groups. Globally present, light footed and fast-growing. And it changed the entire empire. We, as the church of the West, clearly are moving into another Diaspora-era. Maybe we are even in the middle of it. The ability to network might not just be helpful, but necessary to survive in these circumstances. ■

* CEO of the YMCA Esslingen

** Dr. Martin A. Steinbereithner, Sword of the Spirit, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

The Covenant of the Bishops

MILOSLAV KARDINAL VLK*



we are doing, about our pact of mutual love and that we say: Your diocese is my diocese. He answered: “Well, then every diocese has many bishops.” This pact of mutual love was also the carrying strength of our mutual encounters.

And lastly: once a month, we bishops, who live our spirituality, we meet via WebEx – something like Skype. And we enter into a living community with one another, speaking with one another and renewing our pact of love and unity. This is our way to concretely remain in a living community. This is our contribution to **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE.** ■

In 1990, when the communism collapsed, there were three priests who lived our spirituality and were consecrated as bishops. Then we were invited to a worldwide meeting of bishops, who lived this spirituality. For me something very strong occurred in this

group. Frequently, we made the pact of unity. When we shared our experiences, difficulties but also nice experiences from our dioceses, we promised firmly to one another: your cross may be my cross; your diocese may be my diocese. Once I told Pope John Paul II about what



* Emiritus Bishop of Prague

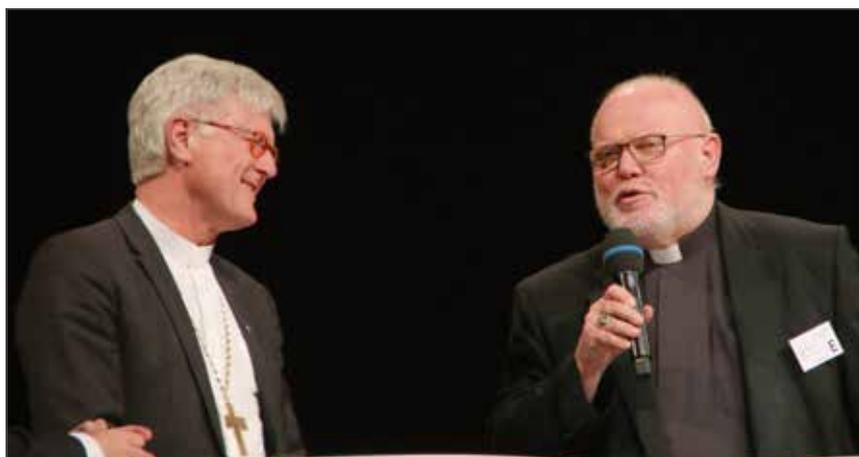
Cardinal Marx and Bishop Bedford-Strohm are at the moment the leading men of the two big churches in Germany. Their personal friendship, but also their vision of unity in diversity concerning the 2017 remembrance of the Reformation are a milestone for the way of ecumenism in Germany.

The Future Outlines of the People of God

A conversation with

REINHARD CARDINAL MARX and BISHOP HEINRICH BEDFORD-STROHM***

*Final words by THOMAS RÖMER****



Gabriele Deutschmann: *They see each other on a regular basis, they correspond with one another regularly and they get on well with each other. Their workplaces here in Munich are located not too far away from each other, easy to reach by bike. I am speaking of the highest representatives of the Catholic and Evangelical Church in Germany. Please do welcome with me His Eminence Dr. Reinhard Cardinal Marx, president of the German Bishop's Conference and Dr. Heinrich Bedford-Strohm, Chairman of*

the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany.

Martin Wagner: *Welcome here in the Circus. We will start with Cardinal Marx. You conduct many dialogues with Christians from the most different denominations and the most different Communities. How do you experience this?*

Cardinal Marx: *I experience it as something enriching every time. For me, a Catholic Christian, who grew up in a very Catholic region, and later,*

as a priest, was sent to a predominantly Lutheran region, I see this as a great enrichment. I have had my prejudices, but walking together with Protestant Christians and with pupils in Bad Arolsen has made me realize what richness there is present in other churches. This was something really great for me. And it did not decrease over the years. The opportunity to work together, not just together for Europe, but together for the Church in Germany and for all those who are living in our country, this is something very beautiful. I am glad about every opportunity to meet with people, who are fascinated by Christ.

*You already had the chance to get to know **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE**, and we are interested: what touches you the most? Do you notice something special about it?*

First of all of it is great that all of you came to Munich.

* Dr. Reinhard Cardinal Marx, Archbishop of Munich and Freising, President of the German Bishop's Conference

** Dr. Heinrich Bedford-Strohm, Bishop of the Lutheran Church in Bavaria and Chairman of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD)

*** Rev. Thomas Römer, CVJM Munich, Steering Committee TFE



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When the preparation group came and visited us two, I remembered that there already had been a big meeting in Stuttgart. Sympathetically I noticed that there are Christians from different spiritual movements who cross denominational borders and invest in the project 'Europe'. This comes out of a spiritual initiative, out of conviction that, – something I sometimes share in my sermons – the Gospel is not outbided yet, not for Europe, also not for Bavaria and not for Germany. There is more to it. Not everything has been done yet. Not everything has been said yet, and not everything is testified as it could be. And I have noticed a lot of motivation within this group. This is why I am very glad that this group has decided to come to Munich.

We have heard about reconciliation, about paths of rec-

onciliation that we walked together. What do you think, what paths of reconciliation are laying ahead of us?

Yes, I do think that reconciliation has a real power, especially if we are convinced that the People of God, if we may call it like this, does not exist for itself. It has a mission for the world. We have heard it from Irenaeus: the world has to be brought home in the communion with the Father in the Holy Spirit through Christ. And this mission is accomplished when the Church is reconciled. When we are “unecomenical” or in a conflict mode, working against one another, then we cannot be a sign to the world that we belong together. Especially in our days it is so important that we make it clear: our walk together does not make us weaker. Our community and the ability to overcome borders to get to know the Other, to discover

one another – this, in certain ways, makes us stronger and more open, more able. This is why it is an important point for reconciliation and ecumenism that we do not circle around ourselves and say: „It would be nice for everyone to get along and to be reconciled...“. But reconciliation becomes a powerful dynamic when we understand: we are here for the world. It is about saving the world. It is not about us.

It's almost 2017. In Germany we will celebrate a big anniversary. We will celebrate the Reformation. The ecumenical year of Christ will be proclaimed. What do you wish to the protestant church for the anniversary of the Reformation?

Ah, we only have common wishes, I would say. It is no longer about the other or about ourselves, but it is a thought

that has inspired us in the Bishop's Conference – and also other believers – brought up by the Bishop and Chairman of the Evangelical Church in Germany: let us celebrate Christ! It is not about looking back, but to follow the message that Martin Luther actually wanted to bring in: let's put Christ in the middle. And we want to bring this into this society, together with the Lutheran Church with its important reflection of the past 500 years. We promised to one another coming from the initiative of the Bishop: We do not want to just walk alongside one another, but we want to witness Christ together at the important events this year and this is our contribution for this country.

From the applause you hear the approval of the people. Many share your passion. It is a great privilege that we live in such a wonderful time, where walking together is possible, where we stand here together.

Gabriele Deutschmann: *Now I look forward to hear from you, Dr. Bedford-Strohm. Under the title "The Sparkflight" you write about your dream of the new Church. Which inspiring sparkflights have you discovered here at **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE**?*

Bishop Bedford-Strohm: First of all I would like to share how great it is when you as Chairman of the Council of the Evangelical Church can boldly underline every single sentence said by the President of the





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German Bishop's Conference on the anniversary of the reformation.

And then you asked about the inspiration, coming especially from the Christian communities and from this congress. It's very simple: **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** is the title of this event. I know that it has been planned for years. Your visits took place about two years ago. And we have to realize in which situation we are currently living. This is a week when the entire world is talking about Europe; the whole world is worried about the future of Europe and the split up of Europe, that Europe will drift apart. And here we find ourselves at a congress simply called: **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE**. I don't think we have to say anything more than the title of this event.

Even without this event you are walking together quite a lot. What is your experience of the togetherness of the two churches? What moves you?

I have mentioned this several times already that my main experiences are the common services, the presence of Jesus Christ. We have celebrated many ecumenical services together. In the Munich Cathedral, there I preach, and in the church of Saint Matthew or another evangelical church the Cardinal preaches. I really enjoy listening to him. I always have a strong spiritual experience. I am strengthened in my spirit. In those moments it is not important anymore what denomination we are part of, but that Jesus Christ is in our midst. This is not a word. It is an experience that we have

made. And – as the cardinal has already mentioned – this is our future. And this is why, when we speak about the state of ecumenism, we also have to talk about our dialogues of doctrine, about institutional questions. But first of all we should notice how living together as brothers and sisters is daily reality in many of our communities and also between our churches.. This is why the state of ecumenism is a lot better and more promising than what we would recognize if we only focus on certain topics. This is how I experience when I write or speak about it. Those topics are also important, but I believe: The foundation is what I like to call the ecumenism of the hearts. When we experience and feel that Christ is in our midst and that he is the main reality among us. And when Christ is

among us there is no other way than him bringing us together.

Cardinal Marx talked about the Christ Celebration in 2017. How are you planning to express of those common things that have grown. What steps do you want to go? What hopes do you share for 2017? What about "500 years of separation are enough"?

Well, now my heart is so full that you might be in trouble to keep the time limit. What we are going to start with is a trip to the Holy Land. Even before 2017 will begin. Mid October we will be visiting the Holy Land, representatives of the

German Bishop's Conference and representatives of the Evangelical Church's Council. We want to go there as pilgrims. We want to receive power. We want to listen to Christ at those places where Christ lived. And we want to take this power home with us and live of it, in our remembrance and in our celebrations. I am consciously emphasizing both. This is why the beginning is already very symbolical and hopefully it is going to mark this entire year. Obviously we are planning a big service, a service aimed at Healing of Memories. This is a term that has just impregnated itself, healing of memories. At the

second week of the great lent, in the beginning of March, we want to confess to one another where we have hurt one another. We want to confess these things to one another. We want to ask forgiveness from God we want to gain new power to step out in unity towards the future. ■

Gabriele Deutschmann:
You can hear the applause. It brings hope to experience both of you here. Thank you so much for joining us. ... Thomas Römer, what is on your mind after the words that we have heard from these two men?





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FINAL WORDS BY THOMAS RÖMER***

Thomas Römer: It is great to know that the bishops of this city are standing behind us. We are living in really exciting times. It's not true that ecumenism does not make progress. The unity of Christians is possible! We have to use those opportunities that are presented to us right now. Now we have the people who are friends with one another, who are connected to one another, who want to serve one another, who share hope with one another. We want unity and we ask the Bishops: please keep going this path of unity.

We are excited about next year, about the "Healing of memories and Remembrance". These liturgies need an inner preparation. For the past 15 years **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** has been the path to such inner preparation. We have experienced such a healing of memories, of forgiveness and reconciliation. Looking back we can

say: situations really change and doors open. Let us be courageous and step through the open doors.

Earlier on today some were sitting at a table, a dining table. This reminds me of the tables that are standing in our churches, of the altar. Over the past years we have developed a longing that we will be able to celebrate the Lord's Supper together at this table. Doors are opening, let us be courageous. But this is important for us: we as God's People do not want to go without the bishops. We are waiting for you. You have to lead the way.

One very last point: How shall we respond to everything what we have heard today? I am reminded of our first moment, when we were together in the Cathedral of Munich on 8 December 2001. Helmut Nicklas then asked: how shall we respond? And, following

much applause he added: "We only can follow Maria in saying: May your word to me be fulfilled". And as we are coming from different denominations and churches I would like to add: We say "Yes" together with Mary, the mother of our Lord and with the fathers and mothers of our different churches and communities. We also have to do something. We need to start loving the fathers and mothers of the other churches. We need such pilgrimages to the Holy Land also for us. But we also need pilgrimages to the saints of the other churches, to their father and mothers, to be reconciled with them and to start expressing our love and awe to the saints of the other churches. I believe that this could heal us within our souls. Let us say "Yes" with Maria and the fathers and mothers from our communities and churches. ■

THURSDAY AFTERNOON, 30 JUNE

At Thursday afternoon 19 Forums were offered as the so called “Congress in Dialogue”. Here, representatives of different communities dealt with different subjects in order to share and enlarge views and perspectives.

Forums

SUBJECTS AND MOVEMENTS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FORUM

- 1 Yes to social responsibility: reconciled co-existence in border regions?**
Equipes Notre-Dame (END), Euregio Christengemeente (ECG), Focolare Movement, Charismatic Renewal in the Lutheran Church (GGE), Missionary Holy Spirit-Community Steyl (MHGG)
- 2 Integration and reconciliation – “I was a stranger and you invited me in ... you did it for me” Matthew 25:35**
Youth with a Mission, Focolare Movement, Community of Sant’Egidio, German Christian Legal Society (Christ und Jurist)
- 3 How are we called to live as Christians in the area of economy?**
Associazione Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII, Tertiary Community of the Fraternity of Christ Selbitz (CCB), Christians in Economy (CiW), Comunità di Nomadelfia, YMCA Munich, Focolare Movement, Community Immanuel, Schoenstatt Movement
- 4 “Dialogue of life” – experiences of reconciliation lived out**
The Sword of the Spirit, Schoenstatt Movement, Focolare Movement, Protestant Michaels Brotherhood, The Transfiguration Fellowship of Minor Orthodox Brotherhoods (Russia)
- 5 Involvement and the hopes of young people in TOGETHER FOR EUROPE. What is the experience so far? How can it be encouraged?**
The Sword of the Spirit, YMCA Munich, JAHU Biel, Jesus Brotherhood Gnadenthal, Focolare Movement, Gospel Centre Munich (EVZ), Schoenstatt Movement
- 6 Yes to solidarity with the weakest**
Efesia, ACAT, Community of Sant’Egidio, Services at the Lutheran Saint Matthew church Munich, YMCA Munich
- 7 Culture of reconciliation in marriage and family – experiences and expertise**
Ecumenical network of responsible persons in marriage-initiatives, YMCA Munich, Alpha marriage course, EFA foundation, Équipes Notre Dame, Families with Christ, Focolare Movement, Spirit and Mission, IGNIS, Youth with a Mission, JMS Altensteig, LISA marriage atelier, network Marriage and Family, Offensive of Young Christians (OJC), proMarriage – Family life mission, Stand up, Schoenstatt Family Movement, Team-F, Christian Life and Training Center (Woernersberger Anker)
- 8 Cost and reward of unity -- overcoming frictions and conflict, nurturing togetherness. With Walter Cardinal Kasper, Rome**
Focolare Movement, Edith Wenger (BFP), Schoenstatt Movement, Tertiary Community of the Fraternity of Christ Selbitz (CCB), Ecumenical Life Centre Ottmaring, Gospel Centre Munich (EVZ)
- 9 Being pilgrims of the world -- pray and walk together the paths of reconciliation**
Pray & move together (Gemeinsam beten & bewegen), Schoenstatt Movement, Community of Christ the Redeemer (CCR), Tertiary Community of the Fraternity of Christ Selbitz (CCB)
- 10 Give Europe a soul – lived brotherhood**
Jesús Morán Cepedano, Co-President of the Focolare Movement; The Sword of the Spirit, International Association of Catherinites, Efesia, Focolare Movement
- 11 “Round tables” – models of reconciliation**
Free Christ Church Munich (Freie Christengemeinde), Schoenstatt Movement, Focolare Movement, Rinnovamento Carismatico, Lumen Christi Tyrol, Loretto Community, Christnet, Intercession for Austria, YMCA Austria, Pentecostal churches, Life Center (Julius-Schniewind-Haus) Schoenebeck

12 Living reconciled. Itineraries, outcomes and experiences in the urban environment

Dr. Stefan Kiefer, Lord Mayor of Augsburg; Herman Weber, Senior Counselor at Mayor's office Augsburg; Father Elmar Busse, Schoenstatt Movement; YMCA Augsburg, evangelical "Stadtkloster Berlin", evangelical "Stadtkloster Zurich", evangelical "Quartierkloster Philadelphia Zurich", Focolare Movement, Schoenstatt Movement

13 Path to joy – testimonials of reconciliation in pastoral care

Tertiary Community of the Fraternity of Christ Selbitz (CCB), IGNIS Academy, ConVita (Germany) and Network of incarnation and pastoral care (NIS), YMCA Esslingen, Offensive of Young Christians (OJC), Focolare Movement, Berneuchener Movement

14 Evangelization today – experiences of togetherness

mit Walter Heidenreich (FCJG Horizont), Dr. Christian Bearership Sisters, YMCA Esslingen, Tertiary Community of the Fraternity of Christ Selbitz (CCB), Alpha Germany, Christ-Treff Marburg, Protestant free church (EFS)-Sohland, Free Christian Youth Community (FCJG) Horizons, Loretto community Salzburg, Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis (OFS), The Sword of the Spirit, Totus Tuus

15 Giving voice to the Word in the New Media

Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis (OFS) Germany, Mission is possible, Verbum Dei Portugal, Carmelites

16 Renewal of the Church

Regional Bishop Ulrich Mack, Professor Dr. Tobias Faix, Dr. Johannes Hartl, Charismatic Renewal in the Lutheran Church (GGE), Schoenstatt Movement, YMCA Esslingen, Augsburg House of Prayer

17 Living reconciliation – daring to cross borders

Cursillo, Tertiary Community of the Fraternity of Christ Selbitz (CCB), Communauté du Verbe de Vie Notre Dame de Fichermont Belgium, YMCA Munich, Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church (CE), Community Immanuel Ravensburg

18 Celebrate Jesus with our Jewish brothers? We wish to heal our past

Jesus Brotherhood Gnadenthal, Charismatic Renewal in the Lutheran Church (GGE), Equipes Notre Dame

19 Spiritual movements and institutional churches – routes towards mutual enrichment

Auxiliary Bishop Thomas Maria Renz, Lutheran Rev. Dr. Frank Zeeb, Focolare Movement, Schoenstatt Movement, Tertiary Community of the Fraternity of Christ Selbitz (CCB), Families with Christ, YMCA Esslingen



"The Congress in Conversation"



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THURSDAY NIGHT, 30 JUNE 2016

Clear the Ring – a Splendid Night in the Circus Krone in Munich

The evening session was completely different – after the first day of the Congress with its stimulating impulses and moving testimonies. And it fitted perfectly to the original surrounding of the Circus Krone building. Encounter – reconciliation – future, the themes of the whole Congress were expressed in an artistic manner, so colourful and manifold, fitting to the world of a circus. A real circus evening was performed with artistic elements, dance, pantomime, magicians and of course clowns. Men and women from the movements of TFE with their many gifts and abilities got involved this evening with great joy.*

* That's how Father Elmar Busse from Schoenstatt Movement characterizes this evening. Found in Schönstatt aktuell 2/4 2016, page 11.

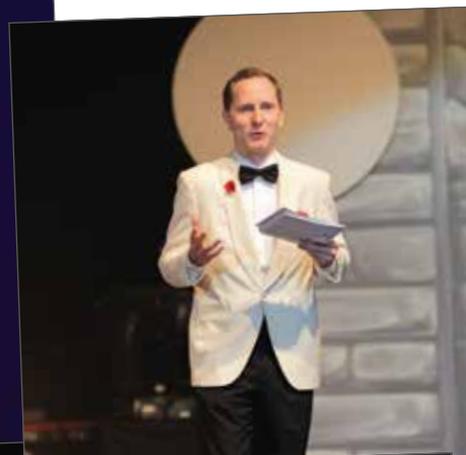




Impressions from the Circus Night



Photos: © Graf, Brehm





The participants of the Congress enjoyed a very special circus night, prepared and organized by Sr. M. Vernita Weiß and Kornelia Orlob from the Schoenstatt Movement.

The “Minions” (Johannes Höfle and Matthias Koch) presented the different parts of the evening: encounter – reconciliation – future. The circus big band (Wilfried Röhrig, Timo Wagner, Gregor Botzer, Amin Jan Sayed, Lothar Ruf, Carolin Ankenbauer) fascinated the audience with swing, jazz and genuine circus music.

Reconciliation needs courage; this was demonstrated at the balance beam by young ladies of the gymnastic teams from the clubs TV Weingarten and SSV Ulm. The pauses were filled by the clowns “Straccia and Blitz Blank” (Anita Lossin und Urs Huber). Melanie and Mario Jäkel, Andrea Sommer



and Evelyn Schulz performed an artistic dance with light and cloth. Udo Knöfel and Jürgen Böhme played a musical parody, which linked classical music to rock music. Christian comedy was perfectly presented by Thilo Krämer and Bernd Bentele. Barbara Richter showed the perfect clown theatre. Even predators were presented in a show by the mime artist Ralf Knauth.

A highlight of great intensity was created by Frauke Menger in her sand performance: “We are one Europe”.

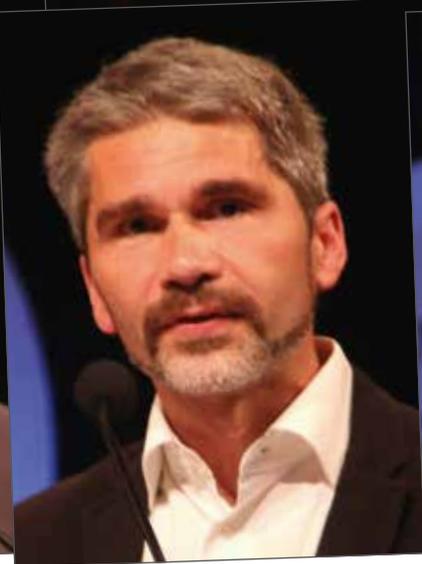
Rap meets Hip Hop, Marie-Catherine Rausch with a dance group and Philipp Obrigewitsch made the audience moving. Mr. Joy enchanted with his high art of illusion and led into an unbelievable deception with undeceived faith. David Brähler, the compere, led in four languages through this splendid evening. ■



CONGRESS TOGETHER FOR EU

30 JUNI – 1 JULI 2016

MUNICH CIRC





ROPE

CUS KRONE BUILDING

2ND DAY

Photos: © Haaf



FRIDAY MORNING, 1 JULY

Opening



MICHELLE MORAN* held a meditation on Hebrews 12:1. “We are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses”. We ourselves represent this cloud. It may encourage us to grow in faith.**

The Taste of Shared Bread has no Equal



By taking a nightshift, SR. NICOLE GROCHOWINA** managed to put a square peg into a round hole and summarized the outcome of all 19 forums. Here, she chose the quote: “The taste of shared bread has no equal.” Coming from this insight lead

her to three imperatives:

- Let us all sit at one table – and let us do this way more than before!
- Let us take a close look at our own wounds, and then, let us disarm ourselves, our speaking, and our way of thinking!
- Let us all become missionaries of hope in our world! And let us be positive that God needs all our generations as missionaries!*** ■

* Michelle Moran, England, President of the International Charismatic Renewal Services. Steering Committee TFE

** Sr. PD Dr. Nicole Grochowina, Fraternity of Christ Selbitz (Germany)

*** Found in Schönstatt aktuell 2/4 2016, page 14

Europe Today

On Friday the participants of the congress focused on analyzing the situation of Europe: Where had we got to? And what do we need to confidently look ahead? To gain further insights, Marco Impagliazzo, Gérard Testard, Michael Hochschild and Herbert Lauenroth presented their ideas coming from political, sociological and philosophical points of view.

