

Notes from School of Community with Father Julián Carrón
Milan, January 29, 2014

Reference text: “Christ’s Conception of Life” in At the Origin of the Christian Claim, McGill-Queen’s University Press, pp. 83-92.

Song *Noi non sappiamo chi era*

Song *Give Me Jesus*

Glory Be

We had decided to work from point 2 (after the premise) onward. We received many questions, particularly regarding clarification of a crucial point in the premise: What is this human genius that Fr. Giussani insists on as the condition for understanding who Jesus is (that is, everything that he will say in the rest of the chapter)? It is clear to everyone that this human genius is not a spontaneous attitude – says Fr. Giussani – and it is not a certain level of holiness or ethical faultlessness. That is why I was saying that this chapter is not essentially about faultlessness – what we usually think of as morality or moralism. The Gospels will always be there to witness that the tax collectors (who, being thieves, were not irreproachable) could be more open than the Pharisees (who did appear irreproachable). The human genius that Fr. Giussani talks about is an openness. In this sense, it can be called moral, but moral as it is explained in the third chapter of *The Religious Sense*: the morality of knowledge, that is to say, the openness that makes knowledge possible. Therefore, this chapter is not about an instruction manual, but about the attitude that makes it possible to intercept Jesus. Since Fr. Giussani tells us that this human genius, which is not spontaneous, needs to be constantly educated and provoked, the question that arises is this: How can we educate this human genius within us? What provokes it? What work needs to be done?

At the last School of Community, you caught me off guard by saying that we have to work at keeping our original openness wide open, otherwise we don’t recognize what happens.

“We don’t recognize what happens.”

The question is: How can we? Because this has always been the crucial point for me.

Not “for you.” This is “the” crucial point for everyone! Otherwise, things happen in front of us and we don’t recognize them.

It seems to me that, in the various ways with which the Mystery has always seized me, this openness is ultimately a grace, something given to me. That is, it seems to me that I am not able to be moved, to let myself be wounded by things. It is only when I have the grace of being struck so deeply, of having a wound so wide open, that, by adhering with all of my freedom (and for me, this has always been the most difficult step, not to be taken for granted), I can start to truly live. I don’t think that I have in me this ability to reach my very core, to ask myself truly what is enough for me, to get to

the bottom of things, because it is totally a gift. I mean to say that, if the Mystery can really use the aridity that I have experienced lately to make me more His, then I welcome it, I truly accept even this – but I don't understand why. What I have experienced is that, by saying yes, especially in many circumstances that are particularly hard, my life has flourished. I don't understand why the Mystery came through these difficult circumstances, but I also don't understand the aridity that I am experiencing now. The only difference is this: before, in the difficult circumstances that I was given to live, the hundredfold was in the instant, whereas now I feel that this is missing. The radical proposal to which you are recalling us is objectively more, and that is why I need to be corrected.

What helps you?

What is helping me the most now is the relationship with my friends.

Which means?

Because, it seems to me...

The relationship with which friends? What is the characteristic of these friends?

That they have met what I have met.

Then, in what sense are you educated? How is your natural gift constantly educated? Through whom? It would be enough to look at our experience, but we are often unaware of it. It is because you are constantly reopened, and reopened wide, that you can grasp something totally unique while it is happening, and live circumstances in a different way. Right?

Yes.

That's it, period. Then you say, "This is a gift." You are right, but it is also an openness on your part, of your freedom. Right?

Yes.

That is why the Mystery educates us through this gift that constantly provokes us, but that needs to be welcomed with total openness. Is this clear? And this accepting, this welcoming, is yours, yours, yours, and yours! The Mystery can open you wide, as often happens, but answering *yes* – as you were saying – that is yours. And only by saying *yes* are we educated.

But the problem is when you are not wide open, when things seem remote.

