

## Focolare Movement

The Focolare Movement has the features of a large and varied family, of a “new people born of the Gospel”, as Chiara Lubich, its founder, defined it. It is a movement of spiritual and social renewal, founded in Trent, Italy, in 1943, during the Second World War. The Focolare Movement, officially known as the **Work of Mary**, was approved by the Catholic Church in 1962. It is now present in 182 nations and more than 2 million people share closely in its life and work.

It aims at spreading the message of **unity** worldwide. Inspired by Jesus’ prayer to the Father, “**May they all be one**” (Jn 17:21), its goal is to promote brotherhood and to achieve a more united world in which people respect and value diversity. To achieve this goal, people of the Movement engage in various forms of dialogue and are committed to building bridges of fraternal relationships among individuals, between cultural groups and in every area of society. Members of the Movement include Christians of different Churches and ecclesial communities, members of the major world religions and people of no particular religious belief.

Each one adheres to the Movement’s goal and spirit, while faithfully following the precepts of their own faith and conscience. At the heart of the movement are small communities of men and women who consecrate their lives to God with vows of poverty, chastity and obedience and live in separate households called “focolares”, from the Italian word for “hearth”. Married people are also members of these communities, while remaining in their families and being faithful to their commitment to marriage. They too make the same radical choice of the Gospel and offer their lives to bring unity in the world.

<https://www.focolare.org/en/>

## Economy of Communion (EOC)

The Economy of Communion (EOC) project is an initiative of the international ecclesial and ecumenical Focolare Movement, and is a concrete attempt to address acute social problems by creating businesses that are integral parts of their communities. The project requires member businesses to commit, after an

appropriate investment in the sustainability of the business, a part of their profits to direct aid for those in need and another part toward nurturing a “culture of giving”. The EOC presents examples of companies that are both successful global competitors as well as clear and intentional manifestations of “lived” faith in the business world. It was started by Chiara Lubich in May 1991, in São Paulo, Brazil, with the aim of building a human society where, following the example of the first Christian community in Jerusalem, “no one among them was in need”. The Economy of Communion is able to help those in need through their profits, as well as by how they treat their employees, clients, and the general public. Although the initiative started as a religious movement, in the core of the Focolare Movement, it is evolving into a humanitarian movement irrespective of religious allegiance.

<http://edc-online.org/en/>

<https://eocnoam.org/>

## Korea: Sungsimdang

Sungsimdang (SSD, “Sacred Heart”) celebrates sixty years and is now a food service company with 363 employees. It started as a small bakery producing steamed bread.

The founder of SSD owns an orchard in North Korea. With the money raised from the sale of 24 apples he could board Victory with his whole family. In 1956 he moved to Daejeon. There, thanks to two sacks of flour received from the parish, he started the production of steamed bread. After the war all the hungry people who had nothing to eat gathered at the station.

Although he was in the same conditions, he gave bread to the poor every day. This "sharing" continued for 60 years without missing a single day. The story of warm bread started spreading on everyone's lips. So SSD grew and eventually moved from the station to its present location. 60 years later...it is part of the culture of Daejeon today.

<http://edc-online.org/en/publications/eoc-newsletter/n-43/12280-two-sacks-of-flour-turned-into-culture-in-daejeon.html>

## Philippines: Bangko Kabayan

When the owners of Bangko Kabayan, Tess and Francis, heard about Chiara Lubich’s proposal for a new kind of economy—the economy of communion—they understood that it was not enough to be comfortable in their own small world.

They continually look for ways to share the benefits of their growing business with their employees by providing above-average wages, health and life insurance, profit-sharing plans and even stock options in order to make each person feel that he or she was truly a part of the enterprise. In everything, they try to share the **culture of giving**; showing by example that actions in favor of the poor need not be the exclusive monopoly of a handful of “good” people.

Aside from the poor with whom they share the profits of the bank as it’s an enterprise of the Economy of Communion, they can, as a rural financial institution, serve the needs of the poor in the community directly.

<https://www.bangkokabayan.com/index.php/about-us>

## Yogya: Goat For Good (G4G)

We are based at Mount Merapi in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, where we've been working with the communities in the area who were affected by the devastating effects of the 2010 volcanic eruption.

We've brought them disaster relief, such as food and other necessities, and helped build public amenities such as portable water systems.

Looking ahead, we would like to help rebuild the livelihoods of some of the villagers through sustainable goat farming.

<http://goatforgood.com>

### 2019 Focolare Mariapolis Retreats:

Yogyakarta : 9 – 11 Aug

Bangkok : 10 – 12 Aug

Medan : 14 – 16 Sep

Johor : 14 – 16 Sep

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