Challenges in Europe – Signs of Time*

MARCO IMPAGLIAZZO**



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Once again, Christians have to decide in favor of Europe. They have to do it out of realism: you cannot face the future alone. But most of all because Europe is ours: its story is a history based on Christianity; not only that of ancient times but also that of the last half century since its foundation. 1989 is very much bound to the Christian roots of this continent: we only have to think about the Fall of the Berlin Wall and the liberation process in Poland, where the religious elements played an important role; the ability of the believers to resist to be seen in the role of John Paul II.

The Christian martyrdom in the 20th century wrote a European story of humanism, which embraces the whole Continent. These are not archeological roots or proclaimed values, but actually lived reality. It goes from the resistance to Communism in the Russian world and the East, which paid an enormous death toll: in Russia, 300 bishops and one million people were killed; Albania was proclaimed the first atheistic State of the world suppressing any kind of faith. It is the resistance to Nazism, in which the Christian martyrs became defenders of freedom. I think of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who was hanged after a farce law-

suit at Flossenbürg for his opposition to Nazism or of Pastor Paul Schneider, who shouted the good news of the Gospel to the prisoners from his cell in Buchenwald, while the guards tried to silence him with blows from sticks. I remember the resistance to the processes of dehumanization by the Mafia. Here, we cannot but think of Don Pino Puglisi, parish priest in the neighborhood of Brancaccio in Palermo. He was killed because he withdrew the young people from the Mafia. Furthermore, many missionaries, who gave their life in the world, remembering that Europe cannot live for itself, but has to have an extrovert reality. In this sense, Christianity is the root of European humanism.

Europe must not live for itself

The Christian faith has a strong message for Europe by turning to the Europeans. It

* Presented in Italian

** Prof. Dr. Marco Impagliazzo, President of the Community of Sant'Egidio

calls to live not for oneself. The Apostle Paul writes: “And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.” (2 Corinthians 5:15).

The strong call to the Gospel of Jesus, brought by Paul to Europe from Greece to Rome, worries the culture of living for oneself. It worries the culture of living alone. Europe cannot live for itself. The perspective cannot only be the economic expansion of the own region or country. If men and women only live for themselves, a country, a community, a nation dies.

Pope Francis shows that Christianity is a critical corrective when society is only reduced to economic dimensions. Despite our limits, which we all know, we already live a humanism in our Christian communities, in our commitment – being a true people in many angles of Italy and Europe. I would like to call it a spiritual humanism. The life of the churches and communities is already very often a resource of humanism. It is a resource for the poor and those in need; it represents a true page of humanism written in the life of societies. We must have the courage to let all this emerge.

It is life, solidarity, bonds as a shared culture. The way people live can become a true culture, even a cultural proposal in the void of thoughts or in the midst of shouted debates.

Today, a European culture moves between the local, the nearby, but also the faraway and the global. A European view knows how to unite the inevitable perspective of my life’s local scenario with the worldwide scenario. We clearly live this point of interception between these two scenarios in the reality of immigration. It is a decisive appointment of Christian humanism: welcoming people does not mean to be a starry-eyed idealist or only practicing charity, but it reveals an idea.

Europe has a mission

Here we talk about Europe and Africa. The European Union cannot live for itself either. Yes, Europe has a mission. I am thinking about Africa. We have an epochal task before us: to connect profoundly and persistently the future of Africa to Europe. A painful and rich history binds Europe and Africa. But many European countries withdraw from Africa, which only remains the place of immigrants towards Europe. The cooperation to develop Africa,

fighting diseases (I think of curing AIDS or Ebola), fighting wars are European tasks.

Africa needs Europe. It is the true answer to the unstoppable flux of emigration, which will not be stopped at the borders or by controls in the Mediterranean Sea. Economic rebirth and hope in Africa will stop it!

Let us make ours the dream of the Senegalese President Senghor, a man of European and African culture: Eurafri- ca, two continents united on a level of equality needing one another. The first mission of Europe is called Africa. Here, it makes sense to be united.

Europe is a sign of peace

Another appointment for Europe is peace. Europe was the origin of two World Wars and of the Holocaust. Could it not be a paradigm of universal peace and solidarity? Could it not give a decisive contribution to the story of peace instead of degrading in the headlines? In the world, Europe is a sign of peace. It is a continent living in peace for 70 years. Europe is diverse: different languages, traditions, cultures, religions, smells and tastes. If Europe is united in its diversity, it will realize the civilization of living together. It is civilization that is missing in the world of a homogenized and flattened globalization, which reacts with clashes of civilizations and religions; it is missing in an inhumane economy without

humanism. The civilization of living together is our answer to terrorism and fundamentalism.

Civilization of living together

The diverse and united Europe represents the civilization of living together: its ingredients are dialogue, the respect of every liberty, the art of living together. Today, we need Europe more than ever. Otherwise, globalization will make us irrelevant and, even worse,

will do the same to our values. We have to have a united Europe with its mission to be Europeans, to not be disappointed, to exist in a big and terrible world. A more united Europe will make the world a lot less terrible.

Europe is not a faraway dream. Dear friends, we are Europeans more than we are aware of. The citizens of our countries are more Europeans than they know. The European

institutions count a lot in the different countries. The human and cultural tissue in which we live is European. It is the task of the Christians to give new vigor and verve to the values, on which the European fathers founded Europe, so that Europe will not only be the one of the fathers but also of the children. ■

Faith in Public Space

GÉRARD TESTARD*



How should we imagine the contribution of religious discourse in a pluralistic, democratic and secular society? Every religious community has to ask this question and to deal with it, with regard to the society in which it has been placed. We are no longer living in an epoch dominated by Christianity and we have to focus on

the future – because nostalgia doesn't lead anywhere.

Bonhoeffer said: "We must dare to say contestable things, if this helps to ask vital questions."

The presence of religions in the public spotlight causes – here and there – a discord in

Europe, because it is not wanted by everybody.

Public space in modern days

For some people, religion only concerns their private space. They are tempted to withdraw from public life to the private life given to them by society. If they don't want to give up the combination of their membership in a church with their daily life, they commit themselves to associations, groups and networks which certainly represent part of the civil society, but also avoid touching the political field.

For other people, the current profound changes make it necessary to reflect on the presence of Christians to guarantee

* President of the community Efesia, Paris. Steering Committee TFE

civil rights. As secularism offers only one solution, which is to eliminate the presence of religion in public, it doesn't really help to solve the problem of religions.

A new phenomenon is changing some of the circumstances: the growing presence of Muslims in our countries: in France, Belgium, Germany and in Europe. The worrying forms of expression chosen by a radical Islam confirm the suspicion of a general global threat, represented by religions which are said to be the principal factors for separation and conflicts, also including the Catholic and Protestant denominations. Some people want to strengthen the implementation measures for the principle of laicism: in public space, there shall only be emancipated citizens who are free of any religious affiliation. In France the debate is held intensively and it reveals, in its political culture, two concepts of laicism: one which wants to eliminate the presence of religion in public, whereas the other concept adheres to the theory that, even though secularism and the state itself are objective, the society is not objective and that therefore, the religions may participate in the discourse of citizens.

In the opinion of the philosopher Pierre Manent "religion has to be taken seriously, quite simply because the idea of God, or of the Divine, represents an indispensable question of our human existence for both,

atheists and agnostics – as well as for believers." He adds: "A political regime cannot change the *conditio humana*, the conditions of human existence. Religion has its place in people's life.

More than ever, Christians are called to rise and speak in public as well as in the political sphere, and to be proactive – if possible, in dialogue with other religions. That's also what Pope Francis tells us. Recently, his encyclical "Laudato si" attracted a lot of attention. It deals with transformations and changes to be realised by individuals and by communities in order to preserve our planet and to be able to pass it on to further generations. The World Climate Conference COP 21 was inspired by this encyclical, and politicians have often quoted from it. That's how social ethics look like.

Christians and churches in social responsibility

Christians, as well as the churches, cannot evade social responsibility. Religions make societies aware of the existence of the beyond which transcends them and encourages them to take risks in history; they represent a wonderful source giving life meaning and a place for ethical training, thanks to the impulses they give for a good life which invites people to act beyond their capabilities. Religions also represent a "counterpart" of the society. They constitute a critical pole asking

questions concerning the sense of justice in a democracy.

Laicism can neither give leave to Christians with regard to their historical mission, nor banish churches from public. Even if it protects society against all forms of religious hegemony, it doesn't silence churches. Their word is legitimate and often even expected – sometimes more than we think, especially for answering questions concerning the end and the meaning of life.

If Habermas defines public space as a sphere, which has been constituted between a civil society of individuals and the state, Christians can make use of this space to begin a free, contradictory and critical debate. Thus, they can form public opinion which provides orientation for state decisions or makes a stand against them. In all these cases, it is the humble expression of a strong faith which makes us act like that. We have to present a manifestation without violence, without any will to power, without replacing political power, but as European Christians – and citizens with political awareness and the resulting engagements.

Communities and churches must acquire a minimum of competence for the topics that are concerned. Otherwise, they risk remaining pious communities which only react emotionally or leave the upper hand to those people who control

discourse and the exercise of power. In the end, modern societies require that religious traditions commit themselves to modernize their faith or, at least, to modernize their use of language without relativizing their own truths.

The breath of life emerges from the encounter between Christians and the world. The important thing is to create trust, friendship and places of cohabitation. By living this friendship, we are empowered to speak. That's why the role of laypersons is very important for proclaiming the Gospel message. And this without fear: one of the most important characteristics of spirituality at Efesia is the "culture of encoun-

ter". Encounters between men and women, encounters with poor people, encounters with other people who are different, and – above all – encounters with Muslims. This is a very present topic and we dedicate ourselves to joint actions by praying together, by giving testimony and in conferences on current issues. By doing this, we are experiencing real "miracles" of friendship, in a dynamic which is both, spiritual, generally popular and civic.

"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect." (1 Peter 3:15–16)

Conclusion

Our faith has to make a positive contribution to the political community. There is not on the one hand a heavenly citizenship and on the other hand an earthly citizenship. There is one way to live citizenship as a Christian, which is to contribute to common good and to cohabitation. This contribution requires, for sure, that we draw strength from our innermost belief. ■

Becoming Reconciled with our Future

*MICHAEL HOCHSCHILD**

Ladies and gentlemen, I came to Munich to offer you a simple, but highly important question: Does hope have good prospects? I am asking you, since I believe that you as movements may be the answer to that question – no matter what each and every movement of your network might answer separately. Why do I trust you so much?



Well, this not due to you, but to the question, which I would like to state more precisely now: Does hope have good prospects

or is our world enmeshed in a hopeless tangle of crises and problems? And if we give our world a second chance, how

would we call this new world? And, moreover: How can social and religious groups support this new world?

* Prof. Dr. Michael Hochschild, director and professor for post-modern thought at Time-Lab, Paris/Institut d'Études et de Recherches postmoderne, studied education, sociology, philosophy, psychology and theology at the Universities of Hamburg, Frankfurt and Bielefeld.

Answering these questions in a broad way might be as easy as asking them, but I believe that this will lead us directly to the movements and their meaning for putting up and supporting the new world. Therefore, I would like to state the following:

1 If we do not want to get lost within our contemporary crises, we need to strengthen our hopes for the future.

2 But there is more to it: We also need a new way of describing our new world, since the term “modernity” does not work anymore, because our former mentality of “let’s keep going” is being bothered in a very sensitive way; eventually, right now, we do not know where to go. That means: If our future should become much better, then I am sure that we should end up in a post-modern society.

3 This only works out, if new cultural players enter the game and provide us with fresh breath. Here, I would like to address the new religious and social movements, since they are led by very sophisticated ideals, which are necessary right now. That means: You, the movements, are looking out for the daybreak and, consequently, for a new way of living which could invite churches and society to share your path. In concreto: Already today you are showing us how we can act and live tomorrow.

You see, it could be so easy to reconcile ourselves with our future – especially for movements. But, unfortunately, re-

ality appears far more complex than this. This is due to at least two challenges. One of them is the disposition of the problems we are facing right now: We are experiencing a severe crisis of our modern society. Now, it is not sufficient enough to adjust to the new circumstances given, since our society has started to change in a fundamental way. In this case, new ways of thinking and acting are highly necessary. The second challenge addresses the new religious movements as such: Now, their faith, their engagement and their trust is put to the test. If they pass, they will lead the way into the new world which is characterized by trust into the future. But to achieve this goal the new religious movements need to understand themselves in a new way, i. e. as creative social and cultural powers who act along these lines. To put it in a nutshell: religious movements need to become social movements.

I would like to give some further insights into these two challenges and I do start with the disposition of our current problems: these problems are different from the challenges we had to face at the end of the 20th century, when some researchers were afraid that we were heading into a “clash of cultures”. After the “cold war”, they argued, the conflicting differences between cultures might become the new battleground for international conflicts. Therefore, orient and occident appeared to become the conflicting parties. The only way to defuse this sit-

uation was to start a dialogue and rely on its success. Here, churches, democratic parties or even media were invited to mediate between conflicting partners. The idea was to strengthen society and to prevent conflicts by allowing very different players to take an active part in the public discourse. It is amazing, that neither social nor religious movements were asked to join this process.

Today, this situation has changed. Former ways of dialogues do not seem to work anymore; in the beginning of the 21st century new ways of dealing with conflicting parties need to be developed. And suddenly, the movements get into sight. Can you imagine why – and what this means?

Without a doubt, today, movements are more important than during the end of the 20th century. This is due to the way in which they have developed, but it is also due to the severe crises the society is experiencing right now. Consequently, a lot of people are looking out for authentic ways of living and dissociate themselves from attitudes which they judge as formal and bureaucratic. Here, it becomes clear why movements appear to be more attractive than other organizations. It can also be stated, that the increasing importance of the movements coincides with the systemic crisis of our modern society. Here, social processes which ensure the modern way of dividing labor within society

became entangled and therefore started to stumble. “Systemic crisis” became the metaphor for the modern operating system which quitted working properly. Since the financial crisis in 2007 we realize that economy ceased to be our major way to lead us through the challenges given. But, unfortunately, right now, there is no other system available, which could fill this gap, since art is exploited commercially while political decisions are made by central banks and not by politicians. I call these “hybrid times”, in which movements are asked to offer alternatives. And I believe that they could do this, since they are capable of showing how life could look like in a different way – even in modern times.

The problem we are facing right now cannot be described as pluralism which we know from the 18th and 19th century onwards. No, the current problem of pluralism is, that it is out of shape! While the world’s society was organized as a system relying on dividing labour, it was possible to adjust to this or even to “humanize” the system. But if the system is out of shape you have nothing to adjust to! Therefore, we need to take into account, that we are watching the end of the social system known to us, while new processes of socialization still need to occur. How could modern institutions answer these challenges, since it was them, who were set up in modern society and desperately need that type of social system to exist and

to succeed? This might explain why religious groups are called now to provide some help and support, since all the systems given seem to disintegrate.

Today, we suffer from indefiniteness! Let me give you an example: in modern times freedom has been promised to us. But nowadays, this freedom has turned into a remarkable imposition. If the system does not provide any steadiness, freedom cannot be carried out. I would like to add another example: the “clash of cultures” has been expected and feared, but it turned out to become a “clash within cultures”. “Cultures” are no homogeneous entities anymore: as you can see, the current Islam tears itself to pieces; even the EU acts in a similar way, and I do not want to go any deeper into the struggles about distributing the earth’s resources, which remarkably threaten the world’s social peace.

Under the circumstances given, it is not sufficient enough to look back and check out why conflicts arose in the past and then to hope that current mechanisms of communication could solve them. If you try this modern strategy, for example, to work on the “refugees’ crisis” you might find out that knowing about the causes why people are leaving their countries might not help to come to terms with the question how we all should live together in one country. Asking for the causes, therefore, is no strategy which leads to reconciliation; it just buys

you some time and, thereby, expresses how helpless you are. In fact, this even shows your lack of vision! Now it becomes clear that it is highly essential to look forward, or – in other words – to seek reconciliation with our future.

Here, the new social, but even more the new religious movements come into play. They are important, because seeking for visions and trusting them is a genuine feature of their organization. They not only offer concrete ways of alternative living, they also widen all the modern narrowing which characterizes the current society in its systemic crisis. Let me give you an example how this works: take a look at the modern individual. Within your movement individuals can regain their religious strength again. Consequently, they are willing to and capable of taking over responsibility for themselves and their environment, too.

Having said this, you might realize that movements are put now to the test. Under these circumstances and coming from the research about movements, it is their task not only to perform as religious, but also as social movements. This means that they need to believe in their creative force to shape the world in a new way. Here, religious movements are superior to social movements, since their engagement cannot be restricted to one single topic. On the contrary, being aware of God dealing with the whole world,

there is an indefinite number of topics religious movements can turn to. Instead, it is crucial, how movements and churches work together: Experiencing reconciliation within one's own movement or church is the only possibility to preach and postulate reconciliation in an authentic and trustworthy way. Indeed, a single "Together for Europe" might not be sufficient enough to reach this goal; instead, a "Together for the world" is de-

manded in this case. All other solutions cannot live up to the promises which lay within global movements like the Focolare Movement, Sant'Egidio, Schoenstatt and all the others.

To sum up: Does hope has good prospects? I asked you this question, because I am very sure that you are the answer. You will be needed when it comes to our reconciling with the future. Whenever you seize

the culture shaping powers which lay within your movements, you will become a living testimony that there is a path that leads us all out of the current crisis onwards right into a better future. Here, you are convincingly showing that new religious movements are born by future – and, therefore, you are absolutely capable of reconciling all of us with our future. ■

Europe in an "Era of Fear"

HERBERT LAUENROTH*



Dear friends, I would like to start my – rather fundamental – reflections on the subject of fear, fear in Europe, with two striking biblical respectively secular images:

1 In a dramatic moment in the book of Genesis God calls man: "Where are you, Adam?" This call is addressed to the one who has sought refuge in

the underbrush, full of shame and driven by fear. To the one hiding from the sight of God because he has become aware of his existential nakedness and wretchedness. This image depicts the present situation in Europe in a quite drastic way: A continent barricading and entrenching itself in its seemingly hopeless presence.

Europe is hiding in the underbrush, stuck in the entanglements of its own limitations and a history of guilt. This underbrush is Idomeni, the Macedonian border, the barbed-wire fence at the Hungarian-Serbian border, but also the various exclusions in society.

If we read the biblical scenario as for turning Europe into a fortress, a measure against migrants, it allows another different reading: It's the European sovereign standing before us, it's his exposure and homelessness we're looking at. He is the real refugee, trying to escape from himself, the most fatal of all flights.

Therefore Europe has to hear this call from the Biblical God once again. It's a question

* Focolare Movement; cultural scientist at Ecumenical Center Ottmaring

of its destiny, mission and responsibility for itself and the world: “Adam/Europe, where are you?”

2 This image of an existential narrowness God calls out of, finds its counterpart in the visions of men’s cosmic forsakenness in an indifferent, inhospitable universe. Philosopher and mathematician Blaise Pascal expressed it like this: “*The eternal silence of these infinite spaces terrifies me!*” It’s about a sense of being appalled or exposed that frightens man, as he is isolated and being thrown back on his own. In European history this recurring theme has been described as “*loss of the center*” or “*transcendental homelessness*”.

3 However, this fear of loss of self and the world can make room for new experiences at the same time: Czech poet and President Vaclav Havel, looking back on the peaceful revolutions in Eastern Central Europe in 1989/90, spoke of fear as “**fear of freedom**”: “*We were like prisoners who had become accustomed to the prison, and then, being released to the long-desired freedom out of the blue, did not know how to deal with it and became desperate because they constantly had to decide on their own and take responsibility for their own life.*” It is, according to Havel, to face this fear. This is how it “*enables us to acquire new abilities: The fear of freedom can be exactly what teaches us to fulfil our freedom. And*

fear of the future can be exactly what forces us to do everything to make the future better.”

Finally, the great protestant theologian Paul Tillich takes fear for the basic experience of human existence: “*The courage to be,*” he writes, “*is rooted in the God who appears when God has disappeared in the fear of doubt.*”

This means: only the experience of fear – as the loss of an image of God, man and the world that was formerly formative and considered to be immutable – unleashes what is called the “*courage to be*”. The true – divine – God appears so to speak in the heart of fear, and he alone causes *de-frightening*. In turn this experience leads man to deeper experiences and horizons of being. God reveals himself in the supposed facelessness and ahistoricity of the world as the face of the other.

