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COMMUNION AND LIBERATION INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE

# TRACES

2

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## EASTER 2018

Ever since the day Peter and John ran to the empty tomb and saw Him risen and alive in their midst, everything can change. From then on, and forever, a person can change, can live, can live anew. The presence of Jesus of Nazareth is like the sap that, from within—mysteriously but certainly—refreshes our dryness and makes the impossible possible. What for us is impossible is not impossible for God. So that the slightest hint of a new humanity, to someone who looks with a sincere eye and heart, becomes visible through the company of those who recognize that He is present: God-with-us. The slightest hint of a new humanity, like dry and bitter nature becoming fresh and green once more.

**Luigi Giussani**

# “OUR ONE DESIRE IS TO FOLLOW HIM”

*This issue’s editorial is the letter written by Julián Carrón to the Fraternity of Communion and Liberation after he was received in audience by Pope Francis on February 2<sup>nd</sup>.*

Milan, February 7, 2018

Dear friends,

As you know, I had the joy of being received in a private audience with Pope Francis on Friday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>. My desire was to share with him, the guide of our Christian people, the steps we have taken since our momentous meeting with him on March 7, 2015, in St. Peter’s Square.

1. First, I told him about the journey we are making in order to make the charism we received from Fr. Giussani increasingly *ours*. You will all remember how the Pope called us to “pass on the flame” of the charism by letting it enter more deeply into our persons.

2. I then thanked him once again for the letter on poverty that he sent us at the end of the Jubilee of Mercy, which served as the basis for our last Fraternity Exercises. Related to this, I mentioned a few of the many initiatives responding to people in need—low-income families, the elderly, immigrants, people with disabilities, and others—that have sprung up into our people as a fruit of the education in gratuity that we receive through Charitable Work.

3. In light of preparations for the upcoming Synod of Bishops on Young People, I gave the Pope a brief summary of our passionate commitment to educating them; a commitment shaped by our desire

to respond to their need for a road that leads to fullness in life. They still aspire to this, though at times they may be confused or pursue false images and paths that cannot satisfy their hearts.

Our conversation confirmed for me how much Pope Francis cares about listening to young people, whether they believe or not, whether they are indifferent or seeking. This is the reason—he told me—that he decided to invite young people from all over the world to Rome for a meeting before Palm Sunday: so that he could get a first-hand sense of all the questions, interests, objections, and concerns that they have. You can imagine how happy I was to be able to share the path of education on which we are accompanying young people in our attempt to help them regain an authentic affection for themselves and discover how Christ is present now. He is present through an encounter—as the Pope said to us on March 7<sup>th</sup>—with the phenomenon of a humanity that is different, inspiring wonder and a desire to belong. What a weight of responsibility I felt in responding to the task we’ve been given in history!

4. Lastly, I spoke to him about the many meetings and conversations with people who come from cultural or religious backgrounds that are different from ours (secularists, Jews, Orthodox, Protestants, Muslims, non-believers, etc.) which have taken place over the last few years in Italy and around the world. All this in an attempt to follow his invitation to be “centered in Christ” in order to be a “Church going forth.”


To my final question of whether there was anything he wanted to tell me, since our one desire is to follow him, the Pope answered, "I would just like to thank all of you for what you do," encouraging me to stay the course. I perceived this as an invitation for me and for each of you, that we might experience what Fr. Giussani describes, that in "living within the ecclesial community [...] [we might] attain that certainty and clarity of truth which we need in order to face life" (*Why the Church?*, McGill-Queens, Montreal 2001, p. 169).

As he said good-bye, while I stood at the door of his private library, he asked me to continue to pray for him. How can we help but sense all the longing in such a request? Let us ask the Spirit of the Risen Christ to help him carry the weight of the entire Church! Let us respond with all the awareness and affection we have in us to this entreaty. Let us beg the Lord that the Pope never lack the grace needed to fulfill the task assigned to him, to be the Lord's witness to all people, as the Pope shows us each day.

On a related note, I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to encourage you to consider the proposal Pope Francis made to all of us after the *Angelus* last Sunday: "Faced with the tragic protracted situations of conflict in different parts of the world, I invite all the faithful to take part in a special Day of Prayer and Fasting for Peace on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Friday of the First Week of Lent. Let us offer it in particular for the people of the Democratic Republic of Congo and of South Sudan. As on other similar occasions, I also invite non-Catholic and non-Christian brothers and sisters to join us in this initiative in whatever ways they deem most appropriate, but still together" (February 4, 2018).

With affection and gratitude for each of you and growing every day in wonder at the journey we are making together,

Yours truly,  
Fr. Julián Carrón



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**Cover:** The image and the text used for the Communion and Liberation poster for Easter 2018. Eugène Burnand, *The disciples Peter and John running to the sepulchre on the morning of the Resurrection*, 1898. Paris, Musée d'Orsay. (© Erich Lessing/Contrasto)

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## THE EMBRACE THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING

 Dear Fr. Carron: At the Beginning Day, the story of the prisoner was etched in my brain. After an unjust body search, he said, “How could the guard behave differently, if he hadn’t had the same experience I’d had, that is, if the fact of Christ hadn’t crashed into him as happened for me?” This has been a period of tension in our home with our three children between the ages of 12 to 18, and we never know what to expect each evening. It is an interesting labor of love, but certainly tiring for my wife and me. So awhile back, we decided to take some time for ourselves, and one Sunday just the two of us went for a hike in the mountains. Splendid sunshine, marvelous colors, and the valley practically empty... maximum Beauty. We enjoyed the day and talked a lot, all the ingredients were there for a beautiful day to “recharge.” Getting back in the car, however, a small thought surprised me; everything had gone so well, but it seemed that something was missing. I didn’t have time to think too much about it because after ten minutes, we were caught up in telephone calls and our everyday life. A few days later, I had a difficult day at work. I got home exhausted and weighed down by worry. Entering our house, I saw, in this order: my adolescent son’s door closed (something told me he had thrown a fit), a daughter who was freaking out about some lost clothing, and the other daughter with her head down, trying to alienate herself from the




world by drawing. Saddened, I forgot about my own worries and, before understanding which of the three kids was in the most urgent need of my attention, I sought my wife’s gaze to find some support. I found her at the stove, but when she turned around, she attacked me loudly with a series of accusations. I felt my world cave in. I had a moment of panic. And here, with incredible surprise, I remembered the episode of the prisoner. I understood that I suffer because I am not made for this, but my relationship with my wife is not defined by our instincts and our struggles. She is my first witness of and my company moving toward Christ. Christ is the only possibility for holding together this relationship and my family. In the middle of the chaos, the value of my relationship with my wife came back unexpectedly in all its strength. It was just an instant: at home, nothing had changed, my boss was still unfair, my children were still all in their rooms, the pots were still on the stove, but I felt light. There was time for a quick hug for my wife and the rounds to see each child. The work is

not finished: there will be the beautiful possibilities of each moment, the surprise that things can be made new each time I come home. How many times have I heard a story like the inmate’s and thought I understood? But just as happened that day in the mountains, even if everything is in order, if I’ve put all the pieces in place, this doesn’t mean that “being moved” just happens. This time, however, it happened to me.