No, you can't go back now! If you are wide open, you are wide open. If you are struck by something, then you were struck – you cannot say now that you were not struck. You were struck, and therefore thrown wide open, intrigued. An instant after this openness happened, you can say *no* or you can say *yes*, but you cannot prevent yourself from being struck by something. Therefore, what provokes us? We are provoked, Giussani always tell us – which is why I continue to stress the methodological value of the tenth chapter of *The Religious Sense* – we are constantly provoked by reality. First, it is reality that constantly reawakens our amazement in front of what happens. Second, the most concrete presence in reality is called "Christ." Is this clear? We are constantly provoked, but we have to constantly accept it. This depends on you and on me, do you understand?

Yes.

This is why each of us must identify where his life is reopened wide, no matter what happened yesterday. I may have before me a beautiful day that reopens the game, I may have before me a presence that reopens the game, because his way of living reality strikes me. It can happen through anything. One of you writes to me, “Thank you for the last School of Community, because this chapter blossomed like a surprising newness that filled me with amazement and gratitude [there – it may happen that a person comes here and this happens]. Once I recognized this, I was full of joy, because I could identify the unmistakable sign of experience: the event of His presence exalts the ‘I’ and generates the desire to go deeper, to become more aware, to embrace life once again, with a clearer simplicity and a more joyful industriousness [this means that a fact happens and makes me experience what the text is saying, rather than simply accepting as true the things I am reading in the book, even though they don’t start to affect my life. No, not in this case: here we start to touch first-hand – this is the case for many of you – that precisely because it happens as an experience, it starts to affect life]. How desirable it is to make this original openness, to which Fr. Giussani is recalling us, stable – that is, alive, and something of which we are aware! See how much desire is part of this openness! For me, in the darkest and most painful moments, this openness is full of asking [even in the darkest moments, it can be full of asking, of begging]: ‘Give me life, because without You, I can do nothing.’ More often, it is dominated by waiting, a waiting that, inasmuch as it is conscious, is free of any demand. When I give in to distraction [instead of asking], to habit, to taking things for granted, then everything becomes arid, the waiting becomes demand, and complaint – even unvoiced, hidden – arises [everything becomes arid!]. Therefore, the inevitable fact that the ‘I’ becomes arid allows me to understand that openness is not automatic spontaneity [it is like this: it can become arid, because it is always a matter of freedom; it is not pure spontaneity, it can become arid]. This, too, is a necessary experience. So, how can we keep this original openness, which is solicited and given order, awake and wide open? The greatest help for me comes from reading Fr. Giussani’s texts. Reading his biography now makes the experience of the disciples of Emmaus happen again: ‘Were not our hearts burning within us while He spoke to us?’ It is a powerful moment of beauty that exalts life [because life is the communication of an experience that draws me in and opens me wide]. I realize that all of this finds a powerful ally in the School of Community, to prevent it from remaining a sentimental event without stable consequences. It is a judgment that inevitably entails hard work, and helps me to be conscious of the steps that I have to take, making them mine. Wasn’t this, by the way, what Jesus was doing when He asked all of the people who went to John the Baptist, ‘What did you go out to the desert to see – a reed swayed by the wind? Then what did you go out to see? A prophet?’ [Jesus provokes the disciples, helping them to get to the bottom of what moved them to go and see John the Baptist: “What did you go out to see?” “A prophet.” “I tell you, and more than a prophet!”] Or when He asks them, ‘Do you also want to leave?’” Jesus provokes us to get to the core, and when one sees this happening, one lives this experience of being opened wide, as a young woman says after having watched an episode of *Extraordinary Lives* dedicated to Fr. Giussani (an interview from 2007 that is now posted on the CL website). She wrote this email: “I do not belong to the

