

“It is a proclamation that does not end with his death—on the contrary! It takes on new strength after the resurrection and Pentecost, when the disciples became courageous witnesses to the Gospel. Their mandate then comes down to us today. Through each one of us, God wants to continue to tell his story of love to those with whom we share a short or a long stretch of time in our life.”⁵

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5. Margaret Karram, in her talk entitled, *Called & Sent*, September 15, 2023.

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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“With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.”

(Acts 4:33)

This sentence, which is used in the liturgy during the Easter season, invites everyone who has received the message of the Gospel to freely witness to the great event that has changed history forever. It invites us to give witness to Jesus’ resurrection!

To fully understand the meaning of this verse taken from the Acts of the Apostles, it is helpful to quote the sentence that precedes it: “Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common.”¹

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The text describes the first Christian community as filled with the power of the Holy Spirit and characterized by a life of communion that motivated each member to proclaim the good news of the Gospel to everyone—namely, that Christ is risen.

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1. Acts 4:32.

These are the same people who before Pentecost were alarmed and frightened by the events that had taken place, and yet now had come out into the open and were ready to bear witness even to the point of martyrdom. The power of the Holy Spirit had swept away all their fear and apprehension. They were of one heart and one soul and they practiced mutual love to the point of sharing their possessions. And their way of life attracted an always greater number of people to follow them.

Among them were men and women who had known Jesus and heard his words. They had lived alongside him, and with him they had loved and served the sick and those regarded as the least in society. They had seen Jesus' marvelous deeds with their own eyes. Their lives had changed because they had been called to live according to his new law. They were the first witnesses to God living among people who loved one another.

But what does it mean *today* for the followers of Jesus to be witnesses to the resurrection?

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The most effective way to bear witness to the Risen Lord is to show that he is alive, and, in fact, lives among us. “If we keep love for our

neighbor alive in our hearts, then the risen Lord will live within each of us. Then if we make a special effort to maintain mutual love among us, the risen Lord will live both in us and in our midst, and will radiate his light and grace around us, transforming our surroundings and producing incalculable fruits. It will be the risen Lord, through his Spirit, who will guide our steps and our activities. He will be the one who will arrange circumstances and provide us with opportunities to bring his life to those in need of him.”²

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Margaret Karram³ writes: “Go into the whole world and proclaim the good news to all of creation⁴ is the extraordinary task that the apostles received two thousand years ago directly from Jesus and that changed the course of history. Today Jesus addresses the same invitation to us, asking us to bring him into the world with all the creativity, talents and freedom he himself has given us. (...)

2. Chiara Lubich, Word of Life, January 1986.

3. Margaret Karram, current President of the Focolare Movement.

4. Mk 16:15.