**Giorgio, Italy**

## SOMETHING THAT GIVES BREATH TO LIFE

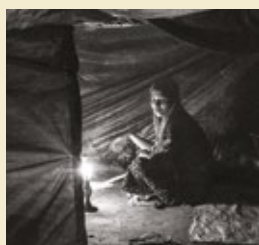
 Dear Fr. Carrón: A few weeks ago, we got together with some friends of the Fraternity after a break of a few months caused by too many commitments. Many things had changed during this time: some of us had changed jobs, some had been transferred elsewhere. So my husband organized this get-together with the desire to see where we stood. We asked our friends and ourselves, “Do we still desire to do the Fraternity together? Or is it just another commitment to try to fit into our busy schedules? With freedom and honesty, we will start up again only if we truly desire to.” I already knew what would happen. One friend would say the Fraternity is so beautiful, but he doesn’t have time. Another friend would say the Fraternity is everything for her, but then she’d disappear. Instead, both of them bowled me over. The first friend said he feels alone with his three young daughters. He told me how, during this break of a few months, he tried to throw himself into parish life, to offer



## AVSI TENTS CAMPAIGN

### A TRIP TO ITALY ACCOMPANIED BY THOSE FACES

**D**ear Fr. Carrón: I've been living in Kampala for many years. Last December my employer asked me to go to Italy to testify about the AVSI Tents Campaign. Since the theme of the Tents Campaign is about the work we do with migrants, I felt it important to go back to the refugee camps to see how our planned activities were being implemented. I had in my heart a desire to rediscover the value of the things we do. Initially my focus was on collecting data: how many people we are assisting and the quality of our interventions, but the reality of the situation revealed itself to me in a much deeper way. I encountered women and children refugees who moved me. Their faces reawakened my awareness of my own need. After many years in Africa, even though I thought I knew all about the things I was seeing, my desire to rediscover them in the surprise of a new encounter was reborn. After my visit to the camp, I saw the Christmas poster. How could I not be moved at the sight of that tent and that light of hope,



which for me meant an encounter with the Lord, made present in the simple and concrete reality of the faces of those mothers and children I had just encountered? Thus, my going to Italy to share the work of AVSI meant first of all talking about my experience of human growth in an encounter with another. I remember a young girl

who, at the end of one of the meetings, asked me if she could hug me because she felt loved and because our gaze on her corresponded to her greatest need. I was also surprised by the number of people who organized the various events I participated in while I was in Italy. The Tents Campaign coincides with the possibility of communicating the novelty that touches us, which makes waking up in the morning meaningful. This experience has been one of an overabundance of affection and reason accompanying me in my work in Uganda, defeating all my objections that are based on my limitations or those that I encounter in reality.

**Manolita, Kampala (Uganda)**

an environment of Catholic families to bring his daughters up in. He told us, "I look at you who are not perfect and who do not have children, and yet, you love my daughters as I would want them to be loved and there is no other place I would want to grow myself and have them grow." The second friend has for a long time belonged to a youth group founded by two dear friends and she has frequently given priority to this group over School of Community. She told everyone how, in these months without the Frater-

nity, she had felt suffocated. "It's true that my friends are in that group, but it's not enough for me, it's not enough to be together, to talk about Jesus and about Christian feelings without this having something to say to me about my life. I need someone to help me look at my life. Otherwise, I am closed off and I can't breathe. I haven't breathed in these months, until you invited me to come back, to come home." That dinner left me in silence. In these weeks, the friendship among us and with these two friends

has become deeper, the companionship more attentive, and the faithfulness among us, to the Church and to the Movement has become more constant. We have also seen the birth of an ever more surprising attention to our relationship with other friends of the community and with our city. I look at all of this and I realize how truly (even in this God-forsaken place in the great USA) we are taken to heart, we are loved and accompanied.

**Myriam, St. Louis (USA)**



# BUMPING INTO

# A LIFE

**A group of university students from North America worked together for a year on an exhibit on Fr. Luigi Giussani. The result was 21 panels showing how his experience continues to shape theirs today through an ongoing companionship.**

BY PETER FIELDS

In years past at the New York Encounter, there has been an exhibit on Msgr. Luigi Giussani—a 14-panel exhibit manned by a few volunteers and available to any Encounter attendee curious about the history of Communion and Liberation and its founder. After the 2017 installment, the volunteers reported back to the organizers of the Encounter, and told stories of the beautiful reception the exhibit had received from newcomers with many questions and people already in the Movement who were struck by learning something new.



**IN THE HEART OF MANHATTAN.** Here and on the following pages, some moments during the New York Encounter 2018 at the exhibition dedicated to Fr. Luigi Giussani. On February 22<sup>nd</sup> it will be the 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death.

On one occasion, a man told a volunteer, after going through the exhibit, that he understood what his daughter had found in following the university students of CL (CLU).

**REVITALIZED INTEREST.** Recently, in the CLU in the U.S. and Canada, there has been a renewed desire to understand the history of the Movement. At the vacation and exercises in 2017, the students heard many witnesses from those who first met CL in America in the 1980s and 90s. So when the organizers of the Encoun-

ter were considering expanding the Giussani exhibit, many in the CLU were immediately interested. “The work came out of a personal desire to know Fr. Giussani more,” said Fr. Pietro Rossotti, the leader of CLU in North America. Grace, a college student from New York City who has been in the Movement her whole life, described how doing this work revitalized her interest. “Through this work, I’ve become so much more excited because this text is a person.”

The work was carried out across North America and emphasized un-

derstanding what the life of Fr. Giussani means now for every person involved. Different communities read different works by Fr. Giussani and excerpts from the new biography, *The Life of Luigi Giussani*, by Alberto Savorana. Each community pursued the themes that struck them, such as charity, mission, or culture, and tried to understand what Giussani proposed, comparing this with their own experience in the CLU. Additionally, many of the students reached out to, became friends with, and interviewed Americans and >>

## ▶ CLOSE UP

» Canadians who had had the opportunity to meet Giussani. What resulted was a 15-minute video of excerpts from these interviews and 21 beautiful panels about the height of a person ripe with images, stories, and witnesses from the life of Fr. Giussani, the life of the Movement in its beginnings, and the life of the American and Canadian CLU now.

The exhibit began with a panel relating an anecdote about a Cardinal, Fr. Giussani, and his friend Enzo Piccinini. The story is that while Enzo was accompanying Giussani on a visit to the Cardinal of Bologna, Giacomo Biffi, Giussani “rushed to kiss his ring, and Enzo followed suit, but somewhat awkwardly, and with little conviction.” When the Cardinal pointed out this lack of conviction, Giussani responded, “It is true, but if he continues to do it, he will eventually believe in it.”

**IN BOLD LETTERS.** This particular story resonated with Giulia, a student from Houston, as she was preparing to give tours of the exhibit. “I thought that I’m exactly like Enzo Piccinini. Something happened in my life, and there is a beauty that I perceive by awkwardly following Fr. Giussani and the Movement. Even if I don’t understand it fully, I know for sure that the longing for this beauty that I have been feeling my entire life can find an answer only through this companionship.”

This desire for beauty manifested itself in other places in the exhibit. Another panel addressed a desire to combat “the neglect of the ‘I,’” as Giussani phrased it. In bold letters on the panel, there was this quote from Giussani: “There is no greater inhumanity than working to erase the ‘I.’ The inhumanity of our age is precisely this.” This is an experience known all too well on college campuses. “I learned that another student



was eating her meals in her room because she hated being alone in the crowded dining hall,” read an excerpt from a recent *New York Times* article (“Loneliness and the College Experience”). The exhibit went on to highlight how the “I” is truly reborn in an encounter: describing Giussani’s teachings about John and Andrew’s first encounter with Jesus, retelling the story of Giussani’s challenge to a young man to “love the Infinite,” and recounting Giussani’s eagerness to communicate his experience of faith when he first started teaching in a high school. “To bump into something absolutely and deeply natural, because it corresponds to the needs of the heart that nature gave us, is something absolutely exceptional” (Luigi Giussani, *Recognizing Christ*). Francesca, a history student from Canada, spoke on one of her tours about how she had been struck to learn in her research that Giussani gave up what was a promising career as a theologian to teach high school students.