Movement, at least not yet, but what I saw and see in all of you is something exceptional that I had never seen before in my life [this young woman is not reflecting upon the text; she is not repeating things that, although true, she heard from someone else. No, she is looking at an experience, at something that is happening now]. When I lived in my hometown, I belonged to another movement, and therefore I already knew what religious movements were. However, I had never found something so real and concrete. It is impossible not to recognize that what moves you, what moves the entire world, is an enormous desire for happiness, and this inevitably results in following Christ. Thanks precisely to the episode I just watched, I understood many things that I knew before, but without completely understanding: I didn't understand what Christ means, that Christ didn't come to bring peace, but war. I didn't understand what it means that He is the first love we have within us. I didn't get the meaning of the words 'to be consistent with yourself to the core.' I didn't understand many things. Since meeting the CLU, I have grown enormously, and I have discovered this beautiful new reality that seizes you and raises you up, higher than any possible human desire [look, this is what opens you wide: a present reality that seizes you and raises you up, higher than any possible human desire!], this reality that asks us to be faithful to ourselves in all of our desire. Because of this, at the end, when I heard the journalist ask you if today's young people are receptive to the charism of CL like those who knew Fr. Giussani, I couldn't help exclaiming, 'It is impossible not to be!' It seemed evident to me, clear as day, that this truth that we carry on attracts anyone whose heart is open and full of desire, even if perhaps he isn't aware of it yet. I won't deny that, thinking of the times in which we live, I feel terribly unmotivated and disheartened, because everything revolves around a superficiality that tries to reduce desire – because every day we are attacked mercilessly from all sides for any small thing that may help to defeat us, and I feel lost. I haven't read the section of *At the Origin of the Christian Claim* for the next School of Community yet, but for quite awhile I have wanted to ask this question: How can I be faithful to myself in times like these? I feel powerless, and I am afraid to end up being resigned to this world that wants to tear away our greatest desire from us. I am afraid of becoming accustomed to the fact that perhaps I can't do anything about it." I'll answer: do what you have been able to do up to now, that is, recognizing a present experience that not even the attacks you have undergone can cause to disappear. An experience like this is more powerful than any attack. This friend sees the risk (that we all run) of the reduction of desire, because in the cultural situation in which we live – as Fr. Giussani always recognized – what do the powers that be try to do? They try to reduce our desire, to transform us into people who are resigned. That is why this young woman is not wrong when she sees now, in the present (not in the past!), people who have this desire, and therefore she is seized and raised up, higher than any possible human desire. This is what Chapter 8 tries to respond to, and we still find it hard to understand.

I will read this email in order to move to the point that we need to discuss today: "I wanted to tell you that, despite all that was said at the last School of Community, I continue to have a hard time with Chapter 8. I see only a few flashes that connect with what I live [each person can select one section or another from this chapter – it is full of jumping-off points; it is so rich that one can

always have some moments of recognition], but in the end I can't name something that sheds light on my experience. It is as if I no longer knew Him [if this chapter is placed at the end of the journey of faith, that is, at the end of the path to know Him better and to help us to decide if we want to believe or not, then what is the point of the chapter if I don't know Him better?] This is serious, first of all because, as you were saying, 'it doesn't cement the relationship with Him,' which is what concerns me the most. Therefore, I asked myself: Why did Fr. Giussani write this book and this chapter? I went and reread the preface to the book, and right there, he says this: 'It isn't abstract reasoning that makes a person grow, that broadens the mind, but finding in humanity a moment of truth reached and proclaimed' [like the young woman of the previous email encountered it: what broadens reason, throws it open, is finding in humanity – that is, in the present, in someone, in some person's humanity – a moment of truth reached and proclaimed; precisely because one reaches it, he can say it in a certain way, otherwise it wouldn't be possible to say it in this way!]. Fr. Giussani continues, 'This is the great overturning of the method that marks the transition from religious sense to faith: it is no longer a searching full of unknowns, but the surprise of a fact that happened in human history.' The last thing is what matters most to me in my life, that is, that what made me begin may become as familiar to me as my mother and father [who doesn't desire this?]. I realize that I need to regain the reasons for a faith that is aware and mature, and that I don't have. Therefore, I thought I would retrace the book's path from the beginning." If one follows the path indicated by Fr. Giussani, then Christ becomes familiar, like the relationship with your own mother or father: in time, it becomes more constitutive of the self. Then the true question is: Has Christ become more familiar? The problem is that it isn't enough to just reread the book from the beginning – which contradicts what she said in her previous sentence – but it is necessary to encounter, in the present, a moment of truth that is reached and proclaimed. Otherwise, we can continue to affirm things as true, but they are not an experience, because they do not throw open our heart. In fact, point 2 after the premise (do you understand why Fr. Giussani considers it so important?) begins like this – this is why it is a problem of knowledge! – "Who is Jesus?" This is the question that this chapter intends to answer: Who is Jesus? The question is how I, in reading the chapter, better recognize who Jesus is. All of our comments have nothing to do with it, or whether we do this or that well. None of that, but: Who is Jesus? "The question was asked. And He answered it." How do I answer this question today? By reading the chapter and having an experience of what it is saying – not by accepting things as true just because they are stated in the chapter, but as something I experience in the present. After this month, we each have to ask ourselves how we would answer someone who asked us, "In what did you better understand who Jesus is? With what facts can you answer the question? What did you see during this month that enables you to say that you know Jesus better, in this or that or something else? In what do you see this knowing Him better?" Otherwise, we can disregard the book of School of Community and make our comments, or transform the book into the basis for our comments. No, no, no – the question is: Who is Jesus? And He answers by "revealing Himself through all the gestures of His

