

internally displaced by the ongoing war. They visited a man who had lost an arm in the conflict and had to flee from his home. Living with this disability was extremely challenging and had a serious impact on his life. Regina said, “He told us that our visit gave him hope, joy and confidence. He felt God’s love through us.” Marita added, “After this experience, I am convinced that nothing is too small if it is done with love. There is no need for anything else: it is love that moves the world. Try it!”

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Each month the Focolare chooses a Scripture passage as a guide and inspiration for daily living. The commentary on it was originally written by founder, Chiara Lubich (1920–2008). Today this Word of Life, written by an international commission and translated into 96 different languages, reaches several million people worldwide.

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“Let all that you do be done in love” (1 Cor. 16:14).¹

This month the words and experience of the apostle Paul can guide us as a “lamp for our steps.”²

He proclaims a powerful message to us just as he did to the Christians in Corinth. He announces that charity, *agape*³ and the selfless love found among brothers and sisters of a family lie at the heart of the Gospel.

This month’s Word of Life is part of the conclusion to this letter. Paul frequently refers to the importance of charity and explains all of its nuances: it is patient, benevolent, loves the truth and does not seek its own interests...⁴

Mutual love lived in this way in the Christian community is balm for the divisions that can threaten it and is a sign of hope for humanity.

1. This month the Word of Life we propose is the same that a group of Christians from different Churches in Germany has chosen to live throughout the year.
2. Cf. Ps. 119:105.
3. In Christianity, *agape* is “the highest form of love, charity.” It is “the love of God for man and of man for God.”
4. Cf. 1 Cor 13.

“Let all that you do be done in love.”

It is striking that in the Greek text, Paul exhorts us to act as a consequence of “living in love,” as if to direct us towards a permanent state of being—dwelling in God who *is* Love.

For how can we welcome one another, how can we be open to each person we meet if we do not acknowledge that God took the initiative in loving us just as we are, with all our frailities and failures?

A renewed awareness of God’s love enables us to have no fear in being open to others, discerning their needs and standing beside them, sharing with them our material and spiritual resources.

Let’s consider how Jesus did this, since he is our model.

He was always the first to give “(...) health to the sick, forgiveness to sinners, life to us all.” He contrasted the selfish instinct to hoard with an attitude of generosity; he challenged the focus on personal needs with attention to others, and the desire to possess with a culture of giving. It doesn’t matter whether we can give a lot or a little. What matters is *how* we give, how much love we put into even the smallest things we do for another person. (...) Love is essential because it enables us to know how to approach others, even if all we have to offer is our availability to listen or to serve. What is important (...) is to try to ‘be love’ beside each person.

“It is the most direct way to enter their hearts and raise their spirits.”⁵

“Let all that you do be done in love.”

This Word teaches us to approach others with respect, without deception, with creativity, making room for their best aspirations, so that each person can make a contribution to the common good.

It helps us to value all the practical aspects of daily life, “...which range from household tasks, to working in a factory or on the land, to performing duties in an office or a school, to any civil, religious or political responsibilities we may undertake. Everything can be transformed into attentive and caring service.”⁶

Let’s consider some very simple gestures inspired by the Gospel. Here are two examples.

“When a very distressed neighbor told us that her son was in prison, we agreed to visit him. My wife and I fasted the day before we went to see him and we prayed we would have the grace to say the right things to him. Then we paid his bail so that he could leave jail.”

A group of young people in Buea, southwest Cameroon, organized a collection of goods and funds to help those

5. Chiara Lubich Word of Life, Oct 2006.

6. Ibid.