4 It is therefore necessary to descend into these ‘inner rooms of the world’ of biographical as well as collective fears and experiences of loss, in order to meet the God who saves us. Two examples:

4.1 Yad Vashem: my visit to the Shoah memorial site last autumn is an unforgettable experience for me: I walk through the mazy-like architecture as if in a daze and finally reach the Children’s memorial, a subterranean space where the light of burning candles is reflected by mirrors. It’s a dark resonance

space of bodiless voices, which unceasingly recall the elementary life-data of the innocent victims and I feel a new, deep solidarity – especially in view of this profound primal fear of not only being physically destroyed, but being even eliminated from the cultural memory. The testimony of this place becomes my own experience: to provide a place for the lost name, to preserve a memory for the name of God and its creatures. My guestbook entry is a sentence of the prophet Isaiah that expresses both my consternation and the new hope in the captive closeness of a fatherly God: “*Fear not, for I have redeemed you. I called you by name, you are mine!*” (Isaiah 43,1)

4.2 In view of the great European tales of fear, Czech philosopher and theologian Tomáš Halík describes a similar experience: “*We do not build the bold project of European unity on unknown ground or wasteland. We build it on a ground, in whose layers forgotten treasures and burned debris are stored, where gods, heroes and criminals are buried, rusted thoughts and unexploded bombs. From time to time we have to set out on looking into the depths of Europe, into the underworld, like Orpheus to Eurydice, or the dead Christ to Abraham and the fathers of the Old Testament.*”

5 For me, these various “descents into the depths of fear” converge in the description



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of the baptism of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew: “*As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment, heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven, said, ‘This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.’*” (Matthew 3:16–17)

We have to descend with Christ to reach that point of origin, above which the sky opens up quite surprisingly. It’s where God’s law of life shows itself: “*What comes from above must grow from below.*”

In this way, in, with and through Jesus, the “fraternal” community of solidarity is formed, in which the individual members do not only recognize themselves as “sisters and brothers” but also as

“sons and daughters of God”, in which “dignity of man” and “God-likeness” form an indivisible unity.

6 In his book “*Letters and Papers from Prison*” (*Widerstand und Ergebung*) Dietrich Bonhoeffer describes the core of the Christian identity as a response to the question of Jesus at the moment of his mortal fear in Gethsemane: “*Could you not watch with me one hour?*” (Matthew 26,40) – It is an invitation to the night watch at the side of Jesus, in his presence facing the Father, in a secular – supposedly godless – world. This presence of Jesus transforms different locations into places of experience and expectation of Trinitarian life.

7 In this key section of the Gospel of Matthew “fear” appears as a privileged place of

learning for our faith where diffuse, “blind” fears converge and transform into the authentic “fear of God” of Jesus that offers new insights.

As:

- In, with, and through Jesus, de-frightening takes place as a real frightening-through of man towards God: The supposed *exposure* of the Son changes to *devotion* to the Father.
- Unity grows as an experience of mutual trust. It grows from sensitivity for the mystery of God which is not at our disposal, the otherness (alterity) of the other. French-Jewish philosopher Simone Weil expresses this experience in a striking way: It’s only the unconditional “*consent to the distance of the other*” that allows for authentic closeness

and communion with God and man.

- So that's what it is about: Preferring the unknown, the unfamiliar, the marginalized – as a “learning place” of faith – in, with, and through Jesus.
- This especially applies to the different charisms and their communion: in Paris in November 2013 at a meeting of **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** with Jean Vanier, founder of “*L'Arche*”, it became apparent to us: one of the real aims of the charisms is also to receive the “charism of the world” and to reflect it to this world. Vanier's testimony has been very impressive: primarily it's not about living with and for the “addressees” of the Beatitudes of Jesus, but from them. In fact they – the supposedly needy and receiving ones – are the God-gifted and giving ones. They are the bearers of a message, a presence of God that has to return to the center of our

societies from their margins. Klaus Hemmerle, Bishop of Aachen and religious philosopher wrote concisely: “*Let me learn from you the message that I have to pass to you*”.

8 This attitude, however, requires a “thrust reversal”, a true *metánoia* of many a Christian on their understanding of themselves and the world. It calls for a new faith in God's love for the world which is revealed in Christ.

It's a matter of growing ever more into a “culture of trust”, including a worldly trust in God that is founded in Jesus.

9 Looking up into the dome of the Circus-Krone building, we might think of some trapeze artists. For me, they are the true artists of *de-frightening*: Flyers hovering in the air, always taking the risk of trust, letting go and stretching out again for future spaces. An artistic moment in that prophetic and always

fragile, risky intermediate state of “grace and gravity”: the grace of weightlessness, yet the creature always having a knowledge of being held and secure, in a certain sense “redeemed” from itself and liberated for turning towards the other.

With this in mind, Henri Nouwen writes: “*A flyer must fly, and a catcher must catch, and the flyer must trust, with outstretched arms and open hands that his catcher will be there for him. [...] Remember that you are the beloved child of God. He will be there when you make your long jump. Don't try to grab him; he will grab you. Just stretch out your arms and hands – and trust, trust, trust!*” ■

Dance performance



Our Mission of TOGETHER FOR EUROPE Today

The Biblical message meets the present situation: Maria Voce explains how love interacts with political and social circumstances, Steffen Kern emphasizes the strength of hope and, in his Bible study, Thomas Römer invites everybody to cling to one's faith.

Europe Today: The New Commandment Creates a Culture of Fellowships

MARIA VOCE*



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The early stages of **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** were weaved into the beginning of our new century, marked by the hope of achieving the so-called “Millennium Development Goals”: These goals aimed to end hunger, to ensure education, health and progress for all, to reverse the consequences of pollution, and so on. But they are goals that are far from being achieved.

Instead, during these few years, we have seen global terrorism rising and developing, we have realized that wars in

countries bordering the Mediterranean did escalate; we have seen massive movements of migrations, and growing intolerance. All this has had a big impact on Europe: there have been terrorists' attacks in capital cities, borders have been closed, freedom got lost. Welfare, which used to be Europe's symbol of equality, is decaying, values are being attacked, a feeling of inadequacy is growing, more and more people fear that our culture and way of living is getting lost, and anguish questions arise what the future may bring.

Almost 60 years after the Treaty of Rome, it seems that our continent is being pushed towards disintegration rather than European integration.

There are new egoistic ideas of regionalism, new nationalisms and local communities start to base their identities on an unwillingness to include and share, and do reject the ethnicity and historical narratives they are actually coming from.. It is paradoxical that the new Europe, which arose after the Berlin Wall coming down, is tempted right now by fear! And it is tempted to shun itself behind new fences, to build new walls and fences, and to keep up the illusion that it could suspend history that is once again knocking at our European doors.

The single currency project was supposed to be a big new step towards political union, a great new identifying moment in which solidarity and the sharing of sovereignty, in order

* President of the Focolare Movement. Steering Committee TFE

to achieve common objectives, were to represent the fundamental pillars.

Actually two examples show us how little this has been achieved. First of all, we realize that the serious delays and heated debates that followed the Greek debt crisis, greatly undermined the foundations of solidarity among the member states, even leading to speculation on Greece leaving the Euro. Secondly, there is the Brexit issue and other separatist tendencies which also test solidarity severely, because leaving the Union is not like leaving a club. Instead, it is like abandoning partners with whom we no longer share the same reason for being together: the founding pact.

Right now, Europe is going through the dark night of its own principles, the dark night of its dreams. In fact, a great sense of disorientation reigns our continent because we experience three simultaneous crises: an unprecedented migratory crisis, a deep economic crisis, and a demographic crisis.

While leaving it to others to analyze the reasons for these crises, I would like to say that I believe that the deeper causes of Europe's weakness today is due to the denial of God and of the transcendent. This is a result of the gradual emergence and spread of secular culture which wants to get away from any link with the supernatural.

In the search for total freedom, Europe no longer recognizes that its culture was formed through 2000 years of Christian tradition. Denying this means cutting its own roots and finding itself like a lifeless tree.

The idea of fraternity bases in Heaven, and it aims to shape the whole live on earth.

So, is everything collapsing then? Is the continent's dream of unity being shattered? No. We are here together, as Christian movements and communities in Europe, because we believe there is something that does not collapse. It is love; God who is love. Our movements are bearing charisms which are certainly very different from each other and yet all are the work of the Holy Spirit. But the Holy Spirit is precisely the one who creates fraternity – so to speak – among the persons of the Trinity and who unites all Christians. So the idea of fraternity originates in Heaven and it also aims to shape the whole life on earth.

All of us can bear witness that we met Christ one day and let ourselves be fascinated and drawn into his Gospel. Living his words led us to change ourselves and reach out to others, building relationships of gospel love and thereby creating communities that become leaven wherever they are. We have discovered a new willingness to be open to all, crossing the boundaries between churches,

religions, ethnicities and cultures, in a 360-degree dialogue, until we rediscover that everyone is our brother and sister.

In this way, we have found the root of our European culture once again, and, on this foundation, we have tried to understand what is going on in our present times, which affect and change the entire planet and all humankind as never before. In fact, applying the ideals of peace, justice, freedom and equality today means gaining a universal dimension, which allows fraternity to become true.

We need to nurture a conscious and responsible vision for our future; a vision, that knows that we need to find creative ways of integration, because we know that various identities grow together, enrich each other and work for a more just and equitable world. We may not extinguish these identities. And that means: we need to go beyond a paradigm of security understood as entrenchment and rejection. We need to learn that this is a false security. Instead, we need to enter into a wider framework of "human security", that is, a security that gives priority to people and their destiny, the preservation of life, the prospect of hope.

We answer: the Risen Lord is right among us

This creative integration can also be sketched out in the network of our movements: We

are all God's children, who are united and distinct at the same time. We are all bound by mutual love which generates the presence of God among us; "Where two or more are united in my name, I am there among them." (Matthew 18:20). His gospel is the greatest gift this network of movements and communities can give to Europe. So, this is our answer: the Risen Lord is right among us, and he consoles, revives and renews through our charisms.

We believe **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** is something which can

inspire individuals or associations in their commitment to a free, reconciled, democratic, supportive and fraternal Europe. We are not talking about an "old" continent, but about a living and lively continent, which discovers, that it has a project to accomplish and that it can be a gift for the rest of humanity.

I would like to end with Pope Francis' words to the European Parliament in November 2014: "The time has come for us to abandon the idea of a Europe which is fearful and

self-absorbed, in order to revive and encourage a Europe of leadership, a repository of science, art, music, human values and faith as well; a Europe which contemplates the heavens and pursues lofty ideals; a Europe which cares about, defends and protects man, every man and woman; a Europe which bestrides the earth surely and securely, a precious point of reference for all humanity!" ■

Europe Today – Living by Hoping

STEFFEN KERN*

Dear sisters and brothers, we cannot live without hope. Hope belongs to our life. It encourages us get up in the morning, it allows us reach out to the future, and it helps through our days. Ernst Bloch, the great philosopher of hope, once had said: "If we stop hoping, then we may need to deal with what we fear. So we hope." We always hope, whether we believe or not, there is always a little hope in everybody. We cannot live without hope. Even Friedrich Nietzsche, the great atheist, had said: "Hope is like the rainbow shining above the falling brook of our life." We need hope, it is inevitable from a psychological point of view – and it is indispensable if you



come from philosophy.. But, sometimes it is difficult to justify our hope.

Let's hope, we have to hope, but what are we hoping for? As Christians we hope in a confident way. We have the word of our Lord Jesus Christ in our

ears, which he said to his disciples in his farewell sayings of John's Gospel: "In my father's house are many dwellings. I am going there to prepare a place for you." And we follow him. We shall go this way, because we are hoping. Yes, we do hope in a confident way.

* Rev. Steffen Kern, Chairman of the Evangelical Community Association Württemberg, (APIS)

Dear sisters and brothers, the hope of heaven needs to be accompanied by the responsibility for the world. God offers us heaven, but he sends us into this world. He gives us this world back, and God also gives us Europe. And who, if not Christians, are called to carry the hope to a Europe that has to deal with rising nationalism. Here, it seems as if Europe is drifting apart! In this crucial situation we are called to hope, for we do have hope for this world, and everybody should see and feel that.

I am from Stuttgart, and I admit, Stuttgart is quite a bit provincial if you look at Germany as such – or if you look at Europe. But despite its provinciality, Stuttgart has become a hub of prostitution. The po-

lice estimates, that here, right in the middle of Europe, about 4000 women are prostituting themselves. Among them you find old women, who are doing this business for decades, who have surrendered and sold their souls and their bodies altogether. And there are young women as well, very young women. We used to call this: girls partly from Eastern Europe. They have been towed or lured to Stuttgart with false promises. Some of these girls have been 18 years old for three years – if you know what I mean.

We have started a new project with our association in Stuttgart. A project of hope. A “house of hope”* in the middle of the red light district. Hope we call it and we want to be there for these women, just to

be there. We like to offer them sincere relationships. And we like to point out, that God does not regard any person as hopeless case. On this basis, we like to show them how to get out of prostitution. And by doing this, we like to show, that God is not willing to forsake our world! And that even in the deepest miseries of our cities and of Europe, and in the face of broken existences – supposedly broken – salvation is there. And hope is there. ... Yes, there is violence, there are evil forces, there are abysses, but, still, there is also hope. We need people who keep hoping. So let us leave Munich as blessed people who know that there is hope for this world and for our life. ■

Pantomime to Psalm 65:

„... you stilled the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, and the turmoil of the nations, ...“ RALPH, KNAUTHE, STOFFWECHSEL (METABOLISM) DRESDEN



Europe Today – a Call to Faith

THOMAS RÖMER*

We have seen the challenges we are facing in Europe today. We are living in an era where fear and uncertainty are rampant. Things are changing. What will the future bring? What will define our life? Which voice will we listen to when it is all about living with and dealing with these challenges?

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In his letter to one of the first European churches, the church in Corinth, the apostle Paul writes: “And now these three remain faith, hope, love, but the greatest of these is love.” (1 Corinthians 13:13) Faith, hope and love shall define our life – in our families, in the economy and in our political convictions.

Some time ago the chairman of the liberal faction of the European Parliament, Guy Verhofstadt, said: “If the politics of hope and passion cannot replace the politics of fear, Europe will keep on marching into a storm of increasing proportions.” (ZDF Heute, 09/11/2015)

In the storm

Europe in the storm – yes – many of us feel that way. For this reason I will read a familiar story from the Gospel today. A story against fear and for faith. Luke, chapter 8,

verses 22 to 25: One day Jesus said to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side of the lake.” So they got into a boat and set out. As they sailed, he fell asleep. A squall came down on the lake, so that the boat was being swamped, and they were in great danger. The disciples went and woke him, saying, “Master, Master, we’re going to drown!” He got up and rebuked the wind and the raging waters; the storm subsided, and all was calm. “Where is your faith?” he asked his disciples. In fear and amazement they asked one another, “Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him.”

Everytime I read or hear this story, I am amazed anew. The storm is raging, the waves are crashing into the boat and Jesus is asleep. The disciples start to work, just the way they had learned to do as fishermen,

they reap the sail and try to bail the water out of the boat.

Jesus sleeps

And Jesus sleeps. He is there! But he does not join the business that the danger, fear and the storm have provoked. He sleeps. By doing that, he is the calming pole in that whole story. He is fully confident in his heavenly Father – this confidence lets him sleep in peace – even in the storm. He believes.

Jesus enters the boat and the water starts to rage. It is whipped up by the storm. The four Gospels tell us the story in a way that we get the impression: This is about a struggle of power! The faith of Jesus disturbs the powers. These are the powers Jesus was talking about when he told his friends: “Go, preach the Gospel, heal the sick and cast out the evil

* Rev. Thomas Römer, YMCA Munich, Steering Committee TFE

powers.” In Luke 9:1 it says: “He gave his disciples power and authority over all evil spirits...”. These evil powers have an enemy they cannot defeat: the faith that trusts in the love of God the Father. Jesus lives this faith, and the powers rage against him.

The disciples are not so full of faith. They say: We have to do something or else we will die. When they realize that their previously acquired skills are insufficient, they wake Jesus up. They talk to him: “Jesus, now it is time to get up. We are sinking. Do something!”

Where is your faith?

Jesus gets up! And he asks his disciples, He asks us: “Where is your faith?” Jesus is looking for our faith. His question about our faith is like a gift to us: he wants to give us faith, he wants to let us partake of his faith. And we respond to his question and pray: “Lord, we ask you to give us this faith that relies on God’s love first, always and in everything. Lord, strengthen our faith.”

We are in the boat with Jesus. I know that some of you might be saying today: the boat “Europe” is filled with no space left. We cannot take anyone else in. But every one of you who takes a closer look will see: Eu-

rope has a secret. This secret in Europe’s history is recorded in the Bible, in Acts, chapter 16. There we read in verses 9 and 10: “During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him: come over to Macedonia and help us. After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.”

When we talk about Europe we have to remember this event. The Apostles came to help Europe with the Gospel. Since then the Gospel is God’s help for Europe, the calming pole in Europe is Jesus Christ. Since this beginning, the power of the Gospel has expanded in



Europe. It has shaped Europe: Mercy has moved in, and so have attention for the poor and the weak, humanity, freedom, love, forgiveness, reconciliation – the Gospel has shaped Europe and made the soul of Europe come alive.

Jesus got into the boat called „Europe“

Jesus got into the boat called “Europe”. He has never withdrawn or quit, he is there; he is there even in the middle of the storms. He trusts and sleeps! Nowadays he is overlooked, he is laughed at, often rejected, but his disciples know him. They shall call on him and wake him up. It is time to stand up – to stand with the resurrected Jesus.

Wherever he is and gets in, the purpose of the boat changes. Any boat that Jesus gets in is a lifeboat, not a luxury cruise ship for a nice vacation! It is a boat for fishers of men who get people saved and keep them from drowning. The boat Jesus is in is there to get people into it so that they may be safe and sound. That they may also discover the faith of Jesus in that boat, get to know Jesus and receive faith from him – faith in the Father who loves us and loves us and loves us.

In the end the sea is calm. Jesus has calmed the storm. Psalm 65 has already said about it: “... you stilled the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, and the turmoil of the nations.” (Psalm 65:7)

With this Psalm in mind, we discover that the story of the calming of the storm carries a global political dimension. The message of the Gospel shall soothe the turmoil of the nations. It is the word of reconciliation that creates this peace. Jesus came into the boat of this world so that this word of reconciliation could be proclaimed and produce its effect. This is why he surrendered himself to the evil powers. Jesus overcame them at the cross through his love and is risen from death to bring the word of peace and love to all the nations. In Jesus, with Jesus and through Jesus, it shall happen.

And together with the first disciples in the boat, we fall down and worship Jesus: “Jesus – who is like you, even the wind and the waves have to obey your word.”

Today Jesus is calling us to believe. He is not only calling us, but with us and through us he is calling Europe not to be bound by fear and egoism but by this reality: Jesus is here. He is asking about our faith. Our life, our communities and movements, our churches and the whole of Europe shall become alive through faith. An atmosphere of faith shall be

born where fear and egoism lose their power.

Will we stand up and stand with Jesus, who commands the powers so that they have to be silent? Will we let go of fear and egoism? Will we relinquish them?

Where is your faith? This question that Jesus is asking is an invitation to live with him today and to let our life be determined by the Gospel. This boat with Jesus in the midst will not sink. It will reach the shore. Security and integrity on our journey are not guaranteed but with Jesus we will definitely reach our life’s goal. The power of fear loses its hold over those who take the plunge to walk with Jesus and to stand with him. Faith, hope and love will fill them.

Where is your faith? This is what Jesus is asking Europe. Jesus is sending us. We shall stand up and go, and call to believe in God the Father who loves us and loves us and loves us. ■

FRIDAY AFTERNOON, 30 JUNE

Round table events

Christians in dialogue with politicians and bishops*

17 round table events took place in the city of Munich. The communities and movements were in dialogue with interested persons from Munich. The impulses came from politicians, church representatives and speakers of business and society.



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“The future of Europe relies on its roots”

“The meaning of Christianity is not to satisfy religious needs, but to set the world into a new light.” This was emphasized by Reinhard Cardinal Marx in his statement at the round table “The future of Europe relies on its roots”. This includes the exertion of political influence. Human rights or the constitution of Germany have essential roots in the message of Jesus. But this shouldn’t make Christians proud. They should instead start in a humble attitude to make this message concrete within the world. This could contribute to overcoming the new threat of a primitive nationalism, said Cardinal Marx.

“Ways to a Europe of sustainability”

In the round table “Ways to a Europe of sus-

tainability” the experts, Cardinal Turkson, the environment engineer Daniele Renzi, Hans-Hermann Böhm and others, encouraged the audience to follow the invitation of Pope Francis to a serious and open debate on the climate change and its ecological consequences. Cardinal Turkson emphasized: “Science and religion should start a dialogue in order to give a common contribution to society.”

Solidarity among generations

Emilia Müller, Bavarian State Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, Family and Integration, commented on “Solidarity among generations”. Europe must live a flexible togetherness of the generations, not isolate itself, but be open for the new: “We must have a wide roof and open doors.”

* A report from SCHÖNSTATT Aktuell 2/4 2016, pages 16–17

Christian values in professional life

The refreshingly youthful round table on Christian values in professional life interestingly turned to European values. Business men and leadership people shared their personal experience such as their commitment to keep jobs in an underdeveloped region, the rehab of a psychologically ill mechanic in the familiar surroundings of his job, and the combination of family life and professional life in the manner that a married couple could share both. Another important issue was to be more aware of the “European” forms of poverty – such as compulsive gambling or excessive debts.



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“Mysticism of the encounter”

Both, representatives of the “New Left” think tank, and theologians and philosophers of Christian movements, came to a dialogue in the round table “Mysticism of the encounter”. Walter Bailer, member of the Austrian communist party (KPÖ) and coordinator of the European network “transform! Europe”, encouraged the Christians to have no fear of secularism: “Concerning the last questions of life, we are closer together than we think, it is all about humanity in fullness”. Jesús Moran from the Focolare Movement pleaded for new and inclusive forms of integra-

tion of people with different ideologies. His final statement: “The harmony today between us gives us reasons for hope.”

“Martyrdom – a painful witness of Christians today”

“Martyrdom – a painful witness of Christians today” was the title of another round table. One of the speakers, Michael Brand, member of the German parliament, reminded the audience of a statement of holy Bonifatius: “We don’t want to be like silent dogs!” “Personally, I got the opinion that we are threatened from outside by



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terrorism and from inside by an aggressive secularism. I have less fear of Islamization of Europe than of a fading Christian faith.”

“What stage are we at on the way to unity of Christians?”