personality” (*At the Origin of the Christian Claim*, p. 83). How has Jesus revealed Himself in the present? Through some gestures in which we were able to recognize Him.

I was particularly surprised by His presence when I went to visit a friend because, provoked by the announcement at the last School of Community when you mentioned the video for the 60th anniversary of the Movement...

I am glad that somebody is taking the video seriously.

I started to call my friends, saying, “This is an opportunity that concerns all of us.” Among these friends, I called one who oversees some stables in the countryside. He answered me, “Come to the stables on Sunday morning at 6:00.” I went with some friends: we met at 5:00 am in order to get to the stables by 6:00. We saw his whole workday, what he does, the entire business.

Demanding.

Yes, demanding.

To say the least.

*And what is more, he works during the week from 6:00 am to 7:00 pm, on Saturday from 6:00 am to 4:00 pm, and on Sunday from 6:00 am to noon. The amazing thing is his face as he works. In fact, at the end of the morning spent with him, I asked him, “Isn’t it a burden to come to work on Sunday? Why isn’t it a burden for you?” He answered, “I was very struck by what Fr. Giussani says on p. 39 in the book *Vita di Don Giussani* [Life of Fr. Giussani]: ‘That which everything consists of has become one of us. Therefore, a person who encounters Him should travel the whole world and proclaim it loudly to everyone. But one can travel the whole world and proclaim it to everyone by staying in the place where Christ put him.’ Do you understand? So, this means to do my work well, to make the cows thrive, to make my boss earn more. Then, for a person who has encountered Christ, every day is like Sunday. Actually, for me it is not a burden to come and work on Sunday.” There it was – I encountered the sign right there, I saw it happen there, in the flesh, before my eyes.*

Why?

Because it is really true that only the divine can save our humanity. Something like this is not normal.

Only the divine can save our humanity. Not as a quote that we can all cite, and then we suffocate with the cows – we all have our own! – but breathing freely in the stable. This is anything but simply affirming that things are true without having an experience! Only one who has this experience understands who Jesus is, and can answer the question: Who is Jesus? Not by using a theological definition, but because He reveals Himself in this man’s flesh, in what he lives daily. We know who Jesus is if this is an experience for us today, because only the divine can save our humanity, the stature of the human person, preventing us from becoming a cow among cows, reducing our desires and living a life of complaint and resignation. Then, “the ‘moral’ heart [not moralistic, not ethically faultless] discerns the sign of the Presence of his Lord” (*Ibid.*, p. 84). It recognizes it now, in the present, among the cows – not waiting for the work with the cows to be

