

Communion and Liberation

The Movement came to Rimini 50 years ago. Tonight, at the Palacongressi, an encounter with Fr. Julián Carrón will mark the occasion.

THE WONDER THAT GUIDES US IN HISTORY

By Stefano Andrini

Communion and Liberation returns to its origins, but it does not run away from the world. This affirmation comes from Fr. Julián Carrón, President of the Fraternity of CL, who will be the protagonist of an encounter with the theme, “Amazed by Christ, Challenged by History” tonight at 9:00 at Rimini’s Palacongressi Conference Center.

What does the 50-year history of the Rimini community represent for CL?

An example, significant for the entire Movement, of how a Christian community is born and can develop. What happened in Rimini is the same dynamic that Fr. Giussani always described. It began with Fr. Giancarlo Ugolini’s friendship with some young people who had met the Movement in Milan and who used to get together on the beach, Fr. Giancarlo’s willingness to follow that which amazed him in those kids. We can see the fruit of this beginning before our eyes: the flourishing of many people, many activities and initiatives, the most evident of which is certainly the Meeting for Friendship Among Peoples. Everything depends on how each of us receives the seed that he finds in front of him: amazed by a human diversity that he cannot help but recognize as corresponding to what he desires for his life. In Rimini, we have an example of the power of this seed and of the development that occurs when there are people who receive it with all of their humanity.

Rimini has become synonymous with the Meeting. How has this event changed over the years, and how will it move forward in the future?

It seems to me that the Meeting is the confirmation of what can be generated in Christianity by a faith embraced in all of its profundity. From this flowering comes a capacity to express oneself and to place oneself in reality. What I have seen at the Meeting in these years is the maturation of the awareness with which it is put on. And the result is there for all to see: a proposal that is ever more incisive, capable of encountering different people and engaging them in dialogue. This is a path that will continue in the future.

What does it mean for the Movement today to re-learn to live life as vocation?

It means to accept the challenge of circumstances, through which the Mystery brings us to our destiny. In this phase of history, we are certainly not lacking in challenges—illness, unemployment, difficult relationships in families—even on the social and political level. Living life as vocation means responding to these challenges as the possibility for a maturation that renders us ever more capable of making our contribution. In this confusing situation, we need people who are able to witness to others that, even within a crisis, it is possible to live, to grow, and to mature; it is possible to generate responses to everyone’s needs in order to make life more human.

You participated in the Synod of Bishops on new evangelization. What contribution can the Movement bring to this challenge?

Simply put, our testimony. The problem is not the crisis, nor is it de-Christianization or indifference to the faith. It is whether or not we as Christians live something that is so fascinating that we can show it to everyone. This is what makes the re-occurrence of Christianity possible, and not as a discourse or as ethics, but as an event that amazes whoever encounters it. This is what people are waiting for. The challenge is to show that it is possible to communicate Christianity in a fascinating way today, just as we experienced it at the beginning of our history.

Does the return to the origins of the Movement, forcefully called for in a moment of great social confusion, mean a change in the civil engagement of those who adhere to CL?

Absolutely not. We want to return constantly to the origin of what fascinated us in order to be more present in social, cultural, and political life at all levels. To be present, therefore, but with the original method: the presence of Christ, perceived as so fascinating that it frees us from every hegemonic pretense. We have to witness to everyone the contribution that the Christian experience can make in this moment of confusion. The analysts are clear when it comes to pointing out what is missing, but lacking when it comes to finding solutions. We, on the other hand, have an experience that has, on many occasions—at the personal and social level—made us understand that we can begin again, even in this situation. The crucial point is whether or not we are truly willing to follow what has happened to us, so that wonder is not reduced to “things to do.” A choice of this nature would bring about the end even of social engagement.