Javier, from Washington, DC, wrote about his experience of rediscovering the “I” for one of the panels. “I was raised Catholic for the first 17 years of my life and had formed what I believed was a very strong connection with God, but then very suddenly and without much warning, my faith was put to the test. I found myself turning away from God entirely. This period lasted for nearly a year. Needless to say, this was a very bad period. I started to try believing in God again, but it was very difficult and I truly didn’t believe I deserved God’s love anymore. A friend of mine unknowingly flipped my world upside down in the best

way possible when she invited me to join her on a retreat. There, I took advantage of the sacrament of reconciliation for the first time since turning away from God, and I got to meet an amazing community of people that I am proudly a member of now. Since joining CLU, I have come to realize just how important it is to resist the desire to take on life all on

“Something happened in my life, there is a beauty I perceive by following Giussani.”





my own, but instead to overcome my difficulties with the help of my community, through whom I can best engage with Jesus.”

**THROUGH A LENS.** Another panel expressed Giussani’s conception of culture. “Culture is the discovery of the ultimate meaning of things and of life: the Truth.” Understanding art, music, books, history, and current events through this lens is one crucial aspect of the life of the CLU.

One example came from Alex from Toronto, Canada. Posted on one of the panels was an email she wrote to her friends after the terrorist attacks in Paris in 2015, expressing her desire to understand this “ultimate meaning of things”: “Dear Friends, as I am sure everyone has heard, there were terrorist attacks in Paris last night. I would like to propose that we all come together to judge what happened. Why am I proposing this? Because I cannot stay in front of what happened without you. I ask myself, what does studying have to do with the attacks in Paris? How can I study when this just happened? Why should I? What will studying do? Is it just a distraction from what is hap-

pening over there? From what could happen here? But also, how can I stay in front of this? How can I not live in fear and sadness for what happened? A friend told me something very interesting when I talked to her yesterday. She said that the only place to start is from the fact that Christ saves my life, chooses me. The only point of hope is starting from the encounter we have had. From this, we can say it is reasonable to hope. Life has meaning because *my life* has meaning.”

Another section of the exhibit focused on the meaning of charity, with examples from both the past and present. Margaret, from Minnesota, wrote about a conversation with a stranger on her way to the charitable work of singing at a nursing home. A man washing shop windows inquired if she was going off to study, but was surprised to hear her answer. “He was so curious as to why college students would do such a thing on a Saturday morning. I told him that we go every month and sing various

kinds of music. I told him that we love to go because we leave so much happier and that we need to be with the people in the nursing home because they help us see the simplicity of life again. We proceeded to have a conversation about how his wife had died and he was afraid of getting old and dying... ‘To hear that you and your friends go to sing at a nursing home makes me less afraid to die—thank you,’ Bruce told me before I said goodbye. I learned something that day: the charitable work does not just begin when our ‘planned activity’ starts, rather is the law of my life—to give myself to others, to give my attention to Bruce, because I desire that he meet what I have met. I am learning that the particular moments of the charitable work are an education to live reality as a constant giving of myself to another person, because it is more beautiful that way, and I am less afraid to die.”

**MORNING PRAYER.** One of the pictures on this same panel shows the CLU of Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas, doing their monthly charitable work: visiting a paralyzed young man who can no longer speak, and singing for him.

Another part was devoted to Giussani’s understanding of mission. “Only what is great, what is total, what brings everything together can help a man put up with the humiliation of caring for and attention to details.”

Mary, from Atchison, wrote something for one of the panels about the necessity she feels to live life as mission. “We always say Morning Prayer in the center of campus together. I ordered many copies of the Book of Hours and the Songbook for >>

**“A woman asked me many questions and finally asked: ‘Do you still meet Him?’”**  
**Teresa**

» our community out of a desire, the desire to engage with my friends in the gestures of the Movement. On Tuesday morning, a priest came to me and said that the last thing he was expecting was to see ten college students chanting the Psalms at 7:30 in the morning. He said, ‘It is clear you have met Christ and now you wake up the rest of campus with your voices.’ I was struck because I saw that Fr. Pietro’s words were true: ‘An exchange of ideas remains abstract until you live them.’ Mission is not what I do. It is who I am.”

**FEELING SMALL.** The exhibit also included the words of Giussani on the beggar as the protagonist of history, “The Mystery as mercy remains the last word even on all the awful possibilities of history. Because of this, existence expresses itself, as an ultimate ideal, in beggarliness. The real protagonist of history is the beggar: Christ who begs for man’s heart, and man’s heart that begs for Christ” (Luigi Giussani to John Paul II, May 30, 1998).

On the same panel as this quote, the CLU described its annual pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Good Help—a Marian shrine located in Wisconsin. One testimony from this experience described an encounter with a friend met along the way. “We met Nicole during the pilgrimage; she was one of the parishioners who hosted us. She decided to follow us for part of the pilgrimage. Afterwards, she wrote: ‘We did not know who exactly we were going to be hosting. It turns out that you are a group of inspiring young people. You are my community, you are the community I have been praying for, and you all showed up at my doorstep.’”



**THE BIOGRAPHY.** *The Life of Luigi Giussani* written by Alberto Savorana has just been published by McGill Queen’s University Press.

Many who attended the exhibit, and there were a very many, were provoked not only by the content but by the tours themselves. Giulia was struck by many of the questions from those she gave tours to. “I had beautiful dialogues. Some of them came back at the end to say goodbye and to thank me. There was a man that had just met the Movement a month before who told me that he wanted to come on the pilgrimage with us this year.”

Some of the encounters the tours were very personal. Teresa, from Atchison, gave one to just a single woman. “She asked me many questions and finally asked me with great intensity: ‘When did you meet Christ? And do you still meet Him?’ As I answered, tears began to fill her eyes. I felt small because instead of me bringing or revealing Him, He had come to me through the eyes of this woman who desired so much. She said that she wishes her students could know what I had just told her, that Christ comes day by day through our lives.

**“I was given access not just to Fr. Giussani’s personality, but his heart.”**

**Emma**

She gave me a huge hug at the end, thanking me for reawakening her heart. My heart had also come alive through her!”

**YEARS LATER.** Emma, from Steubenville, Ohio, had a similar experience. “I was working in the exhibit on Fr. Giussani more awkwardly than Enzo Piccinini before the Cardinal, and I saw a man looking at a panel for a long time. I decided to say hello and ask what he was thinking about. He asked me almost right away if I had read the panel. “Yes,” I said smiling. It was the story of Fr. Giussani’s words to the couple kissing in the garden. He asked me what I thought about it. I hesitated. For me the story was humorous, and I liked seeing Fr. Giussani’s vivacious personality, but I didn’t understand what his response had been. So I asked him what this panel meant to him. He had been standing there awhile. It was clear this story meant something much deeper to him than humor and personality. He said, ‘You know, I’m married. It is hard. I want to love my wife, but yeah, so many times I try instead to possess her. This is where I go. Fr. Giussani is brilliant. He reminds us of the stars.’ From this man, I was given access not just to Fr. Giussani’s personality, but his heart. Even to people he did not know and was not bound to, he spoke words of freedom and love, and now his words were giving these things to this man and to me years later.”