over in order to start living, but among the cows! This is the gaze that Jesus brought into history. That is why encountering this gaze is what makes us know Jesus. Why? Because Jesus, says the School of Community, has identified that fundamental factor according to which “the whole world is not as worthy as the most insignificant person” (*Ibid.*), nothing in the entire universe can compare with him or her. One can have whatever job he likes (or whatever job reality allows him to have), but right there, in the little detail, Jesus identifies a fundamental factor that makes that person able to live the magnitude of the whole world. And no earthly powers that he will ever be able to erase this from that person, because no one can erase the power that this gaze introduced into life. It is demonstrated in this: the fact that a person can have an experience like this shows how true the words “I will be with you until the end of time” are. Because, without the presence of Jesus right now, we cannot have this experience. And so we are afraid of becoming resigned; we are afraid of regressing. However, Jesus always looks at that fundamental point, that burning point with which nothing in the entire universe can compare. Why? Because, “every man possesses within himself an original and irreducible principle” (*Ibid.*). This is what gives him value. What does he possess? That – contrary to what the prevalent mentality says – the value of the person is not determined by the reactions one may have, but it is something that nobody can give to or take away from the person. Then, in the stables, or in prison, or when I am sick, or in the difficulty of studying or hard work, I never – never! – lose that factor that makes my person unique. Where do we see that Jesus attributes this value to the person? In the passion for the individual, the urgent desire for the happiness of each of us, when we meet one who looks at us like this, when we are with someone who speaks to us about life like this, who reawakens in us all of the desire for our happiness that was perhaps already at rock bottom. Then we start to experience Christ in the present again. Why? Because for Him, the problem of the world’s existence is the happiness of each person, since all the rest... He could have created an endless number of other species, but He created man, and everything depends on the happiness of the individual. For this reason, that striking question arises in the Gospel (which Fr. Giussani re-proposed to us in such a stunning way): “For what will it profit a man, if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life?” (*Ibid.*, p. 84). In this question, we verify who Jesus is. What a gaze Fr. Giussani has in front of this question, which we often read only in a moralistic way! Instead, Fr. Giussani reads it in the most impassioned way: “No [...] tenderness [...] has ever impacted the heart of man more than these words of Christ, impassioned as He is for the life of man” (*Ibid.*). However, when we read these words, we often do not feel this tenderness toward ourselves. Only when someone else repeats them to us, can we perhaps perceive the tenderness present in these words, because it is as if they said, “Don’t you realize what you are made for, what greatness you are made for?” Notice that Fr. Giussani says that “to listen to these [...] questions Jesus poses represents the first obedience to our own nature” (*Ibid.*). That is, Jesus’ question (“For what will profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life?”) coincides with our own nature, with our heart as desire for happiness. Jesus looks at our whole nature and He sees it, He values it much more than we are able to. This is why Fr. Giussani says, “If we are deaf [to these questions, to this nature of the “I”] [...] we close ourselves off from