“What stage are we at on the way to unity of Christians?” This was asked at the round table in the crowded Church of the Saviour (Erlöserkirche). Kurt Cardinal Koch said we may have the impression that not many things are moving. But e.g. the Swiss Reformed Church is on the way also to adopt the Joint Declaration of the Doctrine of Justification. The Lutheran Bishop of Wurttemberg, Frank Otfried July hopes that “the big sign of unity, the common Lord’s Supper will be possible, even before the path is fully completed.” The General Secretary of the Wold Council of Churches in Geneva, Olav Fyske Tveit, urged: “There is no way to unity which doesn’t include repentance.”

“Christians and Muslims in dialogue”

At the round table “Christians and Muslims in dialogue” there was the desire to know each other more deeply, to encounter and to cooperate, in order to commonly face the social and cultural challenges of our time. Pasquale Ferrara, newly assigned Italian ambassador in Algeria, emphasized that dialogue is led by people,



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not by cultures or religions. One should always be concrete and realistic. Imam Baztami invited everybody to encounter and get to know each other. Many ideas and projects came from the debate between the Catholic philosopher of religion Beate Beckmann-Zöllner, the protestant Rev. Thomas Amberg and the French bishop M. Dubost. Gérard Testard (Efesias, France) declared: “The medicine against the separation between Christians and Muslims is to recognize the other person as brother or sister.” ■



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Round Tables

SUBJECTS AND RESPONSIBLE PERSONS AND MOVEMENTS*

- 1 **Yes to life from beginning to end**
Dr. Marcus Knaup; Mechthild E. Löhr; Stephanie Merckens, Austria; Jesus Brotherhood, Gnadenthal; Focolare Movement; Elke Pechmann, Offensive of Young Christians (OJC)
- 2 **Youth and the elderly – solidarity among generations**
Emilia Müller, Bavarian State Minister; Michael Götz, YMCA Bavaria; Community Immanuel; The Sword of the Spirit; Father Hans-Martin Samietz, Father Stefan Strecker, Schoenstatt Movement
- 3 **Marriage and the family – foundations for a sustainable society**
Prof. Dr. Christoph Raedel; Prof. Dr. Thomas Schirmacher; Lioba and Andreas Ennemoser, Equipes Notre-Dame Italy; Marly and Hans-Peter Stasch, Focolare Movement; Bernhard and Monika Stock, The Sword of the Spirit; Michael and Petra Kiess, Prof. Dr. Hubertus Brantzen, Elisabeth and Hans-Georg Hagmann, Schoenstatt Movement
- 4 **Ways to a Europe of sustainability**
Peter Cardinal Turkson, Vatican; Daniele Renzi, Italy; Rev. Siegfried Großmann; Sr. Nicole Grochowina, Fraternity of Christ Selbitz (CCB); Prof. Luca Fiorani, Focolare Movement; representatives of regional protestant churches; Sebastian Eisele, Marianne Pfaffinger, YMCA Munich
- 5 **Being called into professional life – do Christian values work today?**
Dr. Iris Hauth, President of the German Association for Psychiatry and Psychotherapy; Prof. Dr. Luigino Bruni, Focolare Movement; Manuela and Peter Miller, Schoenstatt Movement; David Denemoser, Associazione Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII; Fraternity of Christ Selbitz (CCB); Christians in Economy (CiW); Comunità di Nomadelfia; Prof. Dr. Klaus Henning, Community Immanuel; Dr. Reinhardt Schink, YMCA Munich
- 6 **Solidarity in the one world**
Bishop Emeritus Jürgen Johannesdotter; Ursula Kalb, Community of Sant'Egidio; Juan Simoes Iglesias, Spain, YMCA Europe; Barbara Beu, Strasbourg, Community Emmaus; Eberhard Schulte, YMCA Ansbach
- 7 **Immigration – drama and opportunity for the old continent**
Senior Church Council Member Dieter Kaufmann, Wurttemberg; Michael Schöpf SJ; Archbishop Emeritus Dr. Robert Zollitsch; Project examples of the Community of Sant'Egidio (Rev. Dr. Matthias Leineweber) and the Focolare Movement (Stefano Comazzi); Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII; Schoenstatt Movement; Youth with a Mission; Agnès Rausch, Community of Christian Life, Luxembourg
- 8 **The future of our society: mission and responsibility of the younger generation**
Prof. Dr. Jürgen Eilert; Paul Metzloff, Office for Youth Ministry of the German Bishops' Conference (afj); Philipp Obrigewitsch, Lena Postic, YMCA Esslingen; Marius Häffner; Lucia Reinsperger, Vienna, Schoenstatt Movement; Christiane Rohn
- 9 **Together we are strong! – Reconciliation is alive – future is already here!**
Michael Prince of Salm-Salm; Prof. Miroslav Volf, USA; Rev. Peter Dettwiler, Switzerland; Johannes Fichtenbauer, MA, Austria; Rev. Sergej Antunoch, Russia; Rev. Hans-Joachim Scholz; Claudia and Fred Jung, Prof. Dr. Lothar Ruf, Schoenstatt Movement; Renate Henning, Community Immanuel
- 10 **Gospel for people of today**
Dr. Christian Hennecke, Diocese Hildesheim; Lutheran Bishop Dr. Hans-Jürgen Abromeit; Dr. Roland Werner; Alpha France; Charismatic Renewal Bamberg; Chemin Neuf; Community Emmanuel, France; Student Mission Germany (SMD); Community of Sant'Egidio; Schoenstatt Movement; Rev. Jürgen Baron, German YMCA (AG)
- 11 **What stage are we at on the way to unity of Christians?**
Kurt Cardinal Koch, Rome; Lutheran Bishop Dr. h.c. Frank O. July; Metropolitan Seraphim Joanta, Germany; Rev. Olav Fykse Tveit, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches; Dr. Larry Miller, Mennonite, USA/France, Secretary of the Global Christian Forum; Lujaina Toumah, Syria; Dr. Joan Pavi Back, Heike Vesper, Focolare Movement; Dr. Christian Löhr, Schoenstatt Movement; Sr. Anna-Maria aus der Wiesche, Fraternity of Christ Selbitz (CCB)

* The last persons – one or two – in each list were responsible for the preparation and the presentation

12 Christians and Muslims in dialogue

Dr. Beate Beckmann-Zöllner, Community Immanuel; Gérard Testard, Paris, Efesia; Bishop Michel Dubost, France; Pasquale Ferrara, Florence University and Italian government; Rev. Dr. Thomas Amberg, protestant Michaels Brotherhood; Imam Mustapha Baztami, Italy; Gérard Testard, Efesia; Prof. Giuseppe Milan, Italy; Antonella Bianco, Focolare Movement

13 Martyrdom – a painful witness of Christians today

Anglican Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali; Michael Brand, Member of the German parliament, Susanne Bühl, Rev. Dr. Matthias Leineweber, Community of Sant'Egidio; Kuno Kallnbach, Christian Guest Center Wurttemberg (Schönblick)

14 The treasure of prayer – importance and mandate

Sr. Anna Franziska Kindermann, Congregation of the Franciscans of Siessen; Hanspeter Nüesch, Zurich, Campus for Christ; Michelle Moran, England, Catholic Charismatic Renewal; Rainer Harter, Prayer House Freiburg; Rev. Dr. David Demian, Canada, Director of Watchmen for the Nations; Birgit Janke, Free Christian Youth Community (FCJG); Bernd Oettinghaus, Evangelical Alliance Frankfurt

15 The future of Europe relies on its roots

Reinhard Cardinal Marx; Jeff Fountain, Schuman Centre for European Studies, Netherlands; Branislav Škripek, Slovakia, member of the European Parliament; Ortwin Schweitzer, Adoramus Community; Günter Refle, Community Immanuel

16 Mysticism of the encounter

Jesús Morán Cepedano, Co-President of the Focolare Movement; Walter Baier, "transform", European network for alternative thinking and political dialogue, Brussels/Vienna; Cornelia Hildebrandt; Petra Steinmair-Pösel, University Innsbruck; Nikos Filis, Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs of Greece; Father Prof. Dr. Lothar Penners, Schoenstatt Movement; Herbert Lauenroth, Franz Kronreif, Focolare Movement

17 Unity – possibilities and obstacles after 500 years

Rev. Dr. Klaus Rieth, Wurttemberg; Prof. Dr. Peter Neuner, Rev. Friedrich Aschoff, Charismatic Renewal in the Lutheran Church; Father Dr. Michael Marmann, Prof. Dr. Joachim Schmiedl, Schoenstatt Movement



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FRIDAY NIGHT, 1 JULY

Looking back – Decisions – Looking ahead

What lies ahead? The Lutheran Pastor Henning Dobers interprets the prophetic word from Isaiah “God is doing a new thing”. In his summary of the Congress, Gerhard Proß emphasizes the “yes” to TOGETHER FOR EUROPE. Father Heinrich Walter points out the next steps. Thomas Römer encourages us to be Europeans and he prays for the continent. Then Kurt Cardinal Koch directs us with his spiritual input to look forward: it is about reconciliation.

Something New Springs Up

HENNING DOBERS*



“See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland” (Isaiah 43:19)

Dear friends, I would like to look ahead with you, asking the question what is our specifically Christian contribution, the aspect only Christians can contribute to the healing of Europe; but before that, I would first pause for a moment together with you, as I have realized, there is one thing lacking in our

continent, and maybe also in our together-process. I would call it the ability to mourn.

My experience is that things go very fast in our time. The media supply us with images. We receive news, and this goes on day by day in a very fast pace. And we do not take the time to digest what we have experienced and what we have seen. I would remind us of the great city builder Nehemiah in the Old Testament. Nehemiah inquires, how is it going in Jerusalem? He could also have

focused on optimizing his life in Babylon. But he inquires and then receives the news how it is going in Jerusalem: things are bad. And do you know what Nehemiah does? He does not first of all roll up his sleeves, but he starts to weep. Mourning, grieving. He is standing there, fasting for days. And you know, in a sense that is what I desire for us as well, that we take the time, that we have the courage to mourn. Mourning some of the things that have become difficult over the last few years, which have changed a lot.

And out of this grieving before God and in prayer, on his knees before God, a new vision

* Rev. of the Lutheran Church of Hannover, Chairman of the Charismatic Renewal in the Lutheran Church (GGE).

grows: we will build up the city walls of Jerusalem again. This way, Nehemiah begins to build it up again in conversation with his Lord and in conversation with friends. What lay waste for 150 years, was then completed in 52 days. This is the first thing I would like to pass on tonight. I would encourage us to take time, over and again to grieve before God. That we won't just tick off everything but are honest and open with our feelings before him.

And secondly, that in the presence of God, we can then turn it into a positive energy. And I believe this is something only we as Christians can do. This is our specific contribution which only we as Christians in Europe can make, something that no one else is capable of, which is prayer. I am reading a passage from the first letter to Timothy. There we read in chapter 2: *"I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people – for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness."*

I come from a country where a bit over two decades ago, we experienced what is probably one of the biggest miracles of modern time, a peaceful reunification. I was fortunate to still know Christian Führer, the former pastor of the Nikolai church in Leipzig. And he explained it to me in this way: You know when you hold a

candle in your hand you cannot become violent. Then one hand holds the candle, and the other one has to protect the light. Thus we experienced a peaceful reunification in our country with candles and prayers. I personally have experienced this as the biggest miracle of our modern time here in our continent, and I do not want to forget it.

And we have not made it happen, but we have prayed and God has heard our prayers, and therefore I believe the time has come that we intensely pray together as God's people. And our prayer will be especially effective if we pray in unity. I believe in this, we still have to do some homework ourselves. We can be a model for Europe if we ourselves are able to live unity in diversity. If we respect one another and esteem and value one another in our traditions and still are one in Christ. Then we can be an example for Europe, and we have to practice this a lot more.

And then we enter into prayer together that God will work new miracles in this continent as we act together. First of all the miracle of unity of the two large Christian denominations in this continent. Yesterday and today it has already been pointed out that something is being planned for March of next year, on 12 March, a "Healing of Memories", a public confession and prayer for forgiveness.

But after this, something needs to happen. And that something will happen, will be connected to our becoming one in prayer as God's people. Maybe it is also possible that tonight – I want to pass this on to those steering this conference – that we pray once again tonight specifically for those who are here from Britain. That we do not only talk *about* them and hear *from* them but that we bless them and pray for them. And God will do the rest. ■

Dance Performance



Résumé of the Congress Days

GERHARD PROSS*



On my heart are two things at the end of these two congress days. The one thing that moved me was the speech of Cardinal Kasper. He took up our slogan „500 years of separation are enough“ and at the same time turned against all those who raise objections and said, this step of reconciliation is required now. And then at the end of that morning we experienced Cardinal Marx and Bishop Bedford-Strohm, how both of them have shown us that we are no more divided but also the churches are connected with each other. I saw many of us who were deeply touched by this in their hearts. These words and this attitude give us hope. Gabriele Deutschmann just expressed it in the same way. Hope for becoming one and how the new shape of Gods people will rise out of it. We carry the seed for the new

shape already in us. So much „New“ is alive among us. Let us move forward with courage. Let us live the seed of the new shape that is among us.

The second thought is about Europe. During the preparation for Munich I was already moved several times by this. Twice when we as the Steering Committee were together we got surprised by the negative news about terror attacks und at the same time experienced how deeply Europe is shattered. Now we met again in these days and realized how Europe is again shaken. This has its effect on us. And it also affects **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** and suddenly the three words we have chosen as motto more than ten years back become our agenda: Together “for” Europe. In the morning after the decision for Brexit Pater Heinrich said: “It

is like we from **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** would be a prophetic sign”. Some people asked if the word prophetic is not exaggerated. But then – from listening to God – Sr. Anna Franziska had the impulse for Wednesday night: we should speak in a prophetic way.

Dear friends of **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE**, I have the impression that we are called in a new way to raise our voice. Little while ago we heard the view that **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** developed from a child to a teenager and became adult. This links to the question: are we ready to take responsibility for Europe? Are we ready to speak out to the inside and to the outside: “Yes, we are for this Europe, for together in Europe”? Exactly these three words: *Together for Europe*. I invite us: let us say yes to our responsibility for this Europe. ■

* YMCA Esslingen, Steering Committee TFE

What Should we Do?

FATHER HEINRICH WALTER*



What should we do? This was the set question to which we were all asked to give an answer. Over the last few days the quote from St. John's Gospel which we also received twice, came to mind: "I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit – fruit that will last." (John 15:16) We have been chosen not to have an easy life but that we may bear fruit. And this fruit is not just a one off but something that remains, something that continues to grow, something that has a positive outcome on our entire society.

I remember the words of Cardinal Kasper about fruitfulness. He said that what happened in Augsburg were theological events which were then signed. However here at **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE**, this has borne fruit. He used the word: fruitfulness.

Today we just heard from the sociologist, Professor Hochschild, we need to be seen in society. He also spoke of the social and cultural strength he wishes us as a movement to have.

Fruitfulness

How does fruitfulness come to life? In this regard, I would like to say something about the core structure of our togetherness. What is our secret? Our secret is simply that it lives within each one of us, something I would like to call healthy growth. When is growth healthy? It is healthy when it develops and grows from the inside to the outside. Not something that can happen overnight, but gradually from within, just like a seed grows into a plant and a plant into a tree. Therefore, to me one se-

cret of our **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** is that we became friends. Hospitality is a key issue here. Using the culture of hospitality – one small step, which was then followed by hundreds and thousands of little services to each other. This is how we grew. Every step, which we now continue to take, must be deeply rooted in our friendship for each other, otherwise we will lose each other. Therefore, that is what I mean by growth.

If we ask ourselves the question, how do we continue? What should we do now? I think it has to continue to develop from within. Of course, there are some among us, and it even brings a shiver down my back, who want to reach their goal much quicker, we want to do something, but if we do that, we do run out of breath. I believe this has been written into our history as a secret in order to remain healthy that we develop first of all from within; from the inside to the outside, in this way growth develops slowly but in a healthy

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* Schoenstatt Movement, Steering Committee TFE

manner. Even when we experience spring where everything is blossoming, where the buds are starting to open, this process still takes a long time to get there. Therefore, we should not be down heartened or disappointed if things do not seem to go quick enough with our **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** if this or that project does not take shape etc.

I would just like to say one last thing. Tomorrow we will seal the pact with each other once again. This is a pact of mutual respect and love. We did it in 2001, 2004, 2007. The pact tomorrow will only reveal and develop its strength when it receives an update by each one of us in our daily lives, exactly where he or she is at this

moment in time. That is why I like to talk about the extension of the pact, it is not the same pact from 2001 and 2004, but has grown in depth and width with new countries. We have also heard today about the future pact. We just need to think about Europe. Moreover, from Maria Voce we heard how it grew in depth. Whenever it is about surrender, this pact is worth the cost.

So today, I would like to invite and encourage you, up until that very point when we seal the pact tomorrow, to ask yourselves, which expansion or development does this pact from 2 July 2016 contain for you? What additional aspect is there now to this pact? Which new community have you got-

ten to know and taken into your heart? Which step towards surrender is possible for you, so that this pact is updated and personal?

To conclude may I remind you again of the verse from St. John's Gospel so that each one of us can understand it correctly: "I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit – fruit that will last." ■

Praising God with Andrea Adams-Frey and Albert Frey



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Conclusion and Prayer

THOMAS RÖMER*



Some of you have been saying that you are experiencing a taste of heaven here. I believe this is the message of **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE**: heaven and earth are no longer two separate worlds, but they have become one through Jesus Christ, and we already live this unity in his name. And we want to experience heaven on earth: faith, love, hope. you are you in?

For me Europe has become much more concrete again during these last few days than it had been. Europe is a continent of friendship. Friendship is an important word, and now I have friends from all over Eu-

rope, from Portugal to Russia, in Poland, in the United Kingdom, in France, in Greece. I should enumerate all countries you are from. I'm proud to be a European, and I have friends across the whole of Europe.

And I want to invite you to stand up right now and to commit ourselves to the living God in prayer, to the triune God who is love.

Prayer:

Jesus Christ, we have gathered during these days and dedicated them to you, and we thank you that you have come and that you have been living in our midst. You are risen from the dead. Through this the victory at the cross was validated, the victory over sin and separation, the victory over all powers and principalities that want to keep us from being together, the victory over death which no longer has the power to separate us from you and from one another.

Jesus Christ, we want to trust you and to be yours. Help us to follow your commandment to love one another. Help us to follow your commission to live the Gospel in this world and to spread it.

Your kingdom come. Your kingdom come into our communities. Your kingdom come into the churches. Your kingdom come into our peoples in Europe. And your kingdom come especially into the relationships among us.

We pray for mercy for all the people in Europe, for those who have lived here for a long time and for those who just arrive.

Jesus Christ, we ask you to stand up in Europe and to work among us.

Amen ■

* Rev. Thomas Römer, YMCA Munich. Steering Committee TFE

Encounter – Reconciliation – Future

KURT CARDINAL KOCH*

The crucial contribution that we Christians possess, which we can offer to the future of Europe is that we would be reconciled to one another and live as those who have been reconciled. This conference and tomorrow's Rally are therefore represented by three key words: Encounter – Reconciliation – the Future. Yet the word reconciliation is located in the middle between "encounter" and "future". This sends the signal, that the fundamental requirement for reconciliation is encountering one another and that from reconciliation the future can arise. Above all, reconciliation takes center stage in Christian belief, as the wonderful text of Paul's letter to the Corinthians, chapter five, demonstrates (2 Corinthians 5:18–21). From this I would especially like to accentuate three themes.

1 "It was God who reconciled the world to himself in Christ." With this statement Paul plainly shows us that reconciliation among us human beings and Christians is only possible if we ourselves are



reconciled. Reconciliation is first and foremost a gift which God gives to us and from there can it become our mission. With that, God shows us how reconciliation is possible.

In the first place, it becomes clear that God takes the initiative in reconciliation. God does not wait until we humans come to be reconciled. By all experience, God would have to wait a long time. God comes to humanity first and reconciles them to himself. This demonstrates that reconciliation is possible where someone dares to take the first step, indeed directly into the cycle of the mutual building up of arms which is ever to be observed in human relationships and common affairs – even in the economy. One side arms itself under the assumption that the other side has already done so. And this cycle of build-up does not end

until one side has the courage to begin to call it quits. Reconciliation begins when the other is invited to commit himself to the same way.

Secondly, in God's act of propitiation it becomes evident that reconciliation is no trivial matter, rather it is hard work. It is nothing less than the consistent love of God towards an enemy, that was revealed of the cross of Jesus. According to human logic, the cruelty of Jesus' crucifixion must imply vengeance to the extreme, so that the world might be returned to order. But in the cross of Jesus God made an end of all wrath and retaliation. The only "wrath" that God knows is his uncompromising No to retaliation and his love to the extreme. God did not react to the escalation of human wickedness by means of retaliation, rather with an increase in his

* Prof. Dr. Kurt Cardinal Koch, Cardinal of the Roma Curia, President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity

unending love, which includes a willingness to take suffering upon himself. This is the crux of reconciliation, to which we have to attest jointly and ecumenically.

2 From there the view is opened to the Apostle Paul's second point: For our sakes, God made him sin, who knew no sin, so that we could become the righteousness of God. By that it becomes completely obvious that reconciliation is more than merely a sentimental feeling. When reconciliation is born of love it goes without saying, that true love is willing to understand, but not to approve or to declare harmless, that which is in no way harmless, such as division among Christians. Reconciliation is the exact opposite of a weak hands-off approach to wrong-doing or to the trivialization of evil which leaves well enough alone, that which is wrong. In fact, one can only forgive that which one holds to be expressly evil and which one would not just ignore in his darker moods. Forgiveness and reconciliation presuppose that that which was done has been explicitly evaluated as evil and that one is willing to put reconciliation into effect.

Thus, reconciliation is an exacting enterprise. This is clearly evident where it is determined by Christ to be mandatory. It must constantly give us pause to think, that forgiveness and reconciliation were the first gifts of the resurrect-

ed Christ to his disciples when he said to them: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sin, they will be forgiven him; if you retain his sins, they will be retained" (John 20:23). The disciples are then sent out to dispose of the old and the outworn, namely guilt, and to bring to the world the new, that is, forgiveness. Therein lies the task of reconciliation for which the disciples of Jesus Christ are sent into the world.

3 "We are therefore ambassadors of Christ and it is God, who through us urges, 'We plead on the behalf of Christ: Be reconciled to God.'" This third point, which appears in the Apostle Paul's letter, does not just bring to light that we Christians are called to minister reconciliation, but also and, above all, that we do this by the mandate and in the authority of Jesus Christ.