The exhibit included many other stories, pictures, and witnesses. Each was an echo, in its own way, of the words of Giussani quoted on the concluding panel. “To give your life for the work of Another always implies a link between the word ‘Other’ and something historical, something concrete that can be touched, felt, described, photographed, and has a name and surname.”



# THOSE WHO ACCEPT THE RISK

**What does it mean to be a “teacher” today?  
A conference with Julián Carrón marks 40 years  
since Fr. Giussani’s *The Risk of Education* was published.  
A discussion full of life and the reasons for life.**

BY INES MAGGIOLINI

**M**ath and Italian, science and foreign languages: in a word, the subjects. Then, the youth: not as an abstract category, but particular faces like those of Anna and Giorgio, Roman high school students, or Khalid and Franziska, immigrants who are trying to learn our Italian language and history. And

in between, the educators grappling with an increasingly alarming crisis of education.

These are some highlights from a conference and discussion of Fr. Luigi Giussani’s *The Risk of Education*, first published 40 years ago. Much has changed since then, and yet—this is the claim made by the organizers of the “Free to Educate” conference

at the Catholic University of Milan—this little book still has a lot to offer schools today.

The importance of the topic could be seen in the size and geographic scope of the meeting: there were over 3,300 registrants with participation from 60 schools in Italy and eight abroad (from Holland to Kazakhstan). The Aula Magna was packed with an attentive audience, teachers looking for their own “teacher” and road to follow so they can reach the hearts and minds of their students, because—and this was true at every latitude and longitude—“Ideas aren’t enough to reawaken the ‘I,’ to get us out of bed in the morning.”

**AUDACITY.** “If I had to summarize, I’d say that the originality of Fr. Giussani’s educational method is the method itself,” said Fr. Julián Carrón, the successor to the founder in leading Communion and Liberation. “And the method is experience, because this is where reality reveals itself, becomes transparent.” It’s not easy to let go of the security of- >>



**“FREE TO EDUCATE.”** From left, Luigina Mortari, Fr. Julián Carrón, Eraldo Affinati, and Francesco Valenti on January 27<sup>th</sup> during the conference organized by “The Risk of Education Association” at the Catholic University, Milan (Italy).

» fered by rules and principles; it takes courage and audacity to ask students to verify the truth of what is taught for themselves. “In order to judge,” Fr. Carrón went on to say, “You must have a criterion: one that cannot be manipulated and that we find inside ourselves.” The President of Communion and Liberation referred back to the words of Argentine author Ernesto Sabato, who described the yearning and nostalgia for something infinite, something absolute that serves as the “invisible, unknowable background against which we compare all of life.”

It is that same criterion that Fr. Giussani described as “the complex of needs and ‘evidences’ which accompany us as we come face to face with all that exists. These needs can be given many names. They can be summarized with different expressions (for example, the need for happiness, the need for truth, for justice, etc.). They are like a spark igniting the human motor.”

This brings to mind the faces of the students at Berchet High School in Milan, the first to whom Fr. Giussani proposed this adventure and friendship. In an unexpected way, they are much like the faces of the teens that Eraldo Affinati, author and teacher, meets at “Penny Wirton,” the free Italian language school he founded for immigrants. They are wounded by life, de facto orphans, or “spiritual lepers,” as he describes them. “In the face of their insecurities and fragility, what matters is being able to offer an experience of life more than communicating certain content,” he said. “In addition to accepting that a ‘son’ or pupil might take you somewhere you had not expected.”

A far cry from the safe confines of proficiency exams, technical or scientific writing, and mastery of skills...

“Education is always related to the Mystery,” underlined Luigina



*“This love for freedom to the point of risk is, above all, the guideline that education must always keep in mind.”*

**Luigi Giussani**

Mortari, professor of Pedagogy at the University of Verona. “The fundamental questions of our existence and a deep reverence for life must be cultivated. Life must be examined, because we need to find the reasons for things, as Fr. Giussani suggests when he talks about an education to criticism.”

**OMAR AND FARIS.** Together, the participants outlined a relationship with young people that sees their restlessness as an opportunity rather than an insurmountable obstacle. “Adolescence is a critical phase, because it is a time when teenagers are seeking their own personality and identity,” Fr. Carrón explains. “In the time we’re living in, young people are certainly less ideological, but they are also more vulnerable. They are even embarrassed by their embarrassment in front of life; they’re uncomfortable with their discomfort. This

is a distinctive mark of the epochal change in which we live. It’s not a lack of study skills or discipline, but rather a ‘structural weakness.’”

One is tempted to go in two different directions in reaction to this existential discomfort: either creating rules and instructions to hold the uneasiness at bay, or writing it off as a psychological fragility. This was not the experience Fr. Giussani had with his students, as described in *The Risk of Education*. “What Fr. Giussani challenged educators to do was introduce the totality of reality through that uneasiness,” said Fr. Carrón. “No one can keep a teacher from looking at a student, with all of his or her symptoms, at the level of his or her ultimate irreducibility.” Surprisingly, it is precisely because these adolescents are, deep down, a mystery that they can be the first allies for educators. They are certainly not obstacles.

This was the experience Eraldo Af-



finati had in accompanying Omar and Faris, two young men who came to Italy as children, on their return to Morocco. He had a moving encounter with the blind, elderly imam who had taught them to read and write in Arabic. For the Italian author, who is a student of the method of life and education of Fr. Lorenzo Milani, this demonstrated that the action of educating should never come to an end. “The teacher simply becomes a brother to his student,” he explained. “This is passing the torch.”

The same happened for Luigina Mortari in her research and work in forming educators. She described the “infinite patience with which you have to accompany young people in their search for what is good, including in themselves.” This because “one’s ‘I’ may be damaged, but it’s still there, judging; the sign of this is that one realizes he or she is dissatisfied,” Fr. Carrón clarified. “This irreducibility of the ‘I,’ which remains in spite of everything, is crucial for teachers and educators. No matter how confused they are, adolescents still have their hearts, and it is to this heart that educators must appeal in order to teach them to judge and to begin a journey.”

A journey that guides young people

in relating to reality and to their surroundings, because otherwise—as the moderator of the session, Risk of Education Association president Francesco Valenti, underlined—the school and its educators have failed.

“We need to let ourselves be moved by reality and those around us, to be open to the continual call that’s in the eyes of those around us,” Mortari said. “Our concern should be that the other realize all the potential in his or her being.” It is precisely in this “attentiveness

to human relationships, guiding young people to find their true selves, their true names,” that Affinati finds the common ground between Fr. Giussani and Fr. Milani, two contemporaries that have been placed in opposition by an ideological reading of their educational methods.

Today, it seems things have become more dramatic and complex: gang-related crime, high drop-out rates, an increasing number of young people not working and not in school, drug use, and the abuse of social media and virtual reality. Can *The Risk of Education* still help? “I don’t say this out of loyalty, but how could you run a school without having *The Risk of Education* as a reference point?” Fr. Carrón pointedly asked. “Fr. Giussani gave us the tools to face all these things, from apathy to ‘spiritual leprosy,’ because he placed an emphasis on what so often escapes notice: the

**┌**  
**“Young people are uncomfortable with their discomfort. It is a ‘structural weakness.’”**

**Carrón**

**┌**  
**“In the face of their fragility, what matters is being able to offer an experience of life.”**

**Affinati**

**┌**  
**“We need to be moved by those around us, to be open to the continual call.”**

**Mortari**

questions posed by the adults, the educators. The true hope for these young people is that they find someone who can present an incarnate response to their difficulties and problems. No matter the historical circumstances, the first step is always discovering a presence that asserts itself, not to one’s brain, but within one’s life. In

other words, only adults who are enthusiastic about the journey they are on will be able to infect their students with the same enthusiasm.”