the most significant human experiences” (*Ibid.*) – life is reduced, aridity sets in. When we give up living at the level of these desires, then everything becomes flat. Instead, the clearest sign of Jesus’ presence, of His esteem, of His impassioned gaze, is to find someone in the present who, reawakened by Him, lives not because he no longer makes mistakes, but because he is never resigned to living in a way that is not at the level of those desires. And why is this? Because, “Indeed the ultimate motive pushing us to love ourselves and others is the mystery of the ‘I’” (*Ibid.*). Giussani always goes back to this: the only thing that may convince us to take Jesus’ questions seriously, to take this modality seriously, this passion that Jesus has for each person’s happiness, is love for us as destiny, which means loving ourselves. Without this, it is impossible for us to know Him. This can happen through the last comer, as one of you writes to me: “After the last School of Community, I felt uneasy, as it happens when what you say doesn’t evoke an experience. Then, this fact happened to me. I have a niece who attends GS, but in a superficial way and, in my opinion, with little conviction. On December 28th, she came back from the GS winter vacation and she told us that, after listening to a witness, she had felt so provoked, so ‘gazed at,’ that, even though her legs were shaking, she ‘had’ to speak at the final assembly to say that, despite her problems, she couldn’t avoid desiring to be happy. The fact that the divine chose this girl to show Himself to me fills me with amazement and gratitude.” The last comer can be the person who witnesses the presence of Christ better than anyone else. What struck our friend? Seeing a moment of truth reached and proclaimed in this girl – that is, a present fact that inevitably awakens in the person who sees it everything that one desires. This shows – says Fr. Giussani – the extent of our dependence. Why? In what does this relationship consist that Jesus sees? On what is the value of the person based? It is based on the evidence that we depend. But this makes us feel uneasy. Many are wondering, “Is this dependence something convenient, or is it a burden?” Each of us has to reckon with all of the challenges and all of the questions. I will read an email: “I am very sorry, but I don’t agree on the question of dependence [a clear judgment]! I cannot say that dependence is what is most convenient for my life, what is most convenient for life. In fact, I always experience, in every instant, this sense of dependence – that is, the fact that, for me, it is impossible to depend on myself. I see my fragility and my inability in every instant. To say that this frees me is false. Please, can you explain what you mean when you speak of dependence? Because for me, it is not convenient, but a burden. I wish I had some of this self-referential attitude, because instead, wherever I turn, my need for dependence becomes clear and it makes me suffer. I would be grateful if you could clarify this point.” Another says the same: “How difficult it is to let yourself be made by Another, that is, to depend.” For this reason, I would like to read a letter in which one of you recounts his experience in the hospital: “After taking the morning’s first pill cocktail, with the stated intention of not wanting to talk to anybody, on the phone or in any other way, I picked up the book of School of Community and I read the points that you had asked us to work on. When I arrived at the section “Original Dependence,” I couldn’t go on. To read that man is a direct, exclusive relationship with God was startling. Who knows how many times I have heard these words. But, rereading it in the condition I was in – angry, but also unconsciously defenseless

[angry, but defenseless: can you see the crack through which the Mystery enters?], it was what I wanted to hear [many times we say that we disagree, that this dependence is a burden, until a moment arrives when we realize that the fact that there is Someone greater than us, on whom we depend, is what we really want to hear]. So, I started to lift up my head again and to look at everything with these words before my eyes. The fact that I am a direct, exclusive relationship with God means that there is a real You to whom I can turn, whom I can ask for understanding, a You whom I can ask, with whom I can get angry because I don't understand. The fact is that He exists, and He wants me precisely where I am now and in the condition in which I am now, and He speaks to me through what is happening. And I started to live these days like this, forced to be hooked up to the monitors in the hospital due to a minor problem, obeying what He was asking me in that moment, and also looking at my roommate, a 75-year-old man who cried when we said good-bye because I left (I hadn't done anything to make myself likeable). When I got back home, I was afraid that what I had lived in the hospital was due to self-persuasion. But, paradoxically, as I went back to my normal life, I realized that in that hospital bed, with a heart full of questions, but certain of this relationship, I was all intent on not missing a single second of that boring day, whereas I usually don't even realize how much time I waste. Unbelievably – and I say this trembling – I felt some nostalgia for those days and that tension that made me ask, that made me feel glad. To live dependence with this awareness of the relationship, and not just because I have to take some medicine, is something else.” Is living this dependence something convenient or a burden? Those who wrote to me can at least know that there is another way of living it – not as a burden, but as something convenient. When they will find themselves in a circumstance that will make this possibility of openness easier, then they will see it, too, in their own lives. But this is how it is. So you can understand why having this openness is crucial in order to know Jesus, because we can say who Jesus is only if we see this happening within us. As point 3 says, at the beginning, “Insistence on religiosity is the first and absolute duty of the educator, that is to say, the friend, he who loves and seeks to help humanity along the pathway towards its destiny. [...] We cannot even think of understanding Christianity unless we begin with [...] this passion for the individual” (*Ibid.*, p. 87). Each of us can recognize who our friends are based precisely on this, on how they help us to make this religiosity constantly happen again in us. Therefore, one can go and visit a friend in a stable and see this happen again in himself, not because his friend speaks to him about religiosity, but because religiosity happens when one encounters a humanity reached and proclaimed, when one is facing a present fact that, without him knowing how, reopens him. Then, one begins to see who Jesus is precisely because of that newness that opens up in his life. Let's continue to work on this chapter, because – as you can see – we could keep working on it for the whole year. It is inexhaustible. For this reason, let's not take it for granted, because it is all there to be discovered; every line offers something new.