In order to be in the ministry of reconciliation we must always take care that we ourselves are reconciled. The best way that that the Gospel offers us is prayer. It helps one to see others in a new light, especially those with whom one is yet unreconciled, as much as possible, from God's point of view. Prayer enables even "enemies" to turn into „brothers and sisters“, as Jesus commands us in the Sermon on the Mount. It is no coincidence that Jesus ties his call to love of one's enemy with the further command, "Pray for those who persecute you" (Matthew 5:44). In and

through prayer Jesus brought himself to pray for forgiveness and reconciliation while on the cross: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Reconciliation originates under the cross. As a consequence of emulating Jesus, Stephen, the first martyr of the Church, cries out after being stoned, "Lord, do not count this sin against them!" (Acts 7:59).

These biblical witnesses document the wonderful message that prayer for one another is the intensive care unit of reconciliation. The precious pearl of reconciliation, between Christians of different denominations and in today's world begins in prayer and desires to radiate into our everyday lives. Let us pray, that from this ecumenical meeting reconciliation may point the way into the Europe's future. Then the three key words of this conference and tomorrow's Rally, Encounter – Reconciliation – Future, will be fulfilled, not just in words, but in our lives. ■

Without prayer we cannot achieve anything. Therefore, prayers close the day and prepare us for the Outdoor Rally.

Prayers

CHRISTOPHE D'ALOISIO *



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That we may see what we normally don't see. God may open the eyes of our heart to see his face in the persons which he leads into our way. Lord, open our eyes..

Amen. ■

I shall not speak a long prayer, but I want to emphasize one word: A word which is a calling, which will be a programme for Europe. It comes from the Greek mythology. The meaning of this word is

the name of a woman with wide eyes. I want to invite you to keep a moment in silence and to pray that God may give us wide eyes, a great and wide vision. That our eyes may be opened – the eyes of our heart.

DAVID DAMIAN **

The prayer I want to pray for tomorrow. The Lord asked me to read Psalm 24:7–8:

“Lift up your heads, oh you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of Glory might come in. Who is the King of Glory? The LORD strong and mighty.”

So Father we ask that you will open the ancient gates. We

go way before when divisions started. You can role away the shame all the way to the origin when the church was born in unity. So Father, we are not asking for a new work only but we ask that you will restore all what the church have lost and today Lord we say, as we march across the streets may your kingdom come and may your will be done and may the ancient gates be opened for

the King of Glory to come in. Who is the King of Glory? The Lord Jesus Christ, strong and mighty.

Amen. ■

* Orthodox Fraternity in Western Europe, Brussels, Steering Committee TtE

** Dr. Rev. David Demian, Vancouver, Canada. Director of Watchmen for the Nations

Father in heaven, we pray for a rain of mercy when you open the doors of heaven. Your grace, which spreads across our country and across our continent. You may, by your love and mercy, present us with reconciliation, which only can be received from heaven. And we want to stand there tomorrow with our hearts to receive from you this rain of mercy. That our heart may be soaked by your love. And that reconciliation will be possible, not only in our desires, but in the reality of our daily life, and that this reconciliation may happen be-

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tween the generations – you may help us to realize it. And also a reconciliation between the cultures – you may help us to realize it. And that you may help us to spread across our continent and in this world the heritage of freedom from violence, the peaceful revolution, in your name, for you are the Prince of Peace. Let it be, tomorrow, a day of peace, that the shalom of heaven may be

spread at the Stachus. And let it become a real experience for us and for the people, who don't know you, that they may ask: Where does this peace come from, a peace that reigns on this place of the Rally.

Amen. ■

* Bernd Oettinghaus, protestant theologian, leader of the prayer initiative "Round Table of Prayer" of the Lausanne Movement in Germany





OUTDOOR RALLY OF 2 JULY 2016 MUNICH



f TOGETHER FOR EUROPE

– KARLSPLATZ (STACHUS)



Photos: © Grill

OUTDOOR RALLY OF TOGETHER FOR EUROPE

the 2 July 2016 at the Munich Karlsplatz (Stachus)



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The Highlight of “Munich 2016” An Introduction with Comments to the Outdoor Rally at Stachus

FATHER LOTHAR PENNERS*

In the afternoon of 2 July the highlight of “Munich 2016” took place: the Outdoor Rally at Stachus with a focus on: reconciliation and future – in the sense of our shared responsibility for the future of faith and the continent Europe. It had been prepared primarily by the intense encounters of the Congress especially the preceding Friday evening with prayer impulses and contentual reports on topics like “Reconciliation” (Cardinal Koch, Rome), Europe as a continent of friendship (Thomas Römer) and an introduction to renewing, deepening and extending the “Covenant of Mutual Love“ (Father Heinrich Walter). The prayer meetings in different churches in the city centre of Munich held by various groups (see the following list) also served as a preparation for the Outdoor Rally in the afternoon.

However, the Outdoor Rally was not only intended to be and in fact was the highlight of the event in Munich but also the arrival point of the joint path that had started in the years 1998–2001, as was summed up several times during the Congress. At the beginning of this joint path no one could predict

that in the following not even 20 years such an extent of inner and outer developments would be achieved as became apparent during the Outdoor Rally.

In this sense the Outdoor Rally was in fact – as envisioned, of course – a display of the inaugurated goal – on the eve of the Reformation memorial year 2017. However, it was significantly more than that at the same time: a public presentation of what had grown together. And all that in an unspectacular fruitfulness of several vital processes.

Some of that was mirrored in the setting and course of the Outdoor Rally. Those who came to Stachus, or rather to the half of the square Karlsplatz that was initially reserved for the Outdoor Rally, encountered a prepared but hardly intrusive terrain: a stage, that somehow resembled a matchbox given the surrounding proportions; right next to it a screen that was not larger proportionally – any relevant large company in Munich would invest more in and make more fuss of any advertising event.



* Father Prof. Dr. Lothar Penners, Schoenstatt Movement



Photos: © Haaf, Grill

About the same can be said about the gate that was opened step by step in the course of the event. It did not suggest a golden fairytale-like future but rather showed the opportunity to remove the barriers of historically grown alienation to open the way for a new togetherness.

That covers the general setting. Whoever wants to understand what happened in this framework – maybe expecting to discover God’s deeds and historic impulses generated by the Spirit – should not only reflect the speeches and declarations but also specifically the pictures and gestures: the young presenter “couple” who not only skilfully moderated the event but also showed and radiated the unconcerned sincerity or sincere unconcern of a new beginning; the representatives of the Steering Committee of **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** did not seem like senior officials at all but as bearers of life from different groups who contributed their respective share according to their charisma and main focuses. In and through all the situational framework the central message of the network was expressed prominently during the Outdoor Rally in its individual contributions as well as in its central actions: *Unity in Diversity* is possible – in the religious world among Christians as well as politically in Europe and beyond.

I would like to highlight primarily:

- Pope Francis and the Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomy I – both appreciated the gathering notably in their greeting messages.
- In his speech Prof. Miroslav Volf, Anglican theologian, Yale-University, showed a path to reconciliation in four precise steps – equally relevant for the religious church area and the political social area.

In both areas the central message was deepened by means of declarations and symbolic actions in the course of the Outdoor Rally.

First of all the highest representatives of the church: Cardinal Koch (President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity), Seraphim Joanta (Romanian Orthodox Metropolitan for e.g. Germany, Central and Northern Europe) and Frank Otfried July (Vice President of the Lutheran World Federation and Lutheran Bishop in Wurttemberg) asked Jesus Christ and each other for forgiveness for their mutual exclusion, for denying each other’s love and truth and the corresponding signs of strife and division. Particularly the following mutual embrace was one of the most impressive gestures of the Outdoor Rally. “In an embrace there is enclosing and release. This is how the path to reconciliation can reach its goal.” (Miroslav Volf)

As already during the Congress the German representatives of the Catholic and the Protestant Churches, Reinhard Cardinal Marx (Archbishop of Munich and Freising and President of the German Bishops' Conference) and Heinrich Bedford-Strohm (Chairman of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) and Bishop of the Lutheran Church in Bavaria) affirmed their intention to express the apparent unity in diversity e. g. by celebrating Christ together in the memorial year of the Reformation 2017. Regarding the ongoing event they reported that there were not only efforts to unify Christians but also encouraging experiences of tangible unity already.

The Outdoor Rally closed with the present representatives of **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** reading and affirming the message on 2 July 2016 in Munich: "Together for Europe. Encounter – Reconciliation – Future."

As an outer sign of the willingness to make all efforts as a network for a Europe of unity in reconciled diversity in the face of a possibly divergent continent ("Brexit" in these days, issue of refugees), keys were distributed among the attendees. They were labelled "Together – Reconciliation – Future" as reminders of the gate that was opened step by step, as an encouragement to open doors on an individual basis and to "carry what we've experienced into our own social environments, not least through the gates of hospitality" (Father Heinrich Walter). The fact that the keys were distributed by the teenagers and that children and teenagers were not only present but even contributed to the event and especially to the concert and prayer night following it (with a considerable number of about 2000–3000 young attendees) showed that the aspect "future" had a real historical starting point. ■



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SATURDAY MORNING, 2 JULY 2016

In the morning of 2 July ecumenical prayers have been held at six different places. They invited us to spiritually reflect the events happened so far, and to prepare hearts and minds for the Outdoor Rally at the "Stachus". The preaching based on the Gospel of the day, from: Luke 1:39-47 and 56.

Ecumenical prayers in the morning

Mary's visit at Elisabeth (The visitation of Mary)

At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!" And Mary said: "My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. ... Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home. (NIV)



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1 Cathedral, Frauenplatz 12

in German language:

Chairing: Prioress Sr. Anna-Maria aus der Wiesche, Fraternity of Christ Selbitz (CCB)

Co-working: Congregation of the Franciscans of Siessen

Preaching: Dr. Gabriele Rüttiger, director of the diocesan ordinariate ; Rev. Dr. Walter Dürr, Community in the Swiss Reformed Church, JAHU Biel;

Musical programme: Swiss choir, assembled from diverse communities

2 Saint Michel, Neuhauserstr. 6

in German and Spanish language

Chairing: Bernd Oettinghaus, Evangelical Alliance Frankfurt

Co-working: Sr. Vernita Weiß, Arnulf Rausch, Schoenstatt Movement

Preaching: Father Ludwig Gütthlein, Schoenstatt Movement

Musical programme: Immanuel Worship Workshop, Ravensburg

3 Buergersaalkirche, Neuhauserstr. 14

in Italian language

Chairing: Jörg Rohde, Community of Sant'Egidio

Co-working: Salome Vischer, Ilona Toth, Focolare Movement

Preaching: Marco Impagliazzo, Community of Sant'Egidio

Musical programme: Community of Sant'Egidio

4 Dreifaltigkeitskirche (Holy Trinity Church),
Pacellistr. 6

in Polish language

Chairing: Walter Kriechbaum, YMCA Munich

Co-working: Max Stebler, Focolare movement

5 Saint Jacob, Am Anger 2

in French language

Chairing: Christophe d'Aloisio, Orthodox Fraternity
in Western Europe, Brussels

Co-working: Gerard Testard, Efesia, Paris

6 Saint Matthew Church, Nussbaumstr. 1

in English Language

Chairing: Martin Wagner, YMCA Munich

Co-working: Christoph Hemberger, Catholic Charismatic
Renewal (CE)

Preaching: Michelle Moran, Catholic Charismatic
Renewal (CCRS)

Musical programme: John Angelina, Gospel Life
Center, Munich



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SATURDAY AFTERNOON, 2 JULY 2016

5000 participants from over 20 European countries and guests from all over the world came at 2 July 2016 to the Outdoor Rally at the “Stachus”, a central place in Munich. They made it to a great event. The participants came from more than 200 Christian communities and movements. Moreover, ten thousands watched the event by livestream at home or in their local communities.

Programme of the Outdoor Rally

Karlsplatz (called Stachus), 2:00 p.m.–10:00 p.m.

Musical programme of the day

Outbreakband; LZ7; King’s Kids; KISI from Austria and Germany, Jesus Revolution and many others.

2 p.m. Unity is possible!

Words of welcome and video messages from Pope Francis and Patriarch Bartholomew

Maria Voce, Focolare Movement: Unity is Possible

Short statements of successful unity from different European countries

3 p.m. Reconciliation Opens the Future – 500 Years of Separation are enough

Professor Miroslav Volf: Fear Divides, Love Unites

Peter Dettwiler and Larry Miller: Reconciliation between Reformed Church and Mennonites

Gerhard Proß, YMCA Esslingen: Reconciliation Opens the Way to the Future

Kurt Cardinal Koch, Council for Promoting Christian Unity; Bishop Frank Otfried July, Lutheran World Council, Metropolitan Serafim Joanta, Romanian Orthodox Church: a conversation

Rev. Olav Fykse Tveit, World Council of Churches: A Sign of Hope

4 p.m. A Culture of Relationship and Mercy

Gérard Testard, Efesia: Changed Attitudes by TOGETHER FOR EUROPE

Young people: their visions and hopes for Europe

Jeff Fountain, Youth with a Mission and Schuman centre: AD FONTES – Back to our roots!

Andrea Riccardi/Marco Impagliazzo, Community of Sant’Egidio: Not Walls but Bridges

5 p.m. Mission and Future: “The Open Gate”

Reinhard Cardinal Marx; Bishop Heinrich Bedford-Strohm; Father Heinrich Walter, Schoenstatt Movement: a Conversation

Concluding Message: Thomas Römer, YMCA Munich and Steering Committee

6 p.m. Meeting and Music

7 p.m.–10 p.m. Music – Impulse – Joy

Walter Heidenreich, Free Christian Youth Community (FCJG); Paul Manwaring, Bethel Church; Gerhard Kehl, Jordan foundation; Matthias Kunick, YMCA Munich; Jessica Angelina, Gospel Life Center Munich; Christof Michos, Gospel Centre (EVZ) Munich; Father Hans-Martin Samietz, Schoenstatt Movement

I Unity is possible

Introduction

In their greeting statement members of the Steering Committee of TOGETHER FOR EUROPE were already setting the wide horizon of the Outdoor Rally which took place at the end of the Congress. GERHARD PROSS (from the YMCA Esslingen) welcomed the participants on behalf of the Steering Committee and explained why TOGETHER FOR EUROPE had invited to join the Rally.

For 15 years, we have experienced that reconciliation and unity are possible. We could not be more diverse, coming from different denominations, spirituality and culture. And yet there is Jesus Christ in our midst, and that experience is deeper than all the other differences. From this common experience, we do say today: 500 years of separation of the churches are enough. Unity is possible.

HILDE KIEBOOM, Community of Sant'Egidio, emphasized the European dimension of the Rally:

We came here to strengthen our commitment to a unit-

ed Europe. We are aware of our responsibility: the destiny of the refugees and migrants who seek a better future while we see our doors and hearts closed; the difficulty of a true "living together" in a tie of violence and fear due to the terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels – just to mention some of the trials. In our settings, and perhaps even in our communities, we can notice a certain weariness or even resignation; we are too weak, too few, too powerless to respond and act effectively. But: we will not give up, our hope is stronger. Together, we want to build enforce this.

Hope was given by FATHER HEINRICH WALTER of Schoenstatt Movement:

We decided to give a testimony of our experiences. Leaving fears and limitations behind, we sincerely stick to our hopes, and this leads us to deeply believe in the future. Therefore, today's principal symbol is a gate: a locked gate has to protect the city, but an open gate promises encounter and reconciliation, cultural, economic and spiritual exchange. Jesus Christ is our living gate. Believing in him, encounters, reconciliation and future become possible. ■



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Unity is Possible

MARIA VOCE*

“Unity is possible”. Is this an absurd affirmation today, in a Europe marked by global terrorism, a multiplication of wars, migrations of biblical proportions and growing intolerance? Are we talking about a dream, a utopia?

No. We are talking about an experience which several movements and Christian communities in Europe have already been living for over 15 years, bearing witness that unity is possible. We have experienced that there is something indestructible and timeless which binds us: it is Love, God who is Love.

This Love has opened our eyes and our heart to embrace the fears, tears and hopes of this continent. In all that is negative, which seems to overwhelm us, we perceive the pain that God who became man suffered on the cross and through which he showed his limitless love and gave us the hope of resurrection.

Three key words characterise this event: meeting – reconciliation – future.

We can *meet one another* because God came to meet us first through his incarnation.

We can *be reconciled with one another* because on the cross Jesus reconciled us with God and amongst ourselves.

We can *walk securely towards the future* because the one who conquered death is walking in our midst and is leading us towards European unity and the unity of the world, until his prayer “May they all be one” is fulfilled (John 17:21).

* President of the Focolare Movement. Steering Committee TFE

It is worthwhile committing our lives for such for such a high goal.

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Together we want to ask forgiveness for the divisions of the past which caused wars and death in Europe.

Together we want to bear witness to our unity while respecting the beauty and diversity of our churches and communities.

Together we want to be at the service of something new which is needed today so as to make progress once more on the European path.

What we can offer – by committing our lives – is the newness of the Gospel. Before dying Jesus prayed: “Father, may they all be one”. He showed that we are all brothers and sisters, that one “single human family” is possible; that unity is possible; that unity is our destiny.

We commit ourselves here, today, to be catalysts of this change, catalysts for a new vision for Europe, so as to speed up the journey towards unity by starting a profound dialogue

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with and for all the men and women on earth.

Dialogue can happen because of the so-called “Golden Rule” which says “Do not do to others what you would not wish done to you” (Cf Luke 6:31). Basically it means to love. And if love becomes mutual it brings fraternity to its fullness among all. In universal fraternity Europe can rediscover its vocation.

In the 1950s Chiara Lubich wrote: “If one day all peoples were able to set themselves aside, setting aside the idea they have of their own home-

land ... for the sake of the mutual love among states which God asks of us, just as he asks mutual love among brothers and sisters, that day will be the start of a new era”.

So let’s live for this new era!
Unity is possible! ■



Pope Francis and Patriarch Bartholomew could not attend the congress personally. Yet, they attended virtually by sending video messages. Here, they specifically addressed the Rally of TOGETHER FOR EUROPE. Their thrilling messages marked its wide horizon.

Video Message

By *HIS ALL-HOLINESS ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW I*



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It is with great joy that we share this brief, but wholehearted personal message with the hard-working organizers and beloved participants of the **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** event.

Your goal is simple, but your purpose is immense. There has perhaps never been so much need and call for being together and acting in solidarity – both in Europe, more broadly in the surrounding regions, as well as globally. Our world is facing unprecedented challenges, which oblige us to stand together and to work with and in support of one another.

Even when the temptation is to avoid being together, Christians especially are called to demonstrate the fundamental principle of the Church, which is communion (koinonia).

It is only when we share the gifts so generously and freely bestowed on us by God that we are able to experience them fully ourselves. Whenever he faced difficulties and problems, the late Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras, our venerable predecessor, used to say: “Come, let us look at one another in the eyes.” And so we pray and hope that you will re-

member his wise words whenever the world presents us with challenges that tend to divide us, that tempt us to withdraw from communion and being together.

Dear friends, “come, let us look at one another in the eyes.” Because in the eyes of our fellow brothers and sisters, we will see the glory of God

May God bless you all in your wonderful initiative to be **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE**. ■

Video Message

POPE FRANCIS



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Dear Friends in **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE**, I know that you are gathered in Munich, Bavaria, from many movements and groups, for your meeting called “Encounter – Reconciliation – Future”.

You are right. It is time to get together, to face the problems of our day with a true European spirit. Apart from some visible walls, other invisible walls are being strengthened which tend to divide our continent. These walls are being built in people’s hearts. They are walls made of fear and aggression, a failure to understand people of different backgrounds or faith. They are walls of political and economic selfishness, without

respect for the life and dignity of every person.

Europe finds itself in a complex and highly mobile world, which is ever more globalised and therefore ever less Eurocentric.

If we are aware of these momentous issues, then we must have the courage to say: we need change! Europe is called to reflect and to ask itself whether its immense heritage, so permeated with Christianity, belongs in a museum or is still able to inspire culture and to offer its treasures to the whole of humankind.

You are meeting so as to look together at these chal-

lenges facing Europe and to highlight testimonies of life in society which enable networking, so as to welcome and show solidarity towards those who are weak and disadvantaged, to build bridges and overcome conflicts whether they are open or latent.

Europe’s history is an ongoing encounter between Heaven and earth. Heaven indicates openness to the Transcendent, to God, which has always been characteristic of European people. Earth represents their practical and concrete ability to address situations and problems.

You too, Christian communities and movements which

began in Europe, are bearers of many charisms, which are gifts of God to be made available to others. **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** is a unifying power with the clear aim of translating the basic values of Christianity into concrete responses to the challenges of a continent in crisis.

Your lifestyle is based on mutual love, lived out with Gospel radicalness. A culture of reciprocity means talking things over, esteeming one another, welcoming one another, helping one another. It means appreciating the diversity of charisms so as to move together towards unity and enrich it. The tangible and clear presence of Christ among you is the witness which leads to faith.

Every authentic unity draws on the wealth of diversity which forms it – like a family

which grows in unity in so far as its members can fully and fearlessly be themselves. If Europe as a whole wants to be a family of peoples, it should put the human person back at the centre; it should be an open and welcoming continent, and continue to establish ways of working together that are not only economic but also social and cultural.

God always brings newness. You have experienced this so often in your lives! Are we open to surprises today too? You, who have answered the Lord's call courageously, are called to show his newness in your lives and bring to life the fruits of the Gospel, fruits that have grown from Christian roots, which for the last 2,000 years have nourished Europe. And you will bear even greater fruit! Maintain the freshness

of your charisms; continue to be "Together" and extend it further! Make your homes, communities and cities into workshops of communion, friendship and fraternity, which can bring people together and be open to the whole world.