This passion must permeate every detail in the classroom, because the encounter between a teacher and student takes place during class. The challenge is reawakening the “I” of each student through the way one lives (not through extra activities), starting with how one walks into the classroom.

“You can tell from the way that we explain physics or chemistry or delve into art history and literature whether our reason is a restricted rationalism that does not point to anything beyond itself, or if our gaze is one that, through the content we teach,

opens us to the Mystery,” Carrón explains. For example, the time he took a class to the planetarium in Madrid and upon their return found the following questions from his students on the blackboard: “Who made the heavens and the stars? What is the meaning of all of it? What is its purpose?” **┐**



A group of Donald Trump supporters during a rally in Michigan.

# THIS ANGER IS NOT ENOUGH

According to the *New York Times* (and many other reviews), his latest book is one of the most notable of 2017. **PANKAJ MISHRA** offers his clear-eyed vision of today's world and its globalized "disorder."

BY GIUSEPPE PEZZINI

**W**e met up with Pankaj Mishra in a classic pub in North London, where he lives with his family during those brief intervals when his engagements as an author and journalist don't have him traveling the world. His latest book, *Age of Anger*, was a best seller in the United Kingdom and in the United States, and was hailed by the *New York Times* as one of the most notable books of 2017. It offers a "history of the present," as the subtitle states, in search of the cultural roots of the crisis in which we live. Spanning from Giuseppe Mazzini to Donald Trump, from Gabriele D'Annunzio to Osama Bin Laden, Mishra's book describes how the normalization of Western values and institutions such as individualism, capitalism, and secularism necessarily leads to violent reactions. Reactions that are dangerous and, furthermore, useless because they share as their foundation the same reductive vision of humanity promulgated by the ideals they claim to oppose. Born in 1969, Mishra was born in Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh, in northern India. It's surprising that a thinker with such vast and in-depth knowledge of modern Western thought came from so far away.

**In a world populated by billions of people coming from very different backgrounds, does a special interest in Western culture still make sense?**

The theologian Reinhold Niebuhr ridiculed the fanatics of Western civilization, the contingent fruits of which were regarded as the ultimate form and norm for human existence. Despite this kind of criticism, Western culture has now attained to global dimensions and influence. Today, we live in an immense, homogenous worldwide market, in which human beings are programmed to maximize their own personal interests and aspire to the exact same things, no matter their cultural context or individual temperament. Theodor Herzl, founder of Zionism, spoke approvingly of what he called a "Darwinian mimicry," a desire to "mimic" that leads entire populations to conform to the dominant mentality and its illusions of grandeur.



Pankaj Mishra.

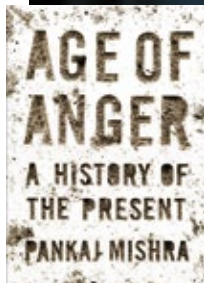
**Many people, however, continue to defend liberal capitalism, especially as embodied in America, by holding up its triumphs in the history of the last two centuries.**

For centuries, America has been spoken of as the land of freedom by people who have turned a blind eye to the history of its development and the content of its promise. Its promise of growth and expansion (territorial and economic) was from the beginning limited to a well-defined slice of the population, to the detriment of indigenous peoples and other social categories. The capitalistic and in the end societal disorder generated by the disproportion between the promise of happiness through econom- >>

» ic gain and the actual prospects of realizing it continues to infect American society, and has spread like wildfire in our globalized world. In the same way, the birth of a capitalist economy in Western Europe brought with it political, economic, and social disorder that generated a brutality unprecedented in human history, including two world wars, totalitarian regimes, and genocides. A brutality that the heralds of “progress” tend to deny, forget, or at least reduce to a limited number of extreme examples, like Nazism and Communism. This disorder is currently infecting a vast number of peoples and nations at a global level.

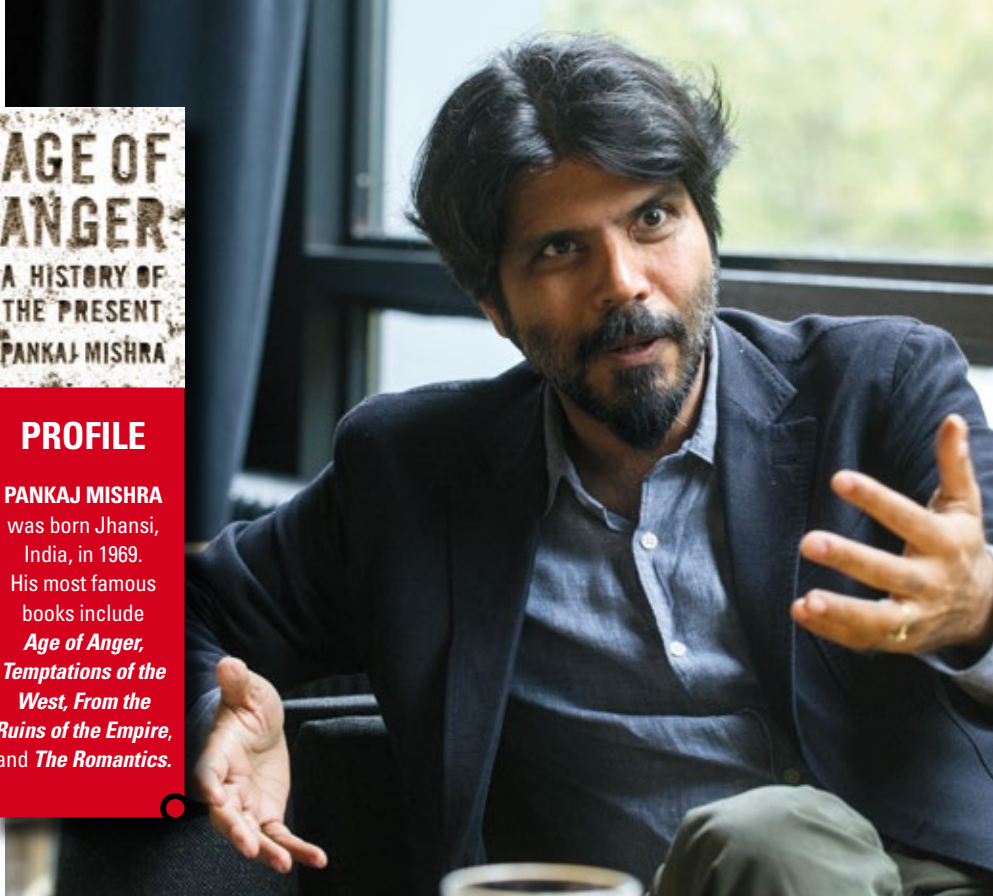
**In your book, you maintain that this homogenization applies not only to the promoters and victims of liberal globalization, but also to its staunchest opponents.**

Since the 1800s, a web of overlapping connections has united the most vocal opponents of the materialism and individualism advocated by the bourgeois capitalist system. Herzl, a Jew, was a spiritual disciple of Wagner, the anti-Semite from whom he borrowed the political idea of an elect race. The Bolshevik Maksim Gorky, the poet and herald of a “pure Islam” Muhammad Iqbal, and Gabriele D’Annunzio were all faithful followers of Friedrich Nietzsche. Lenin and Gramsci looked to American Taylorism, and the brokers of the New Deal were inspired by Mussolini’s corporatism. Both Gandhi and Damodar Savarkar, the ideologue behind Hindu nationalism, considered themselves the spiritual heirs of Giuseppe Mazzini. More recently, before his execution, white supremacist Timothy McVeigh became close friends in the supermax prison in Colorado with Ahmed



**PROFILE**

**PANKAJ MISHRA** was born Jhansi, India, in 1969. His most famous books include *Age of Anger*, *Temptations of the West*, *From the Ruins of the Empire*, and *The Romantics*.



