

Rocca di Papa, 30th June 2003

**Towards Europe as a shared Homeland***Chiara Lubich's Message for Stuttgart*

On his recent journey to Madrid, in Spain, Pope John Paul II said words that had a particular effect on our soul. He said he dreamed of "Europe of the spirit". So, not only political unity in Europe, not only Europe with the euro, but "Europe of the spirit".

This is the dream that motivates us too, who belong to various Movements, Communities and Christian groups which, united in the name of Christ, are preparing the Event at Stuttgart to be held on 8th May 2004 called "Together for Europe".

Let's do this because we love Europe as we love our own countries and we want it to be a little different to how it is now, even though the process of unification is already a source of consolation.

It is clear, nonetheless, that even if and when political unity comes about, this will be insufficient if the nations forming it remain overwhelmed by secularism, invaded by materialism and consumerism.

**What can we do?**

Together with other Europeans, who we know are mobilising to find solutions to all that is wrong with Europe, we too want to contribute, with all our hearts, to this end which – we feel we can say – is not without hope.

Yes, because Europe's history is not only a sequence of negative and painful events: wars and invasions like our schoolbooks told us, for example. It is also a light filled history, which may be overshadowed today, but which is real, because down through its centuries of life Europe has not been left completely to itself. God, the Father of all and prince of history has followed Europe with love, offering it help from time to time.

We see this in extraordinary people, for example European saints, who did so much for Europe from the very start, like Europe's founders who have now become its patrons, St Benedict, Sts Cyril and Methodius and many others down through the centuries. We see this too in the Fathers of European unity, Conrad Adenauer, a remarkable person; De Gasperi and Schuman whose processes of canonisation are ongoing.

**What can these great figures say to us today?**

They tell us that if Europe has not been left to itself, today too the Lord can but have solutions at hand to make it new, beautiful and strong.

Here we see how useful the new ecclesial realities, movements and communities are, which bring back Christianity to the radicality and authenticity of the Gospel.

They can do this especially because, as many of them began and spread in Europe, they are like numerous networks bringing peoples together, almost as if to give a foretaste, in an experimental way, of European unity.

Now if the gifts of the Spirit they are guided by, which are so varied and useful, are better known by Europeans. If they are appreciated and welcomed through, for example, the Event in Stuttgart, we cannot imagine all the good this will do for Europe of the spirit.

Let's try to do our part. The Lord will help us. And all will be for the good of our great Country and for the glory of God.