Together for Europe? Today this is more than ever necessary. In a Europe made up of many nations, you bear witness to the fact that we are children of one Father and brothers and sisters to one another. You are a precious seed of hope, so that Europe can rediscover its vocation to contribute to the unity of all. ■



Testimony by Priests and Pastors from Hungary

TIBOR GYÖRÖK*



I am a Catholic priest from Hungary. I speak in the name of many pastors and priests from different churches. In our country there are various Christian churches which were mutually hostile in the past. Twenty years ago, a network of priests and pastors from the Catholic, Reformed, Lutheran and Baptist churches began. We seek what unites us. Through periodic meetings we became like brothers in Christ. Shared prayer put us in front of God. We shared the experience of the daily Word of God, the efforts and successes of our pastoral work, our spiritual goods and often our material ones too.

Bishops and key people in the churches have supported us. The pastors in the Pentecostal churches have also set out on the path to unity. Currently about 200 priests and pastors

from 15 different churches in more than 20 cities and towns in Hungary take part in these gatherings.

A concrete outcome of our shared journey has been the „Open Space” project which was held in Szeged in the autumn of 2015. We wanted to connect more with society. So we decided to organise a festival with different institutions, organisations, communities and artists. 60 different stands portrayed the activities taking place for the city and its citizens. The „Open Space” project conveyed the spirit of receptiveness, cooperation, mutual help and brotherly love. We learned that unity is possible.

Over 2000 people including bishops took part in three days of community experience of

the city itself. 100 young people worked for the concert given by a rock band.

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Feedback from the participants convinced us that our cooperation will contribute to breaking down the barriers between people of different views and between believers and non-believers. We have learned that often Christ’s disciples in a society which is still sleeping in a “post-communist dream” can bear witness to our responsibility to engage and participate in civic life. ■

* Tibor Györök, Catholic priest from Hungary

Spiritual Realm Influences our Society, Repentance Changes Things

PAVOL STREŽO*



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In 2011 I discovered in my home town Dolny Kubin a Jewish woman who was daughter of a man, who perished in Holocaust. 250 Jewish citizens of my town were deported and killed in a Nazi-destruction camp. I asked her: “did anybody ever say sorry to you for this?” She said “No”. I called my Christian friends from Slovakia, who love Israel to Dolny Kubin and we prayed. It was good, but in my spirit I knew, that this should be a matter of authorities of our town – spiritual and secular.

I went to the mayor with a request for a reconciliation meeting. I promised him, that God will bless our city for that, because he promised, that if his people will repent, he will come and heal the Land (2 Chronicles 7:14). The mayor, who was not a believer, was open to organ-

ize it. So in September 2012 we had a first reconciliation meeting. The mayor, church authorities and all the people asked for forgiveness to God and to official Jewish representatives and Holocaust survivors. After the repentance, one Jewish woman expressed forgiveness and prayed Aarons blessing over our city.

Few months later I realized, that a new factory came to our city and two other big companies enlarged their capacities. Our mayor sees a clear connection between repentance and release of blessing in our city.

Next year, I saw on the website of our city that “the city government was asking for help, to deal with vandalism of the young people in our city centre.” They stated that police guards and cam-

eras didn’t helped so much. I prayed and the Lord gave me idea, to identify: which houses belonged to Jews and which to Christians before the war. I did so and when I came with the map to the main square, I was in shock! All problematic pubs were in houses, which belonged to Jews before the war and were stolen from Jews.

I immediately knew that we had to organize another repentance meeting with the focus on the main city square. So I went to the mayor and told him my plan. I invited a pastor, who is the son of a Nazi-soldier and a priest, who is the grandson of a Slovak guardist (member of the military force of the Slovak party, which collaborated with Hitler). They prayed with whole their heart Nehemiah’s prayer: “Lord, forgive us and our fathers ...” (Nehemiah 1:5–11).

Two weeks later, young people from our community came to me with a request. They wanted to pray every Monday

* Pavol Strežo, Co-leader of “New Evangelization community” in Dolny Kubin, Slovakia

and Friday in main city square. Few months later, our major called me and invited me to his office. He expressed his thankfulness that we helped to deal with vandalism in city square. He told me, that reports of police decreased rapidly, and they do not need to spend so much money to repair destroyed

things. The two worst pubs were closed and a third one had problems, so they needed to move to other place.

Lutheran young people opened alternative club called “Garage”, where many young people go to instead of going to pubs.

Praise the Lord for his mercy and for the great weapon in our hands, which is repentance!

Reconciliation in Volgograd

*SERGEJ ALTUCHOV** and *HANS SCHOLZ***



Russian television in Kazakhstan.

Sergej Altuchov: Christians belonging to various Christian denominations came to us in Stalingrad for a week in May 1995, 50 years after the war. For a whole week, they went to nursing homes, schools, kindergartens, factories, hospitals, and universities. They have asked for forgiveness from us Russians for the sins committed by the Germans during the Second World War. They have touched old and deep wounds.

The tears have washed our souls. And hearts were healed.

Hans Scholz: *The prayer service on reconciliation was held in the biggest hall for Volgograd celebrations. There were about 2500 visitors, representatives of all Christian churches and the Jewish community together with the government officials of the Volgograd region. It was broadcast not only in cities, but also on*

The message was received: Christians from Germany bring blessings and reconciliation, where previous generations had sown destruction and hatred. But it has become very clear in recent months that our generation must not only take the responsibility for the sins of their forefathers, but even more so today, we have the duty to be ambassadors of reconciliation.

This is why last year we participated once again together with a group of Christians in

* Rev. Sergej Altuchov, Protestant community in Volzhsky near Volgograd, the former Stalingrad.

** Rev. Hans Scholz, Baden, Germany, Charismatic Renewal in the Lutheran Church (GGE), Initiative “Road to reconciliation” 1954/1955

Volgograd at the 70th anniversary of the end of the war and the victory over Nazi Germany. We did it so that forgiveness may heal our hearts. This was our experience.

Together with the Orthodox bishops, priests and deacons and a large number of pilgrims, we went from the city centre to the “Mamayev Kurgan” Memorial. The Easter greeting that followed has united us all in this commemoration of the dead: “Christ is risen – he is truly risen!”

Although our ecclesial traditions and theological knowledge of the Eastern churches are very different, this procession of more than six and a half kilometres made us understand and live reconciliation.

The Prince and Princess Salm donated a shoe to the municipal museum, which their father had made from a car tire during the Russian captivity and had brought it home.

At the Sunday Mass celebration, we prayed for the present representatives of Russian veterans and we have blessed them.

The President of the Veterans Association then took a commemorative medal from his lapel, and Rev. Scholz placed it in his protestant cassock to represent all those who identify themselves part of the journey towards reconciliation in Stalingrad.

I was surprised because this was not part of the program. I

had the courage to ask for forgiveness for those who cannot, and to use my hands to bless and to say words of comfort.

Here we are, side by side, embracing each other: a Russian and a German.

Like the Apostle Paul, we are “ambassadors of Christ ... and we ask: be reconciled to God.” ■



II Reconciliation Opens Future – 500 Years of Separation are Enough

It was a ground-breaking experience of reconciliation that opened the way of TOGETHER FOR EUROPE. Gerhard Proß reports that under the heading “Reconciliation opens Future”. Professor Miroslav Volf, Yale University, USA established a wide frame for the topic. The reconciliation between Reformed Church and Mennonite Church shows very vividly the effects a propitiation can develop even 500 years later.

The highlight was the concrete act of reconciliation between Kurt Cardinal Koch, Lutheran Bishop Frank Otfried July and Metropolitan Serafim Joanta. This act was accompanied by many bishops from different Churches and by the Steering Committee of TOGETHER FOR EUROPE, and lead to opening the gate. The joy and cheers of the 5000 participants underlined the enormous significance of this act of reconciliation.

Fear Divides, Love Unites

*MIROSLAV VOLF**



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European unity is under threat today. I recognize in it patterns of the tensions in the former Yugoslavia in the eighties.

After 1989, we had great hopes that socialist authoritarianism would give way to plu-

ralistic democracy. But what replaced it instead was aggressive, bellicose nationalism. The wars of newly independent nations were also wars among religions – the Orthodox and the Catholics fighting each other, and both, each in their sphere of influence, discriminating

against Protestants. Ecumenism was dead, a casualty of the war. But the war killed ecumenism because ecumenism was sick to begin with. Ours was not unity in the common Lord, Jesus Christ, not even unity in a common set of fundamental values. Ours was unity in fear, mainly an instrument of opposition to a common enemy. Once our enemy was gone, we returned to being each other's enemies. Fear builds fortresses with tall walls and wide moats; fear doesn't know how to build bridges.

* Professor Dr. Miroslav Volf, Yale University, USA

In May of 2005, about a decade after the war ended in Bosnia, I was walking the streets of Sarajevo with a friend, a Franciscan priest and a professor of theology. In the city, new mosques were springing up and the old ones were being restored to new glory.

“We’ve lost the fear of God,” he said somewhat abruptly.

“Fear of *God*?” I wondered out loud.

“Largely, the building spree is not a testimony to deep spirituality seeking spaces for outward expression and nurture,” he argued. “These mosques are political statements. Muslims are asserting their identity and marking their territory.”

“We Christians are not much better,” I noted. In Mostar, a city some 120 km to the south of Sarajevo, a 30 meter tall Jubilee Cross was erected, on the very place from which Croatian forces used to shell the Muslim part of Mostar. The cross as religious artillery!

“You make my point,” my friend replied.

Christians and Muslims alike use religion to occupy spaces, to celebrate and legitimize their own identities, to keep others at bay, to defend themselves, and to conquer.

The single most significant factor determining whether a religion will be implicated in

violence is this: the level of its identification with a political entity and entanglement with the agents of its power. If we let the fear of enemies infect our Christian convictions, if we let the fear of those who want to erode our values from within or assault them from without, drive the search for Christian unity, the cross on which Christ died to reconcile humans to God and with each other will morph in our hands into a blood-spilling sword.

If we, the Christians of Europe, want to foster reconciliation and help unite Europe, we need to learn how to love God more than we fear one another and more than we fear outsiders, above all immigrant Muslims. Christian unity and unity of Europe inspired by a Christian vision cannot be built on fear. It can only be built on love. No, I am not invoking the warm and fuzzy feeling that the flower children of the hippy generation called “love”. “Love” means giving our ultimate allegiance to God, the source of our life and of all our good. “Love” means acting on the conviction that though we may be able to prosper if we live apart and against our near and far neighbors, we can only truly flourish with them, when we flourish together.

It is easy to name the key elements of reconciliation, though it is very difficult to practice any one of them well. We can express them in 5 simple injunctions:

- *Remember!* Or rather: Remember rightly! Without purified memory, without perceiving ourselves rightly, whether we are perpetrators or victims, no reconciliation process can commence.
- *Apologize!* Without admitting publicly and unambiguously the wrong we have perpetrated and without committing ourselves to a changed life, the work of reconciliation would either not start at all or it would be halted in mid-course.
- *Forgive!* Without willingness not to count wrongs we have suffered against those who have wronged us, reconciliation will lack its substance.
- *Restore!* What would apology and the entire journey of reconciliation turn out to be if we refused to restore--at least in some measure--that which we have taken by wronging others? It would be a mere ruse designed to hide the benefit we enjoy from the wrongdoing we have committed!
- *Embrace!* In embrace, we both close and open our arms. Without closing our arms to embrace of one an-

other, the journey of reconciliation would fall short of reaching its goal; but without opening our arms again to let each other go and be ourselves, reconciliation would cancel itself and turn into oppression.

European unity requires reconciliation on all three levels: political, social, and personal. But at the foundation of all reconciliation is a heart willing to open its invisible arms to embrace another.

I was one year old when my six-year-old brother, Daniel, was killed because of the carelessness of a soldier and the negligence of our nanny. My mother told me that the day Daniel was killed she and my father, independently of each

other, decided to forgive both the soldier and the nanny. For each, the same words from the Bible provided the motivation: “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.”

A few months after the funeral, my father traveled a day’s journey to find the offending soldier, assure him of his and my mother’s forgiveness in person, and tell him about God’s love in Christ. The nanny, a Serbian woman whom the war had left a widow, stayed in our home and became an angel of my childhood. Love drove out of my parent’s hearts the desire for revenge and fear, and it bore the costly but beautiful fruit of reconciliation.

Friends and fellow Christians, European unity cannot rest on fear, opposition, or enmity; it must rest on justice, generosity, and flourishing for all, on what the prophets of old have called “shalom”. And our own Christian unity must be rooted in Christ, the embodiment of God’s generous love. Let us open our arms to one another in knowledge that love, God’s love, is greater than fear! And let us not exclude outsiders from the circle of our embrace; above all, let us not exclude the poor, who are – with the words of Benedict XVI – “God’s first love”. ■

Reconciliation between Reformed Church and Mennonites *PETER DETTWILER** and *LARRY MILLER*** in Dialogue

Peter Dettwiler: It happened on 5 January 1527 in Zurich: Felix Manz was led, with hands bound, by boat to a little house for fishermen located in the middle of the river. During his last journey he sang loudly: “Into your hands, Lord, I entrust my spirit.” Then he was drowned in the river Limmat. He is considered the first martyr of the Anabaptist movement, whose roots go back to

the Reform movement in Zurich and spread rapidly from there. Despite brutal persecution, Zurich became “Zwingli’s city” and not “Manz’s city”. Zwingli is part of the history of Switzerland – but who knows anything about Felix Manz?

Larry Miller: *Who knows Felix Manz? I do! I am a Mennonite, being rooted in the Anabaptist tradition. I grew up with*

the history of Felix Manz and his friends. And I am convinced that they were not rebellious heretics but heroes of faith and fathers of the church.

For Mennonites, Zurich is the cradle of the church, meaning not only your church, but ours as well. But it was as late as 1614 that the Zurich government arrested a 70-year-old farmer, Hans Landis, judged

51 Rev. Peter Dettwiler, Reformed Church Zurich

52 Dr. Larry Miller, Executive Secretary of the Mennonite World Conference



him as “seditious rebell” and beheaded him.

Peter, in certain ways, the past has never passed. For many centuries, your and my histories are completely different! They were histories driven by conflicts, Mennonites and the Reformed Church did not manage to solve these conflicts. But at last, we come up with a new history; a history rooted in reconciliation and unity; a history both of us share.

Peter Dettwiler: Yes, Larry, my brothers and sisters in the Mennonite tradition opened my eyes. I began to see history from a different point of view. Little by little I realised that we in the Reformed churches in Switzerland chased out the Anabaptists not only from our country but also from our memories.

The time had come to open up the history and give a sign of reconciliation. Larry, you were part of that historic event

held on 26 June 2004 in Zurich. We inaugurated a plaque which recalls the execution of Felix Manz. Our President read a confession of guilt, in which he said, among other things: **We confess that the persecution which took place then, according to our convictions today, was a betrayal of the Gospel and that our fathers in the Reformation were wrong on this point.**

Larry Miller: *Peter, it was that day that your church – the church of Zwingli – invited me, as a representative of Felix Manz and Hans Landis, to ascend Zwingli’s pulpit and preach in the Grossmuenster church. And as you see, I was not beheaded because of this! Instead, I came across a parish full of humility and vulnerability.*

For Anabaptists/Mennonites this was a breath-taking experience. I do not hesitate to call this a day we were delivered from being victims of

persecution – now and forever. And due to this we feel free and open to embrace the gifts of your church and to regard them as gifts for our church. We experienced that by confessing, forgiving and reconciling the past has been changed into future.

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Peter Dettwiler: Yes, I was surprised to experience that after 480 years of conflict reconciliation became possible. In our Zurich Confession from 2004 the Reformed Church states:

It is time to understand that the Anabaptists’ history is part of our history, too. Moreover, we are invited to learn from Anabaptist traditions and to carry on our dialogue with Mennonite parishes in order to strengthen our common witness of the Gospel. ■

Reconciliation Opens the Way to the Future

GERHARD PROSS*



Reconciliation opens the way to the future. This is what we have just heard in our two statements and this is what we have experienced in **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** (TfE) and this is why we are here and why we have invited you to this day.

We are looking back over the 17 years history of TfE, which began on 31 October 1999 – the day on which the Joint Declaration on Justification was signed between the Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation. Members of other churches have joined quickly after that.

We come from different denominations, Lutherans, Catholics, Orthodox, people from the Free churches. We live different spiritualities: there are those who live in a Marian style, those who live in a charismatic way, some live

more liturgically, others more according to the diaconate. To these were added national and cultural differences.

Yet we found ourselves in deep unity in Jesus Christ. We are one! Everything began with the miracle of reconciliation. I still remember clearly the “Meeting of those Responsible” in the year 2000. Of course we all knew the history of the divisions between the churches that occurred 500 years ago. But on that day the Holy Spirit, through a talk that Bishop Wilckens gave, touched our hearts and we were deeply struck by the extent to which the divisions have damaged the credibility of the Gospel. With good reason Jesus prayed his last prayer for the unity of the Christians so that the world may believe. We were struck and spent time together in silent prayer. Into this silence a

Catholic priest asked forgiveness of the Lutherans for all the painful things the Catholic Church had done to them over 500 years. We Lutherans granted forgiveness and asked forgiveness in our turn because we have all been guilty. It was as though a heavenly dyke had been opened. Together we realized that in that process, which lasted an hour, something new and fundamental came about. The burdens of centuries vanished and the future opened up before us. Forgiveness and reconciliation were possible and we felt as though the moats of past centuries had been filled up.

This reconciliation made possible the way of **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE**. We were transformed: our attitudes, prejudices and our assessments. Almost all of us can bear witness to this and we want to profess today that unity is possible, unity in Jesus Christ. We live a deep unity as Christians from very different churches. This reconciliation has enabled the path of **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE**.

* YMCA Esslingen, Steering Committee TfE

We stay different; we do not become the same, and our organisational structures are still independent, because we have a God who made us different and who loves multiplicity. Yet we are one.

We are grateful for the amazing steps that have been taken by our churches towards unity during the last 50 years. Nevertheless, we keep suffering, because our churches are still not yet completely one. Division in the Church is and remains a wound in Christ's Body. But it does not have to stay that way. Reconciliation and forgiveness

level out the road towards the future. Therefore we invite you to further steps of reconciliation.

I feel an enormous response in the People of God. The Body of Christ yearns for unity: 500 years of division are enough!

We are here in this square and we are looking towards the gate. Pope Francis has invited us this year to open a gate of mercy. Let's open the gates of mercy to one another today, and as denominations ask forgiveness of one another – and grant forgiveness reciprocally

– so that the Churches may reflect the prayer of Jesus: “may they all be one, so that the world may believe”.

Our unity as Christians will be a fruit for the unity of Europe, for peaceful living in the world and for a new atmosphere of faith in Europe.

Let's take courageous steps towards unity today, because 500 years of division are enough! ■

1500 excited and joyful young people arrived at the “Stachus” during the Rally. They had started their own programme in the morning, called the “Holy Spirit Night” (HSN). When they reached the “Stachus” everybody cheerfully gave their hands to welcome the young people. Later, they celebrated at the “Stachus” until late at night. Here, music and worship filled the air.



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A Conversation between

KURT CARDINAL KOCH , METROPOLIT SERAFIM JOANTA** , BISHOP FRANK OTFRIED JULY*** , and SISTER ANNA-MARIA AUS DER WIESCHE*****



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Sister Anna-Maria aus der Wiesche: *You have a passion for unity and have been involved in many processes. You saw our gate and how plank after plank was removed with every step of reconciliation. What are you grateful for? What are your experiences regarding reconciliation?*

Cardinal Koch: The most beautiful fruit of the past 50 years is that we rediscovered fraternity. A global net of friendship was created. And this net is so fruitful because it is nourished by good water that

is by the water of baptism. We have rediscovered the common baptism and are called to discover it anew. It is reported that when Martin Luther was tempted he told himself imploringly: Martin, you are baptized! That is said to have helped him very much. And it will help us, too. In the baptism we immerse into Jesus Christ and emerge as people who have fellowship. The closer we come to Christ the closer we come together. And today I think especially of those Christians who are not only baptized but have to take on a baptism of blood and

suffer martyrdom. There are many Christians who give their blood, and it doesn't divide us but unites us. The blood of so many martyrs today is the seed of unity in the body of Christ. This is my greatest hope. .

Bishop July represents the global Lutheran Church. He is Vice President of the Lutheran World Federation and in charge of Central and Northern Europe. What is your experience?

Bishop July: One wonderful experience is this conference

* Prof. Dr. Kurt Cardinal Koch, member of the Roman Curia, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity

** Metropolitan Serafim Joanta, Romanian Orthodox Archbishop and Metropolitan for Germany, Central and Northern Europe

*** Dr. h.c. Frank Offried July, Bishop of the Lutheran Church in Württemberg, Vice President of the Lutheran World Federation

**** Sister Anna-Maria aus der Wiesche, Prioress of the Fraternity of Christ Selbstitz

and this final Outdoor Rally. This kind of ecumenical togetherness is something I pray for and desire for our future. This is one experience that it is possible, that we are able to do what we are doing right now. And the second beautiful experience I have is that the churches showed their colours together last year and into this year when the refugees stood at the gates of Europe – many churches in many European countries together! This, too, is an ecumenical experience in Caritas and deaconry. That was a great witness in Europe. And the third experience is that we as churches in Germany, as Lutherans, as Protestant Church in Germany together with the Roman Catholic Christians are going to celebrate next year as a Christ Celebration. Then it will be evident that Christ is the centre in spite of all the denominational differences that we have. And this is exactly what we need to show this society in Germany and Europe again.

Metropolitan Serafim, you are Metropolitan of the Romanian Orthodox Church here in

Germany and in Western Europe. What is your experience of togetherness and unity, what you are thankful for from the bottom of your heart?



Serafim Joanta: I am really happy about and thankful for the movements, communities and associations that have contributed so much to our unity. I know very well and I am in close contact with the Focolare Movement, the Community of Sant'Egidio and the Fraternity of Christ Selbitz. We pray together, we share thoughts, we really feel we are one. There



really is a mystical unity that many Christians experience already. I am convinced that precisely this mystical unity is a precondition for the visible unity of Christians. This is why

we need more and more encounters and joint prayer to get to know each other better. And the Holy Spirit will establish the mystical unity within and among us more and more..