Yousef, the mastermind behind the first terrorist attack on the Twin Towers.

**The lines of thought you cite above are apparently quite unrelated, yet you group them together, ultimately tracing them all back to Rousseau and his criticism, which I would call “archetypal,” of Voltaire.**

Voltaire is the prototype of modern man: defender of reason and freedom, opponent of traditional religion, promoter of an international alliance among the powerful, and himself a businessman and investor. With his life and thought, Voltaire made a life of luxury and comfort seem like a legitimate, and even necessary, political and economic objective under the auspices of free competition among the enlightened. Rousseau is the reaction to all of this; the internal critic of the Enlightenment. Rousseau counters Voltaire’s individualism with an idealized vision of an egalitarian community, kicking off a series of revolts against modernity that continues to the present day. Voltaire and Rousseau are, however, two sides of the same coin: a Rousseau necessarily

follows from a Voltaire.

**What do you mean by that?**

Rousseau embodies the quintessential experience of modernity for the majority of people: citizens of a commercial metropolis, lacking any roots, hopelessly aspiring to a place in the sun and struggling with their contradictory feelings of envy and their fascination for, repulsion against, and rejection of the system they fight against while, at the same time, being generated by it. As philosopher George Santayana prophesied, the spread of an individualistic, competitive culture cannot help but generate “a lava-wave of primitive blindness and violence” ready to erupt in times of crisis. Even before Santayana, Dostoevsky had understood that people taught to dream of the blind satisfactions of individual liberty could easily become radicalized when confronted by negative realities. The beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century confirmed this prophecy: during the first major crisis of global capitalism and the largest-scale international migration in history, the individual will’s



*“Violence and terrorism are reactions to the reduction of man to homo economicus, to the de-spiritualization of human desire and the resulting deification of it as a merely material interest.”*

anarchical and nihilistic quest for liberation took on the form of violent terrorism.

**Violence and terrorism, then, are the fruits of a false promise that was not kept?**

They are reactions to the reduction of man to *homo economicus*, to the de-spiritualization of human desire and the resulting deification of it as a merely material interest. The pillars of capitalism—individual autonomy and the exaltation of personal interest—promised happiness and equality, but have instead caused the vast majority of people to be humiliated by a small, powerful group of the elite. The Trump phenomenon, along with the white supremacy and American nationalism that feed it, are examples of this kind of reaction, just as Islamic terrorism is. The true origin of all of it is nothing other than Western nihilism.

**Could you explain that further?**

In the absence of clear political and religious reference points, men and women flounder in the face of a freedom without limits. When

depth of thought is abandoned for a never-ending flux, men long to have something solid and certain, at least on a material level. Unable to return to their previous creeds, they submit to a godfather who can promise them safety. This strange kind of individual liberty within a vacuum is now endemic in the developed and developing world, as well as in underdeveloped areas.

**We are, therefore, reliving past history, but at a global level.**

With one important difference. In the history of the two previous centuries, the shocks of modernity were absorbed by traditional social structures—family and community—and state welfare systems. Now all that is on the path to destruction.

**But aren't socialism and more recently, nationalism and isolationism (for example in England and the U.S.) precisely attempts to rebuild the community that was lost in the face of globalization?**

The “nation” is an abstract, intangible concept, and therefore is just another false solution to a real prob-

lem. Nationalism seeks to fill the vacuum created by the absence of social ties and individualism with a false sense of belonging. It is yet another sham, because it is not based on a real experience of community as in the old sense of being a neighbor. Nationalism is dangerous, because deep down, it presents itself as a substitute for God, giving the illusion of restoring lost bonds.

**How can we escape this perpetual cycle of modernity?**

It will take a complete rethinking of the self and of the world. Human beings follow those who know how to appeal to their deep motivations. Both our analysis and our solutions must look at the human person in its irreducibility, in its fears and desires and anger. One can only begin to understand and resolve the worldwide civil war of our time in the unstable relationship between the private self and the public one.

**Is this just a matter for intellectuals?**

No, first and foremost we need to rebuild real communities. I was asked the following question when I was traveling to promote *Age of Anger*: Where does your critique of modernity come from? My answer was very simple: from my own history. Having a chance to experience the benefits of a village community distinguished me from many of my colleagues who have had to come together within an urban disorder made up of solitude and anxiety. Only such an experience of community, therefore, can lay the foundation for a serious alternative to modernism. I grew up in a village in northern India; a real community where everything had its proper place and its limits. We need to start building villages again within this globalized world. **T**

**ROMANIA**

# **THE POPE AND THE ORPHANS OF BUCHAREST**





**Twenty years ago, members of the Romanian association FDP met the children of an orphanage on the outskirts of the capital and started a friendship that has continued to this day, and has even brought them to the Vatican. These pages offer their unpublished dialogue with Pope Francis.**

BY ALESSANDRA STOPPA

In August of 1998, in an orphanage on the outskirts of Bucharest, the volunteers of FDP—Protagonists in Education—found about 100 sick and neglected children. “They were left to sleep in small beds, because there was no incentive to take care of them. The nurses washed them from a distance by spraying them with pumped water. The children were excluded from school,” recounted Simona Carobene, director of FDP, a Romanian association created in 1996 through its members’ friendship with some volunteers from AVSI. FDP has since grown in the charism of Fr. Giussani, dedicating itself to people at risk of social exclusion.

From that meeting with the orphans 20 years ago, much more than a project was born. “We began a life together that continues to this day,” Simona states. Those small orphans have grown up to become mothers and fathers themselves; they work

and have their own homes. On January 4<sup>th</sup> FDP and the orphans celebrated their friendship with a private audience with Pope Francis, as you can read in notes from the dialogue with him published in these pages.

“In these 20 years,” Simona continued, “they have taught us a great deal. They have always amazed us and continue to do so.” First of all, they are still alive, and want to live. “Not only are they marked by their abandonment in their mind and spirit, they are small and fragile. If you are not wanted, if you are abandoned, you do not grow in any dimension: psychological, cognitive, or physical. These orphans have seen other children die, and have always thought they would die in the same way, early and alone.”

Instead, between 2000 and 2002, the FDP opened three homes to host 21 of the orphans. Seven others were welcomed by foster families. In this way, 28 of the over 100 orphans >>



**PRIVATE AUDIENCE.** The greeting after the dialogue on January 4<sup>th</sup> between the Pope and the young people of Bucharest. Here, one of them with Simona Carobene, director of the nonprofit association that has accompanied them for 20 years.

» were able to leave the orphanage. Today they themselves are parents: seven children have been born to date. “It seems like the most natural thing in the world, but in their case, it is extraordinary, not at all to be taken for granted,” starting from the fact that the young women chose not to have an abortion. In the midst of situations that continue to be difficult, “in these children of theirs it is so evident that life is a gift. They could very well not even have been born.”

**IRONIC ATTEMPTS.** In their letter asking for a private audience with the Pope, the friends of the association wrote, “These little ones force us to change every day. How should we accompany the new families? What can we say when a parent dies? Last year one of them, a four-year-old, saw his father die. How can we continue to accompany each other? What awaits us in the coming years?” They asked many other questions that have arisen from this friendship with the orphans, which over time has become a companionship encompassing all aspects of life, from the desire for work, for “a real job” (they have launched a non-profit firm that produces mosaics) to the problem of finding a home. It was difficult for these young people to even find rooms to rent in a market where the most fragile are exploited, and so the association acquired four apartments.

“All these efforts are ironic” concluded Simona, “because the wound of each person can never be truly healed. But even so, they already have everything, because they have been loved, one by one. Loved and looked upon with esteem, they have become protagonists in their own lives and have generated new ones. God has brought into full bloom something much greater than anything we could have imagined that August almost 20 years ago.” **T**



**THE DIALOGUE WITH FRANCIS**

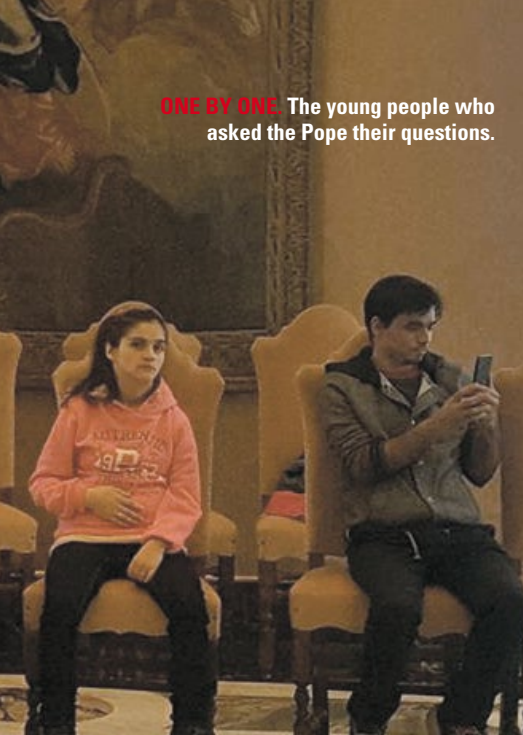
**“WHY THIS FATE?”**

**Notes from the January 4<sup>th</sup> meeting with the Pope. “We don’t know the ‘why’ in the sense of the reason, but we know the outcome that God wants, that is healing, and life.”**

**SIMONA CAROBENE.** Dearest Holy Father, we are here today full of wonder and gratitude for these 20 years of friendship that have marked our lives forever. With us is a group of Romanian young people who have experienced the wounds of abandonment and sickness, together with some of their children—stupendous, happy children, who remind us in every moment that life is a gift. These children are the most beautiful gift that could have happened, an unexpected gift, above all because their parents told us that it would not be possible for them to be born, or even that it would be better to say “no” to these lives. Instead, these children help us to remember that the life of each person is a very beautiful gift, even in circumstances that we would not have desired.

Today we are here to celebrate the victory of our friends’ lives, lives that are from all outward appearances of little worth (at least this is what we were made to believe), but instead have generated and been a sign of beauty for the whole world, because God looks at them differently. He does not care if we are small, if we are disabled, if we have suffered greatly. He looks upon us and loves us just as we are.

We all need a mother. We all need a father. When these figures are not present, life is difficult and it seems that nobody can be trusted. Instead, when it happens that someone loves us, we begin to trust, and life becomes more beautiful. When we realize that someone looks at us with fondness for what we truly are, our life becomes more beautiful.



Like today, Holy Father! Being here is a fantastic gift for us! We are truly grateful to you! We want to be looked upon in this way forever for what we are, people of great worth, unique, full of desires and hopes, people who have struggled all our lives with courage, who still suffer greatly from the wounds of the past and the difficulties of the present, and also have many questions.

**POPE FRANCIS.** Dear young people, dear brothers and sisters, thank you for this meeting, and for the trust with which you bring me your questions, from which one perceives the reality of your life.

Before answering, I would like to thank the Lord with you because you are here, because He, with the collaboration of many friends, has helped you go forward and grow. Together we remember many children and young people who have gone to heaven. We pray for them and pray for those who live in situations of great difficulty in Romania and other countries of the world. We entrust to God and to the Virgin Mary all the boys and girls, the young men and young women, who suffer from sickness, wars, and slavery today.

And now I would like to answer your questions. In these questions

there are many “whys.” Some of them I can answer, others I can’t: only God can answer them.

**QUESTION.** Why is life so difficult, and why do we often fight among ourselves? Why do we cheat each other? You priests tell us to go to church, but as soon as we leave we make mistakes and commit sins. So why did I go to church? If I consider God to be my friend, why is it important to go to church?

There is an answer to your “whys.” It is sin, human egotism. This is why—as you said—“we often fight among ourselves,” “we hurt each other,” “we cheat each other.” You yourself recognized it: even if we go to church we make mistakes again; we always remain sinners. So you rightly ask, what’s the use of going to church? It’s of use because it puts us in front of God, just as we are, to say “Here I am, Lord. I am a sinner, and I ask your forgiveness. Have mercy on me.” Jesus tells us that if we do this, we return home forgiven. In this way, slowly, slowly, God transforms our heart with His mercy, and also transforms our life. We do not always remain the same, but we are “worked” like clay in the potter’s hands, and the love of God takes the place of our egotism. This, my dear, is why it is important to go to church.

**QUESTION.** Why are there parents who love healthy children but don’t love the ones who are sick or have problems?

I would tell you this. In front of the fragility of others, like sickness, there are some adults who are weaker. They don’t have enough strength to bear the fragility because they them-

selves are fragile. If I have a big heavy stone, I can’t rest it on top of a cardboard box. There are parents who are fragile. They are men and women with their limits, their sins, and the fragility they carry inside. Maybe they didn’t have the good fortune to be helped when they were little. Do you agree?

**QUESTION.** Last year, one of our friends from the orphanage died. He died during Holy Week, on Holy Thursday. A priest told us that he died a sinner and so he won’t go to heaven. I don’t believe this.

What that priest told you seems very strange to me. It would be necessary to understand better. Maybe he wasn’t understood correctly. In any case, I tell you that God wants to bring us all to heaven, and that during Holy Week we celebrate precisely this: the Passion of Jesus, who like the Good

Shepherd gave His life for us, His little sheep. If a little sheep is lost, He goes looking for it until He finds it, and when He finds it He puts it on His shoulders and brings it back home, full of joy. This is what the Lord does during Holy Week, also for your friend.

“Some of your questions I can answer, others I can’t: only God can answer them.”

**QUESTION.** Why did we have this fate? Why? What meaning is there?

Your “why” is one of those that doesn’t have a human answer, only a divine one. I can’t say why you had “this fate.” We don’t know the “why” in the sense of the reason, but we know the “why” in the sense of the outcome that God wants to give to your fate. That outcome is healing, and life. Jesus says it in the Gospel when he meets a man born blind. The disciples ask Him, “Why is he this way? Who sinned, this man >>

» or his parents?” And Jesus answered, “No, neither he nor his parents sinned. It is so that the works of God might be made visible through him” (cf. *Jn.* 9:1-3). This means that the ugly situations we have found ourselves in, ever since we were little, God wants to heal, to restore; He wants to bring life where there is death. This is what Jesus does, and this is what Christians do too, those who are truly united with Christ. You have experienced this.