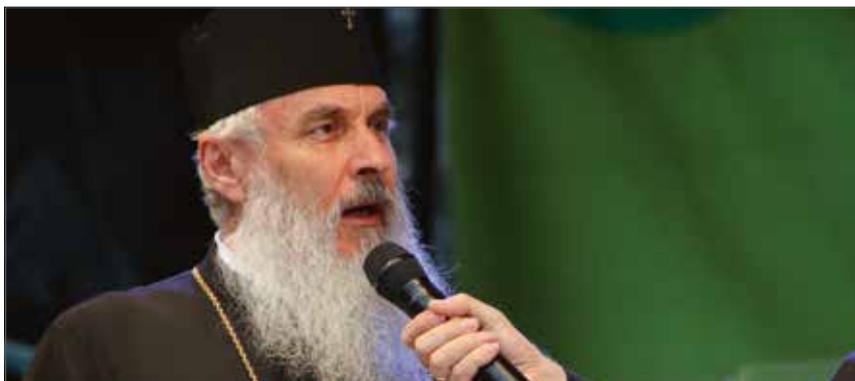
There are still some planks left, the gate isn't fully open yet. Still there are painful experiences where we have to stand the pain. Bishop

July, as you're holding the microphone, what's one of those experiences of which you say it's really painful that we haven't managed to resolve them yet and I want to believe for and dedicate myself to further growth among the Lutherans?

Bishop July: First of all in general: I think we do way too many things separately which we could do together already despite all the differences. We still have to get better at that. And I personally suffer from the fact that on the road to Emmaus we have not come as far as I would like regarding table-fellowship in reconciled diversity at the table of the Lord. And this is what I desire primarily for married couples from mixed denominations, too. Often

they form a believing home church together, many married couples to whom this is important. And I wish we would achieve some progress quickly so they can experience the grace and the sacrament of the altar together.

Cardinal Koch, what is your pain, your painful experience and what is your hope where we can take a further step?



Cardinal Koch: Already when I was still at school one detail of Christ's passion really touched my heart. The Roman soldiers divided everything that belonged to Jesus among themselves, everything but his tunic. They left it as a whole. And thus it became a symbol for the unity of the church. However, the tragic thing is that we Christians did exactly what the Roman soldiers did not dare to: we divided the tunic of the Lord. Today I suffer most by the fact that there are so many Christians who don't suffer by that anymore. Because suffering by this broken unity is the precondition for us to apologise for what we did wrong.

But an apology is not enough, it needs forgiveness – and the door to forgiveness is suffering together by the un-wholeness of the Lord's tunic. Only then the motto "500 years are enough" is really credible.

Metropolitan Serafim, the Orthodoxy, the Catholic and the Protestant Church all have their own experiences. What is your pain and what is your hope for a further growing unity between the Orthodoxy and our Churches?

Serafim Joanta: Yes, I suffer by the fact that there still are fundamentalist groups in various churches which ruin the pursuit of unity of many Christians. Especially in the Orthodox Church. This is a sin against the Holy Spirit. I also mourn that there are so few young people in our churches. Without them the church ages and thus its witness to

the world is weakened. Young people, too, suffer – maybe unconsciously – because they haven't found the meaning of life in God. As Christ's servants we bishops and spiritual fathers can only say one thing: Come and see how good the Lord is. Don't be afraid to look at Christ, to listen to Christ, to follow Christ.

We can express thankfulness, pain and intercession to the triune God. It is him, who is unity and leads us the next steps towards unity step by step, deeper and deeper. And this is what we would like to pray together.

Prayer:

Bishop July: Over the last few days many of us have prayed and asked for mutual reconciliation and forgiveness and for new paths we can walk on. And thus, the following prayer is at the core of these days.

Eternal, triune God, we are beggars, this is true. Repeatedly we come to you with empty hands and ask you to fill them for us. Today we are coming to you like this and ask you for forgiveness. We should have been and should be witnesses who proclaim your presence, your love and your mercy. However, we have often proclaimed ourselves, our importance, our will, our claim to power.

Serafim Joanta: **Lord Jesus, we divided your body, did not see it as a whole. We narrowed our view and mistook this for the wide horizon of your presence.**

Cardinal Koch: **Holy Spirit of God, we have prayed for your presence but in fact preferred to be left alone. We hear about renewal in your spirit and rather prefer to remain unchanged. We hear about new understanding and rather speak our familiar language.**

Serafim Joanta: **Eternal, triune God, we are beggars, this is true. We are standing in front of you in this truth. Fill our hearts, minds and hands again on our pilgrimage through life.**

Cardinal Koch: **In your presence we ask each other for forgiveness. We have excluded each other and mutually denied love and truth. We have set an example of dissent and discord to the world.**

Bishop July: **We are really sorry for this. Forgive us, so we forgive each other. Lord, have mercy. You construct paths of trust, bridges of hope and here and today you grant us a new togetherness in the diversity of our traditions and denominations.**

So far we have one thing in common: we pray the Lord's Prayer, everyone in the language he or she prefers. And in doing so we as bishops we'll take each other by the hand as a sign of reconciliation. If you like you can do that, too.

Collective Lord's Prayer

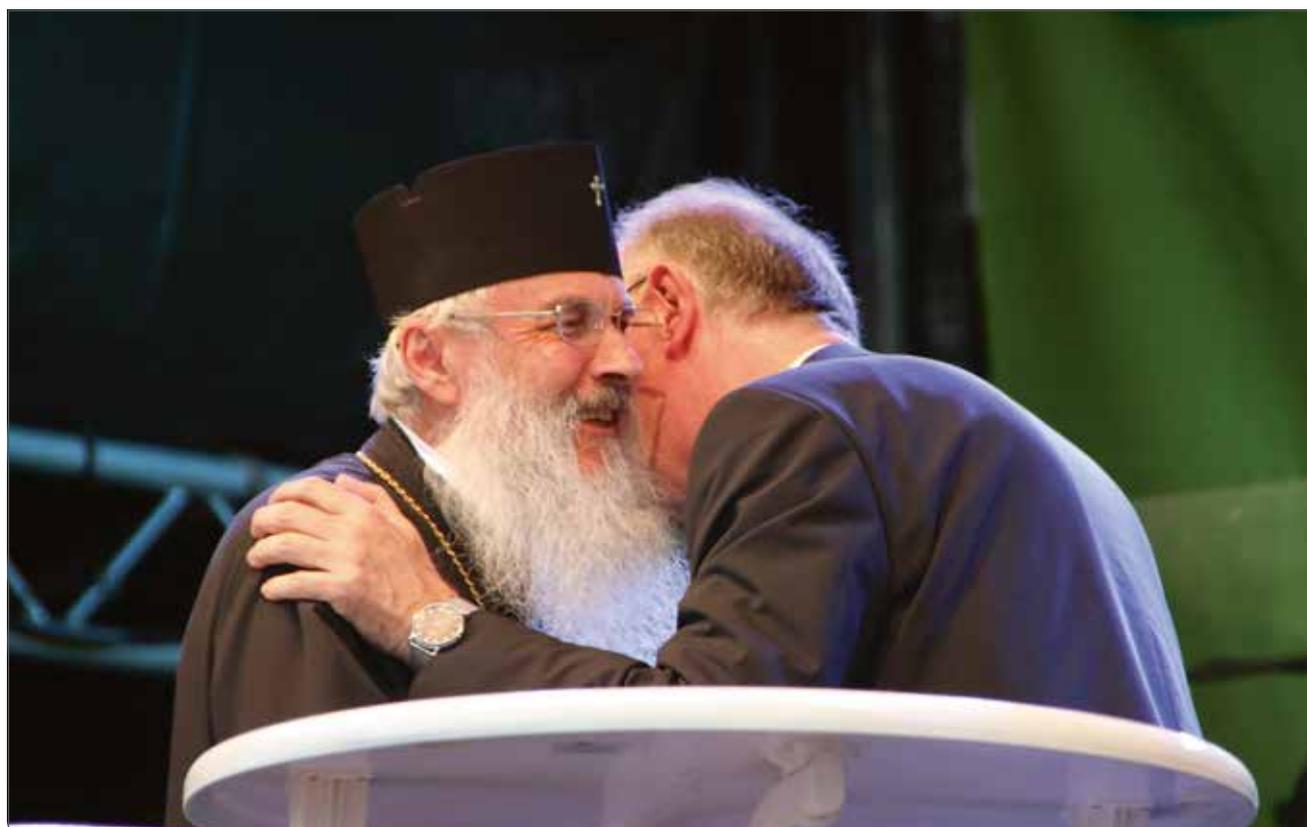


Bishop Joly: We as bishops will now embrace each other. You may know that from church services as a greeting of peace. But today we also do that as

a sign, that we ask each other for forgiveness and that we are granted forgiveness. This way here in Munich a sign of reconciliation is to be raised among

us, which is to accompany us continually on our future paths, especially on our path to unity. We will never forget this sign. May God help us.

Embrace of the Bishops



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Gerhard Proß: Dear friends, something of great importance has just happened. We all here at this square feel it and you have expressed that by your applause. Forgiveness and reconciliation have taken place. We experienced the specific request for forgiveness and the declaration of reconciliation on a personal level but also at

the same time among the corresponding churches. This opens up new perspectives for the future.

Now it's our turn. Do we join in to this reconciliation? Do we carry it out? Everyone individually, among each other? Then let's exchange the greeting of peace like the bishops.

At the same time I ask the bishops from various churches among us whose heartfelt desire this is to come on stage for this sign of reconciliation and unity. ■



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A Sign of Hope

OLAV FYKSE TVEIT*



Gerhard Proß: *Right next to me you see Olav Fyske Tveit, the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches. Mr Tveit, how do you feel on such a day full of reconciliation and forgiveness?*

Olav Fyske Tveit: When I see the flags and when I see the different symbols we carry as Christians we are reminded of our identities. I'm a Lutheran, you are (Gerhard Proß) a Lutheran, too. In the first letter of Peter the first that he said about us as Christians is that we have been given a new birth, a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is our identity. People of the living

hope. When I see you today I see a sign of what that means. A living hope, a hope for the world, a hope for the church, a hope for each one of us for a future together as one body of Christ.

Let me give you a warm example of what this living hope means. Some years ago President Nelson Mandela came to the World Council of Churches in Harare and said: without you I would never be a free man. Couple of weeks ago I was marching together with people in Soweto. From one school to another stadium. 14 years after the massacre of the students that were killed on their march

to this stadium which became a turning point in this tackle for justice and peace in South Africa. Families of the children that were killed and the policemen. Only the church can bring them together. And we came to the stadium thanking God that we have a living hope. Not a hope for one day, a hope for every day, a hope for our fellowship. A fellowship that really can brake down the barriers and the walls. That we create whether we are Europeans or whatever. We are always seeing this new barriers coming. Therefore we have to be the people of the living hope, to believe that there is another future and it starts today. Amen. ■

* Rev. Dr. Olav Fyske Tveit, Norwegian Lutheran theologian, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, WCC

III A Culture of Concernment and Compassion

Young people take the opportunity to express what they hope for Europe and how they picture their Europe to come. Experiences from France (Gérard Testard) and the song of a young woman from Syria show what Europe is up to right now. Furthermore, the future of Europe relies on its roots, as Jeff Fountain from Holland points out. And Andrea Riccardi (founder of Sant'Egidio) offers a fundamental contribution: "Not walls but bridges". Here, he outlines all that matters in Europe right now. His paper has been presented by Marco Impagliazzo (President of Sant'Egidio). After considering all this, the 5000 participants announced their clear and unambiguous "Yes" to Europe in a very touching way. And finally, everybody received a key to open specific doors to the future in his/her individual sphere of activity.

CHANGED ATTITUDES BY TOGETHER FOR EUROPE

GÉRARD TESTARD*



protect themselves from foreigners or persons in fragile situations. Together for Europe has a vision to foster the unity of the human family in diversity, and believes strongly that there are possible ways, without building new walls or creating nationalism and populism.

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I am the son of a prisoner of war and I grew up with prejudices about the Germans and other people. The **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** has allowed me to make a profound reconciliation, transforming these negative images in my thoughts and actions. The German people have become my friends. I have German and Italian friends, who also have their own stories. The **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** is an adventure that brings together friends who each have their own stories, though belonging to different peoples. They are rich, and having come

together, they truly stir up what we want to build in Europe.

As a young man, my model was Robert Schuman. He has worked to unite peoples. He was strongly opposed to the spirit of revenge; he fought for a spirit of brotherhood and solidarity, and was the founder of the European conscience. This encourages me every day to promote a "culture of encounter".

Persons have a great capacity to build walls: walls against those who are "different", to

I am convinced that the social and political crisis we are experiencing right now principally has to be regarded as a spiritual crisis. Therefore, we have to work hard on the spiritual unity, that conjoins us all, and we need to encourage each other to live up to our understanding of brotherhood on a larger scale. This should be our way of restoring Europe's soul, which is inevitable for Europe to come into its calling again in order to establish and strengthen peace and freedom for all the generations to come. ■

* President of Efesia community, Paris. Steering Committee TtE



Young people speak about their

Johannes Klein*: We have asked young people about their idea of Europe. Many have met and exchanged their hopes. We now shall hear the hopes of five young adults. These five stand for many young men and women in Europe.

Marie Mejstríková**: I was born in the Czech Republic, in the heart of Europe, when the communist regime had been falling. The damage of commu-

nistic crimes did remain for a long time and it is still perceptible in mentality of our people. I hope that Europe could be a place which is less individualistic and more friendly towards everyone. I will struggle for Europe in more harmony.

Johannes Höfle***: My idea of togetherness in Europe is: everybody begins to accept his neighbour the way he is, to be interested in the influenc-

es of his character and what he believes. Our task as Christians is to accept each other in our strengths and weaknesses. Exactly these we must import into Europe, so that it can grow together into a family. For Europe doesn't begin elsewhere but within me personally.

Adilia Schweizer****: When I think of Europe, I have in mind its colourful variety; a multitude of cultures, religions

* Johannes Klein, Catholic Charismatic Renewal, CE, presenter at the Rally

** Marie Mejstríková, Focolare Movement, spoken in English

*** Johannes Höfle, Schoenstatt Movement

**** Adilia Schweizer, Schoenstatt Movement



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visions and hopes for Europe

and personalities. This is the feature which for me is significant for Europe. This variety makes it possible for me, to get in contact easily with other cultures, and to widen my own horizon. I stand up for open dealing this variety, so that we all can benefit from each other.

Marcos Benedetti Groblackner*: Today, we see how Europe is braving a humanitarian crisis among other challeng-

es – this is an opportunity for a united Europe. We could watch our dreams for Europe pass by like comets or we could start making footprints in the sand – I prefer to make a mark. I'll be a global citizen who'll actualize the change I hope to see for Europe.

Lena Besch**: I realize a change in Europe. Respect and tolerance for new and uncertain things create anxiety in many

people. Instead I will stand up for reaching out and realizing each other, and so creating a Europe full of growing hope, respect and mutual trust. I stand for getting more long-sighted, and so enflame the mutual interest and be glad to learn from each other.

As a sign of hope we now will start our balloons. ■

* Marcos Benedetti Groblackner, Focolare Movement, spoken in English

** Lena Besch, YMCA Esslingen

At the Morning of the Third Millenium

WAJD ASMAR*



At the morning of the third millennium
Yet, there is still hunger,
homeless kids
cries and tears!
Come on, Let us end all wars –
O' powerful nations
No to poverty
No to oppression
No to racism

Who are you?
I would not question
but your sadness
told me who you are
I don't know care what colour you are
or what religion
All I know is that
you are my brother
my brother in humanity

At the dawn of the third millennium
yet, there are still exiled people
and people have been in prisons for years!
Let us, at the dawn of this new era
and the world is so longing for justice
Let us end all oppression,
End fear
and agree on justice

Who are you?
I come from this East
The land of faith
Our villages home the sunrise
And the colour of time
From us to all the peoples of the world
We send our greetings
May a generation go, a generation come
On the path to freedom!

* An arabic song presented by Wajd Asmar from Syria/Luxemburg

AD FONTES – Back to our Roots!

JEFF FOUNTAIN*

What is the way forward for a Europe where crisis has become the norm? The Renaissance scholar, Erasmus, has a word of wisdom for us. Two words in fact: ‘AD FONTES!’ This was his advice to the kings, emperors and popes of his day: Return to the source, the roots, the fountainhead!

For in Erasmus’ day, Europe was also in crisis – through corruption within, and the Ottoman threat without. Not to



mention that German monk who threatened to shatter Europe’s age-old unity. Erasmus pleaded for a united Europe based on the message of love and forgiveness modelled by Jesus Christ. Love for God and

neighbour. AD FONTES! He said. Return to the roots.

Today Europe is a paradox: a continent shaped by the story of Jesus – and by its rejection. Messengers brought that sto-



* Until 1990 Director of Youth with a Mission Europe. Director of the “Schuman Centre for European Studies”, Netherlands.

ry to peoples from Armenia to Iceland, from Italy to Norway, profoundly shaping European culture and making possible the motto of today's European Union: "United in diversity"

Sadly many Europeans today are like squatters living in a house, indifferent to who built it and on what foundations. We talk of European values – freedom, equality, brotherhood, and human dignity. Yet when difficult times come, freedom and equality becomes only for our sort; brotherhood and human dignity is for those with our skin colour.

Brotherhood however begins with Fatherhood. Equality and dignity come from being created in God's image. Free-

dom is living in right relationship to our Maker, our brothers and sisters, and the world around us. That is why the way forward has to be: back to the source! AD FONTES!

Sixtysix years ago, Robert Schuman, founding father of the European project, dreamed of a "community of peoples in freedom, equality, solidarity and peace and which is deeply rooted in Christian basic values". The crises facing him and his colleagues, Konrad Adenauer and Alcide de Gasperi, were much greater than those we face today. Yet as former enemies reconciled through the Gospel of Jesus Christ, they dared to dream of, and prayed for, a post-war Europe rebuilt on the age-old foundations.

This can be our dream still today for our Europe in crisis.

But we as followers of Jesus must truly live out this European motto, United in diversity, something the traditions we represent here have not always faithfully done. That is what can attract our fellow Europeans: back to the roots. ■

Not Walls but Bridges

ANDREA RICCARDI*, presented in German by MARCO IMPAGLIAZZO**

What has happened to you, Europe of humanism, the champion of human rights, democracy and freedom? The Pope asked this question two months ago when receiving the Charlemagne Prize in the Vatican. Francis was aware that the people who live in Europe feel lost and distant from themselves, they lack vision. In a "Europe which is becoming increasingly entrenched" the Bishop of Rome sees the need

to "build bridges and tear down walls". His were strong words which challenge us as Christians but which also touch all those who have the future of our continent at heart. "Together for Europe" today is not only about ecumenical initiatives that we have been working on for years, but an imperative for all.

Yes, our times are tempted by walls. All continents are

tempted in this way and Europe too. "Festung Europe" "the European stronghold" as in the saddest days of the Second World War. People think they can distance the world's tragedies from themselves by building walls so as not to see them. But this is only an illusion. It is also the effect of strident propaganda, of alarmist concerns without justification, also because the people who manage to reach Europe's borders are

* Founder of the Community of Sant'Egidio in Rome. Professor for history, recently Minister in the Italian Government, recipient of the International Charlemagne Prize. Steering Committee TtE

** Professor Marco Impagliazzo, President of the Community of Sant'Egidio

only a tiny percentage of the vast numbers of refugees in the world. There are 500 million Europeans. 25 years after the fall of the Berlin wall and the disappearance of the Iron Curtain we are witnessing a new complex of barriers in which

Kingdom leaving the European Union. Jo Cox said: “Our communities have been deeply enhanced by immigration, ... While we celebrate our diversity, what surprises me time and time again as I travel around ... is that we are far more united

going nowhere in the context of a global and interdependent scenario. The Word of God itself, with its spiritual breadth, helps us understand how indifference and closure blind us, making us sad and aggressive.

This is why we must build bridges, among people, nations, cultures and religions. To be bridge builders is the mission of our time; for us and for future generations; for societies that should inherit the splendid heritage of humanity, of thought and achievement that the smallest continent of the world has been able to develop down through the centuries. For Christians, who know that mercy is a key opening unforeseen and advantageous vistas across 360 degrees: “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.” (Hebrews 13:2)

So, yes to bridges of mercy. Yes to discovering others and their rich heritage. Yes to understanding that we are truly “one thing only”, that there is a unity and a fraternity to be worked for and that we must find the ways to “break down” the many “dividing walls” (Ephesians 2:4) as St Paul said, that continue to separate us.

Right here in Munich, in the darkness of the Second World War, a group of university students with vision and courage – the students of the “White Rose” – were able to draw on



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the continent is not cut by one vertical slash but by many different slashes.

Yes, dear friends, because the siege syndrome is truly an illness, it makes us see something different. And so a wall is never enough. You need another one. It should be higher, more protective. External walls produce many internal walls, between European peoples, between parties within the same nation, between areas in the same city.

I was very struck on hearing a speech given in the House of Commons by the English Member of Parliament killed in a barbaric attack shortly before the referendum on the United

and have far more in common with each other than things that divide us.” This is true. We are more united than we think. We must learn to see it, to be surprised by it, to make it understood.

Dear friends, we have far greater need of bridges than walls. We need them like air, and like bread. We need a new mentality, which breaks down the clichés, frees us from intensified emotions and opens us up to the future. Because what we see is the end of an old world, not a siege. A new time is beginning. We must face facts: there is no point in putting our heads in the sand. We, not only the Spirit, but reason tells us this because a split Europe is

their faith and on the best European cultural traditions to reject complicity with evil, calling German youth to a revolt in terms of humanity and the spirit. In one of their leaflets they referred to the words of one of the great writers of this land, Novalis: “If Europe wants to wake up, if there existed in our future a State of States ...”.

The older people among us have not seen a “State made up of States” arise. The young people have received it as their legacy: it is Europe. We would like Europe not to be merely

the Europe of their parents but also of their children. And today the children must have the ambition to build a Europe without walls which looks at the world of tomorrow with hope. Many Christians have worked to build it together with men and women who shared the same culture and the same roots which have the taste and beauty of what is universal. Each one of us, all our communities, our European peoples, all of us can take hold of a key to open the walls, to bring fresh air into circulation, with freedom, humanity and mercy. All

of us can give an example to the world, a precious model of integration which opens the future by building the present. Certainly bridges are the most obvious place for that great strength of European fashioning: peace. Let’s live in peace, let’s build peace every day, opening up channels of peace and let’s dream of peace in Europe for the world as a whole!!



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IV Mission and Future: “The Open Gate”

Father Heinrich Walter of the Schoenstatt Movement speaks about hope, the hope that is at the heart of this day. Young people with their experiences underline this hope. In dialogue with the President of the German Bishop’s Conference, Cardinal Marx and the Chairman of the Evangelical Church of Germany, Bishop Heinrich Bedford-Strohm the hope for the common way of the churches is reinforced. The participants were impressed by the close relationship of these bishops. Hope now has two impressive faces.

Mission and Future

*FATHER HEINRICH WALTER**



© Graf many decisions in favour of a culture of relationships in Europe, have shaped our “Living together” over these 15 years.

Today we are witnesses before God who is in our midst, who acts and saves us. We have experienced signs of reconciliation between faiths and churches. We opened our doors, and each one received a key. We heard words that have touched our hearts. We were abundantly rewarded. This gives us confidence and awakens hope in times of fear and uncertainty. We hope and pray, through greater unity among God’s people, for a new credibility of the Gospel in Europe.

As it has often happened in the history of Christianity, Jesus is sending out his disciples among people again today. They do not bring anything with them: they have no money nor weapons to defend themselves. They go with no claim to power. They only have a new experience in their heart and the strength that God has promised them.

Our open doors, signs of our hospitality, the long and difficult road of reconciliation, the

So we should not remain complacent with the results. This “Living together” will now take on the task of ensuring Europe of a beautiful future at the service of the globalized world.

The Lord, who took us on this journey, will send us to the city and places where we came from. Some hopeful signs are already clear. We have heard some brief testimonies of these, which will then be followed by the encouragements of Bishop Bedford-Strohm and Cardinal Marx. ■

* Schoenstatt-Movement. Steering Committee TFE

„Misiones“ – Living in Faith

JOHANNES BECHTOLD*



When I put on my yellow T-shirt and my “misiones cross” something changes. I become a “Misionero”. That is very exciting at first. What will happen when I ring a door bell? Will I be welcome?

Misiones are teenagers who do parish missions together. We go from house to house to meet people and to talk with them about their lives, their beliefs, about God, the neighbour or the daughter’s cancer.

This courage to approach people as a Christian has an effect. Many are deeply touched by that. Often those we meet are astonished that there are young people who believe in God and like to belong to a church. People realize that we are “a little different”. And precisely that being different is a reason why a dialog can begin.

We do not want to convert anybody or impose our faith on anybody else. We want to meet people and it is not important if they are Catholic, Protestant, Muslim or do not believe in God at all. When we meet others openly and full of joy a true encounter is possible. Doors and hearts are opened.

As an example I would like to report the following encounter: A door is opened and a young Muslim woman smiles at us. After we introduced ourselves she invites us to a cup of tea. She explains that I am not allowed to shake her hand because she does not want to be touched by unfamiliar men. But despite this cultural border we have a good conversation. As she sees our picture of Mary she gets her Coran and translates all scriptures about Mary for us.

In such moments I am convinced that God is there and helps me to go beyond my own horizon because there is still so much of God’s love to discover.

This is exactly what Misiones means for me. I can get to know the loving God in all his manifoldness and creativity. Because he sends me wearing my yellow T-shirt to people who show me that togetherness is not so difficult when I take the plunge. ■

* Schoenstatt Movement

What is happening in and around Munich?

LUKAS LORENZ*



When I came to Munich I asked God: „What’s your plan for this city?“ And God is replying very concretely at the moment. How? Well, God is bringing all Christians together step by step.

I can see that myself at „Stay and Pray“ at Heilig Geist Kirche**, where thousands of people stream into the church – to pray. But not only there: whenever you speak with entirely different Christians in Munich every time you notice they are stirred by a desire. A holy unrest. This unrest draws people to prayer and unity – and it enables them to cross the denominational borders easily just like this afternoon here.

Or look at this meeting here: Those who organise **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** and Holy Spirit Night, HSN, realised the enormous potential in them joining forces. And because the project is huge all Christians were asked if they would like to join. And the exciting thing is: already in the preparatory meetings we realised, that this was and is right indeed.

It is the new, the young generation, it is us who have this unrest, this desire for more as a burning concern. We see that in the many networks that already exist among the separate churches. Or in the common large events like Awakening Europe in Nuremberg last year

or “Mehr” House of Prayer Conference*** in Augsburg, where Christians from all directions come together.

In my experience more and more people here in Munich have a huge desire for God doing something, for him intervening and sending his Holy Spirit here with authority. And he does that – in a very clever way: first he looks for all the puzzle pieces and then he puts the whole puzzle together. Why? For us to rebuild the Kingdom of God together. ■

* Staff of stay&pray in Munich

** “Holy Spirit Church”, a Catholic hall church in the city centre, one of the oldest church buildings in Munich

*** organised annually by the Augsburg House of Prayer

Conversation among REINHARD CARDINAL MARX*, BISHOP HEINRICH BEDFORD-STROHM** and FATHER HEINRICH WALTER***



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Father Heinrich Walter: *As a network of movements we have also been on the move. But in this dynamic process we have never walked our own way without those responsible in the institutional churches. We have always pursued good relationships to the bishops and are thus very grateful for the great support for our event this afternoon, which we have received from both Cardinal Marx and Bishop Bedford-Strohm. We welcome them warmly here.*

Dr. Bedford-Strohm has been Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria since 2011 and since end of 2014 Chairman of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany.

Bishop Bedford-Strohm, at the congress during a press conference two days ago you surprised us with clear statements regarding steps to unity. Of course, that was in a small intimate circle, not in public. But I'd like to ask you a lit-

tle provocatively: Could you please repeat in a few sentences to this wider public what you entrusted to us, your hope and your confidence regarding the unity of Christians?

Bishop Bedford-Strohm: Yes, in fact I don't need to say it to these people standing here because the unity is standing right in front of me. You could feel it all through this afternoon that here are so many people who carry Christ in their hearts. And Christ can-

* Cardinal Dr. Reinhard Marx, Archbishop of Munich and Freising, Chairman of the German Bishops' Conference

** Prof. Dr. Heinrich Bedford-Strohm, Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria and Chairman of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany

*** Father Heinrich Walter, Schoenstatt Movement, Steering Committee TfE

not but call us to unity. When the two of us, Cardinal Marx and I speak of Christ we don't talk about a Catholic Christ or a Protestant Christ or an Orthodox Christ. It is about the one Lord, who calls us to unity when we listen to him. And when we follow this call we cannot but carry this unity of the churches, this longing for the unity of the churches in our hearts. This is what I have felt today – all through this afternoon here – and this is why this afternoon for me is an afternoon of hope. We can succeed in bringing the radical love to Christ and the radical love to the world – which results from the first – into the world together. We can succeed in being the salt of the earth and the light of the world and in showing people how good and how much fun it is to be a Christian.

I'd like to intervene a little here; you have mentioned that already. I think the common wish of the people here is the same as the wish of the attendees of the Conference at Circus Krone. But this desire, of course, also expects concrete steps. That is, the audience here want to experience something of this unity, they want to see it happen. The younger generation, of course, has more time ahead of them; but are specific steps possible and which are they? And the question also is: Can we contribute anything to make it a little easier on the official level?

Well, I believe we have said the most important thing repeatedly and publicly over several months and we say it again here: for the first time in history we will not celebrate an anniversary of the Reformation, a centennial anniversary, for enhancing our own reputation but we will celebrate it in the one spirit Martin Luther himself was up to. Martin Luther wanted to point to Christ. That's all he wanted. And we want to celebrate a huge Christ festival and point to Christ anew and we can only do that together. And I'm really happy that Cardinal Marx and I are of one mind in fact and agree totally at this point. We will make sure

and since 2014 Chairman of the German Bishops Conference. In preparing this event it was a fortunate divine providence for us that these two central figures from both Protestant and Catholic Church in Germany live here in Munich. Because of that it was a lot easier to have them both on the stage here than it would've been if we'd had to bring one of them here from Berlin.

Cardinal Marx, you've encouraged us very much from the first conversations on when we had just decided to hold this event here in Munich. And we've received a lot of support from you. Back then



that – and I take the opportunity to announce that now – that we will celebrate this anniversary of the Reformation together.

I would like to turn to Cardinal Marx now. He has been Archbishop of the diocese Munich and Freising since 2007

in our conversations you put great emphasis on your hope for continuation also relating to the whole youth work in this city. You have repeatedly expressed your wishes – which came true today – that many teenagers would participate here and that it would go on

in the sense of sustainability of this event. Could you please explain your vision, your dream a little?

Cardinal Marx: Explaining dreams is a little difficult as they are varied and complex. But as we just heard in Lukas' testimony, and I liked that very much, when he said that in this city there is more potential. The Gospel is not yet exhausted so to speak. And we can only do that together. I'd like to underline what the Bishop just

Concerning next year you said: my message here regarding the spirit of optimism has something to do with Christ and with a joint look at Christ. It would be wonderful if you could tell us more about that as an encouragement for our awakening here.

In my opinion it's important – we've also shared that over the last few days – to give witness to Christ together. It's important for the world. We don't think: What's going to



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said. My experience is: we are not separated in fact. The word "separation" is way too strong from my point of view. We are different but we have to walk a common path. But this city and Germany and Bavaria and Europe expect us to give witness to Christ together. The young generation does that primarily and they feel – as we have just heard in the testimony – there is more potential and we go ahead.

happen to Christianity, what's going to happen to the church, what about us? Instead we ask ourselves: What's going to happen to the world when the Gospel is not shared? What's going to happen to the world, when Christ is not confessed? This is what it's all about, this is the challenge. And doing this together is really, really important, I think. And then we feel the name of God also is mercy, just as Pope Francis said for example. When we give

witness to Christ together, to God who showed and granted the world his mercy in Jesus, we can never politically abuse this God and this faith. We can never misuse him for our own purposes. Giving witness to Christ together means inviting everyone to discover God's mercy. For me giving witness to Christ together also means directing Jesus' view to all people as we've just heard. God is not exclusive for only a few people, he takes care of them all, he wants to include everyone. And he pays for that with his son's life. He gives away everything to reach everyone. And we do our share to make his view effective through our testimony. That means: Giving witness to Christ together in this world. And we confess, that God sees every single individual as a present to the whole world. Believer or unbeliever, black or white, Christian or Muslim. Every single one is a present of God to the whole world. And we will do our share to make this present visible. This is our mission. That's what it means to give witness to Christ together.

Every human being is unique and therefore human life is holy and precious. From the very first moment of existence to the last moment. That's why the house of creation is not exclusive for only a few people, but for everybody. That means for me: giving witness to Christ together in this world. And therefore it is – I believe – crucial that we get weaving,

you together with us, and that perhaps at the end of 2017 it's visible publicly: we cannot separate these Christians anymore, they belong together.

The last keyword in my notes is the topic acceleration. You just indicated you would like to say something about this. Together we are convinced that we are living in a season of acceleration regarding unity. The situation in Europe demands that from us and challenges us. What is your point of view regarding acceleration towards unity? Or if you would like to add anything to giving witness to Christ?

Bishop Bedford-Strohm: Well, I think first of all we have to perceive the signs of unity: how wonderful it is to celebrate a service together or to be together just like here and now. The practiced ecumenism is so strong, sometimes we simply have to open our eyes and see and perceive what's happening in this area. I would like to add something to what Cardinal Marx said previously and I fully agree to every sentence he said, as it is most of the time. I would like to add that we experienced something last year and again today which is like a small plant that has to continue growing. Previously there were different camps: there were the political, the progressive and on the other wing there were the pious, the Evangelical. We placed each other in separate boxes. That season has to be over. When we really follow

Christ that means that piety and the witness to the world, standing up publicly for the weak belong together inseparably in politics, too.

A few hundred metres from here we had lunch together in September and we decided –

Interjection from Cardinal Marx: We had lunch at my house!

Bishop Bedford-Strohm: At his house we had lunch. Most of the time we have lunch at his house. He has a great cuisine.

were astonished and could hardly believe that they would finally be welcomed somewhere with love, empathy and solidarity. We saw these faces. I'll never forget them. And that's why my dream, maybe I can say our dream, is that the radical love to Christ leads us to a radical standing up for the weak, for the creation, for a world in which every human being can live in dignity. Those two go together inseparably and all Christians have to contribute their share so that we give this witness.



Interjection from Cardinal Marx: But I don't do the cooking myself.

Bishop Bedford-Strohm: Maybe that's why it's so good. No. – Well, we decided spontaneously to go to the main station. The station is just a few hundred metres from here. It was that weekend when 20 000 refugees were welcomed here in Germany; that famous weekend. And at the station we saw the faces of the people, of the children who arrived and who

Cardinal Marx: I fully agree, this is for sure. I come from a tradition, in fact both of us come from a shared tradition of social work, of commitment – before we became bishops – and thus it is our concern that prayer and action come together as well as mysticism and politics, piety and sensitivity for justice, for the dignity of every human being especially of the poor. This is what I'd like to highlight. The fundamental unity is: we all are the Body of

Christ together. What is to separate us essentially? Those who are baptised form the Body of Christ together. This has to be the message we take with us.

Father Heinrich Walter:
I think we all agree that those were really encouraging testimonies. And we understand how this unity also influences our unity and vice versa. How wonderful that the unity we live inspires our bishops and that we are inspired by the unity of the bishops to progress faster on this path. Thank you very much!

Cardinal Marx (to the audience): Thank you for your witness!

Bishop Bedford-Strohm:
Thank you. “Speak to Christ, progress courageously”, said the Pope. I fully agree. ■







Conclusion with Message

The audience was inspired by the experience of unity and the powerful acts of reconciliation. Therefore the “Concluding Message of Munich”, the Message of TOGETHER FOR EUROPE from the 2 July 2016 in Munich is a real highlight. Thomas Römer of the Munich YMCA presented the message together with other members of the Steering Committee in various languages. TOGETHER FOR EUROPE itself stands for that message. The final image was on the stage with the Steering Committee, bishops, young people and 200 leaders of the communities gave an indisputable message of the unity of God’s people and their commitment to the togetherness of Europe.

*FATHER HEINRICH WALTER**

Appearing behind me, you see a number of people who serve TOGETHER FOR EUROPE in a very responsible way. While they appear on stage, we reach the climax of our Rally. At this

point, I would like to emphasize, that we strongly believe that our Lord Jesus Christ is present among us in the midst of any crisis we are experiencing in Europe right now.

* Schoenstatt Movement, Steering Committee TFE



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But nevertheless, we keep walking, while trusting that any anxiety will be taken and transformed by His presence.

Believing this, we keep working for our idea of Christianity that keeps its gates widely open. We are driven by a respectful ethos that retains the dignity of every single human person. We strive for a Europe without fences and walls, for a Europe with hands extended to each other. We work for a Europe of diversity, where everybody feels at home. We stand for a Europe that is able

to deal with the almost insoluble tension between identity and difference.

This week, we put our message down on postcards, but the common witness of our friendship is much more important than any words. Everybody who is standing up here now and every one of you standing in front of the stage is a sign of our shared idea that the potential of reconciliation and unity in Europe is not exhausted yet. Many steps still need to be taken – and we are all willing to walk this path.

Four of us will read our message out aloud now. And then we invite everybody to read out the last part of the text. Let us take this as our personal sign of commitment, when we all read and pray the message together. So, now, we ask Michelle Moran, Thomas Römer, Maria Voce und Christophe D'Aloisio to read the message. ■



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TOGETHER FOR EUROPE

Message of 2 July in Munich

ENCOUNTER. RECONCILIATION. FUTURE

There is no alternative to being together

“United in diversity”. This European hope is more than ever relevant. Europe must not become a fortress and build new frontiers. There is no alternative to being together. Being together in reconciled diversity is possible.

The Gospel – a source of hope

Jesus Christ prayed for unity and gave his life for it. This is stated in the Gospel, which for almost 2000 years has played a key role in the culture of Europe. Jesus Christ teaches us boundless love for all people. He shows us the path of mercy and reconciliation. We can ask forgiveness and forgive one another. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is a powerful source from which we can draw hope for the future.

Europe – a culture of respect and esteem

The terrible experiences of two World Wars have taught us that peace is a precious gift that we must preserve. Our future must be characterized by a culture of respect and esteem for others, even for strangers.

Unity is possible – Overcoming divisions

We ask all Christians, especially Church leaders, to overcome the divisions. These

have caused suffering, violence and injustice, and have undermined the credibility of the Gospel. As Christians we want to live together as people who are reconciled and in full communion.

Our commitment

We live the Gospel of Jesus Christ and bear witness to it with our words and deeds.

We are pursuing the path of reconciliation and working to enable our communities, Churches, peoples and cultures to live “unity in diversity”.

We meet people of different beliefs and faiths with respect, seeking dialogue with them. We are committed to building up humanity and peace in the world.

We have a vision for Europe being together in a way that is stronger than fear or selfishness.

We place our trust in the Holy Spirit who continually renews and gives life to the world.

FATHER HEINRICH WALTER

Dear Friends, these are strong words of commitment. Can we agree to them? Those of you who can agree, please raise your hand to the sky and keep your hand lifted for the next two minutes. Yes, it's about what we're going to do together right now. The inner power of our togetherness is

a pact of mutual respect and love. For the first time it started 15 years ago here in Munich. Over the last 15 years it has succeeded as a foundation for life and collaboration. This alliance is a strong tie that links and binds everything together. It is the pulsing heart in the organism of our togetherness. To-

day we forge that pact anew as a sign of hope and an operating principle for the future of the continent.

Create the tie that binds all of that together. Create the tie of love.

Prayer

Jesus, we say yes to your commandment. Jesus, we want to love each other as you have loved us. Jesus, we ask you: strengthen our love through the power of the Holy Spirit for this pact to bear much and remaining fruit. Amen. ■

Sharing the Experiences of the Day

The Outdoor Rally at Stachus ended with an invitation to meet and greet. Hundreds of picnic “baskets” were distributed that had been prepared in advance. People approached passers-by everywhere to meet them, to share their experiences of the day and to invite them to the evening programme.

2000–3000 mainly young people attended the evening programme. It had been prepared by teenagers from the communities together with persons in charge of the “Holy Spirit Night” in Munich. Jesus Christ was witnessed together in public by youth-friendly music and speeches. For many it was a sign of hope that so many teenagers participated in

the Outdoor Rally at Stachus. One highlight surely was the procession of the teenagers from Holy Spirit Night. Far more than 1000 young people

from Munich thereby showed their support for the Outdoor Rally and also organized a joyful programme for the evening. ■



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Impressions from the Outdoor Rally



Photos: © Grill



Photos © Haaf



Publishers' Epilogue

„Connecting instead of Separating“. That was the headline of the report on sueddeutsche.de about the Outdoor Rally of **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** at Stachus on 2 July 2016. And it expresses very well the hope of the many participants of the **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE** Congress and Outdoor Rally in Munich. In these days people from various Christian movements and communities from the whole of Europe had intense encounters. Right before the meeting in Munich the British had decided to leave the EU. “Brexit” determined many discussions and also the public perception of **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE**.

TOGETHER FOR EUROPE virtually became a prophetic sign. In those days in Munich the three words of our name said it all: Together for Europe. A responsibility was placed into our hands that we should not

let go. Will we be able to put the message of those days into practice in and through our communities?

At Stachus we as Christians in Europe said decisively yes to Europe. It was a twofold Yes:

- We pass on to Europe the Yes that God spoke to all mankind through the Gospel. Thus our commitment in the message of 2 July 2016 starts with the words: “We live the Gospel of Jesus Christ and bear witness to it with our words and deeds.”
- We say yes to Europe as it is. The presentations on Friday morning at the Congress showed us our place in Europe as Christian communities and movements. Prof. Michael Hochschild reminded us that we „as spiritual movements can-

not be ends in ourselves“. He challenges us: “Whenever you seize the culture shaping powers which lay within your movements, you will become a living testimony that there is a path that leads us all out of the current crisis onwards into a better future.” Herbert Lauenroth spoke about the era of fear that is shaping Europe at the moment. “This fear of loss of self and the world can make room for new experiences at the same time.” He asked us to live a “culture of trust” and also to grow into a “worldly trust in God“.

In Munich we experienced a very special time of far-reaching significance.

The topic reconciliation was elementary and really opened the door for the future.



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Embedded in the atmosphere of the Congress of the Christian communities and movements signs of unity and steps towards reconciliation (Cardinal Koch, Bishop July and Metropolitan Serafim) were possible for which we had been hoping and praying for a long time. For many of us the warm togetherness of Cardinal Marx and Bishop Bedford-Strohm was a highlight that generates hope.

We experienced the power of reconciliation among us and committed ourselves to continue on this path of reconciliation. Being and becoming messengers of reconciliation is the job of the Christians according to the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Corinthians.

In Munich we received a key. We want to use this key for unity and reconciliation

and for togetherness in Europe: By contributing to an open atmosphere in our country in and together with our communities we resist the egotisms and demons of our time.

A special sign of hope and a highlight for many was the demonstration procession of the young people of Holy Spirit Night. They also attended the Outdoor Rally and organised the evening with a joyful and deep programme.

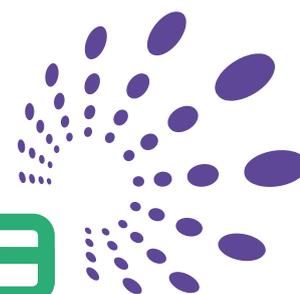
Encounter. Reconciliation. Future. The headline for those days in Munich became a real-

ity and thus we move on courageously and with hope: **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE!**

We remain together on this path and thank all those who contributed to the success of the days in Munich. ■

MITEINANDER FÜR TOGETHER FOR
ENSEMBLE POUR L' INSIEME PER L'
MAZI GIA THN ВМЕСТЕ ДЛЯ

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The message of Munich in the original layout

Message on 2nd July 2016
in Munich

ENCOUNTER.
RECONCILIATION.
FUTURE.

**TOGETHER
FOR EUROPE**
ENCOUNTER. RECONCILIATION. FUTURE

MITEINANDER FÜR TOGETHER FOR
ENSEMBLE POUR L' INSIEME PER L'
MAZI FIA THIV BMECTE ДІЯ

europē

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We cannot separate
these Christians anymore,
they belong together.

Reinhard Cardinal Marx

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