**QUESTION.** I often feel alone and I don't know what meaning my life has. My daughter is in foster care and some people have judged that I'm not a good mother. Instead, I believe that my daughter is doing fine and that I decided correctly, also because we see each other often.

I agree with you that foster care can be a help in certain situations. The important point is that everything be done with love, with care for the person, with great respect. I understand that you often feel alone. I advise you not to close in on yourself, but to look for companionship in the Christian community. Jesus came to form a new family, His family, where nobody is alone and we are all brothers and sisters, children of Our Father in heaven and of the Mother Jesus gave us, the Virgin Mary. In the family of the Church we can gather together, healing our wounds and overcoming those empty spaces without love that sometimes exist in our human families.

**QUESTION.** When I was two months old, my mother abandoned me to an orphanage. When I was 21,



**I looked for and found my mother and lived with her for two weeks, but she treated me badly and so I left. My father is dead. What's wrong with me, that she doesn't want me? Why doesn't she accept me?**

It's not a matter of something wrong with you. It's a question of the great fragility of adults, due in your case to so much poverty, to so many social injustices that crush the small and the poor, and so much spiritual poverty. Yes, spiritual poverty hardens hearts and provokes what seems impossible, that a mother could abandon her own child. This is the fruit of material and spiritual poverty, of a wrong-headed, inhuman social system.

**SIMONA.** I was very struck by your message for the World Day of the Poor. It made my heart leap, and I asked myself, “How do I look at my kids?” At times I realize that I'm so involved in “doing” that I forget why Jesus brought us together. I still need to travel a road of conversion. This journey is ongoing and can never be taken for granted. This is why I continue to follow my kids, because they are my “saints.” And I remain deeply attached to Holy Mother Church

through the charism of Fr. Giussani, which is the concrete modality that brought me to love Jesus. At the same time, however, the call of your message was very concrete. You talked about true sharing. I began to ask myself if the time had come to take one more step in my life, one of hospitality and sharing. It is a desire of the heart that is taking shape in me, and in the coming period I would like to verify it. What are the signs to look at in order to understand God's design for me? What does it mean to live the vocation of poverty to the full?

**FRANCIS.** Simona, thank you for your testimony. Yes, our life is always a journey, a journey following the Lord Jesus, who with patient and faithful love never stops educating us, causing us to grow according to His design. Sometimes He surprises us, in order to break through our usual framework. Your desire to grow in sharing and evangelical poverty comes from the Holy Spirit, and He will help you go forward on this road, on which you and your friends have done so much good. You have helped the Lord to accomplish His works among these young people.

Thank you once again, all of you. Meeting you has done me a lot of good. I will carry you in my prayers, and I urge you, please pray for me too!

# JULIÁN CARRÓN

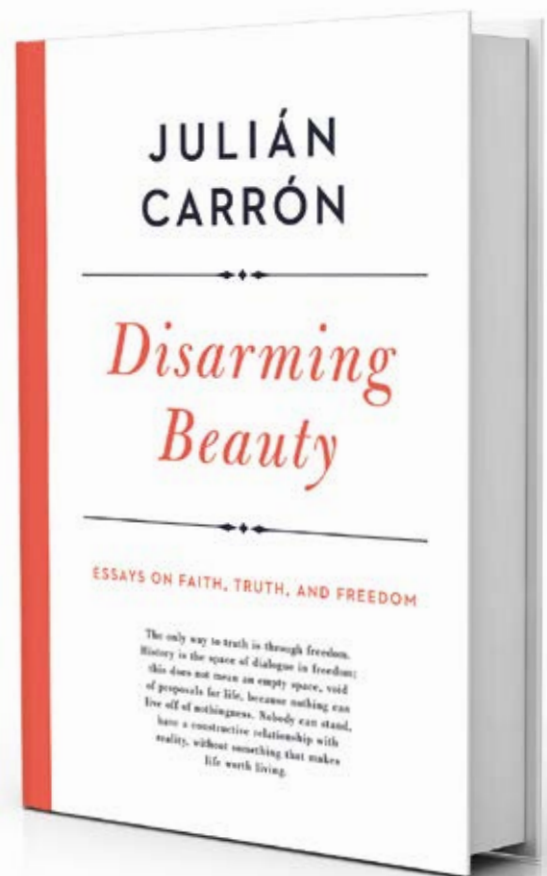
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Adapted from talks given by **Fr. Carrón**, these essays have been thoroughly reworked by the author to offer an organic presentation of a decade-long journey. They present the content of his elaboration of the gospel message in light of the tradition of Fr. Giussani, the teachings of the popes, and the urgent needs of contemporary people.



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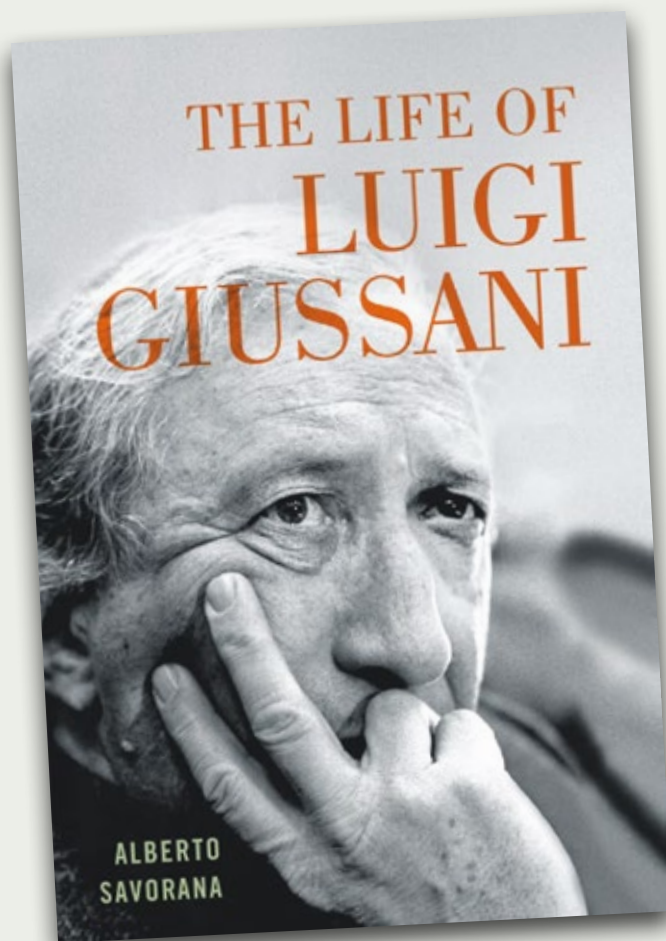
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NOTRE DAME PRESS

# THE LIFE OF LUIGI GIUSSANI

by Alberto Savorana. Translated by Chris Bacich and Mariangela Sullivan



*A detailed account of the life and legacy of the founder of the Communion and Liberation movement.*

1,416 Pages, December 2017

Monsignor Luigi Giussani (1922-2005) was the founder of the Catholic lay movement Communion and Liberation in Italy, which has hundreds of thousands of adherents around the globe. In *The Life of Luigi Giussani*, Alberto Savorana, who spent an important part of his life working and studying with Giussani, draws on many unpublished documents to recount who the priest was and how he lived. Giussani's life story is particularly significant because it shares many of the same challenges, risks, and paths toward enlightenment that are described in his numerous and influential publications.

In addition to providing the first chronological reconstruction of the life of the founder of Communion and Liberation, *The Life of Luigi Giussani* provides a detailed account of his legacy and what his life's work meant to individual people and the Church.

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