The next School of Community will be on Wednesday, February 26th at 9:30 pm. We will continue with Chapter 8, working on the remaining part, pp. 92-98.

I propose again that you organize a **public presentation** of the book *Vita di Don Giussani* [*Life of Fr. Giussani*] in your towns, universities, and various circles, because it is a great opportunity to know and to make known to all the charisma that fascinated us. As you have heard, when one reads it, it is like touching “the hem of the cloak” today. We are making known a fact that is happening now.

For help in organizing the presentations, you can also contact the Associazione dei Centri Culturali [Association of Cultural Centers] (website: www.centriculturali.org).

I remind you that we proposed this text as **book of the year** in order to give everybody enough time to read it, savoring what it means to have before you a person who lives what we just said to each other – a lived witness of this chapter. You don’t need to be in a hurry, but simply keep it as a companion for the journey. It isn’t a book that one has to finish, because sometimes he cannot go on, as what he is reading is so amazing that he says, “I need to stop here.” So, if we can finish it in a year... The people who have already started to read it can confirm to you how valuable it is for them and for others, as we also saw at some cities’ public presentations. You can find articles regarding those presentations on the CL website, on Twitter, and on Facebook.

The **Fraternity Exercises** will be held in **Rimini** on **April 4-6, 2014**. On February 18th, the secretariat of the Fraternity will send an email to those who are enrolled, in order to communicate the opening of the website for registration – which, like last year, will be done only via Internet.

The **Exercises for adults and young workers** will be held in Rimini on the week following those of the Fraternity, that is, **April 11-13, 2014**. These Exercises are conceived particularly for people who are not enrolled in the Fraternity and for people who are new. Therefore, they are a missionary gesture of invitation and proposal to all.

Video for the 60th anniversary of the birth of Communion and Liberation. After what we heard, I think that everyone can feel personally invited to make a video. In order to give you more time to shoot the videos, the deadline to upload them to the website has been postponed to the end of February.

I remind you that you do not need to be a professional to make these videos. One needs to be moved by a passion to document who we are. Nothing else needs to be said, other than people giving witnesses, so that they can be really helpful to many people who will be able to watch them. Therefore, this proposal concerns everyone, precisely for this missionary passion. Why are we making this video? Not to show off, but to share with others what we have encountered, as our friend said, quoting Giussani. This is why it concerns everyone, and not just video “experts.”

April 27th: canonization of John Paul II and John XXIII. The celebration of the Mass with Pope Francis will take place in Saint Peter's Square, likely starting at 10:00 am (followed by praying the *Regina Coeli*).

For those attending, the Holy See has not arranged any ticketing to enter Saint Peter's Square (we remind you that on the occasion of the Beatification of John Paul II, pilgrims already filled Via dei Pellegrini the night before). As soon as we have more instructions, we will let you know.

May 10th: meeting with Pope Francis for the educational community. The meeting with the Pope, organized by the Italian Episcopal Conference for the entire educational community (teachers, parents, students) will be held in Saint Peter's Square, from 3:00 to 6:00 pm.

The theme of education – so important for our history – is particularly dear to Pope Francis, as he has already remarked in many of his speeches. We will provide more information as we receive it.

Saturday, February 8th: 14th National Day of Medicine Collection organized by the Foundation **Banco Farmaceutico** [Free Medicine Bank]. It is an important gesture of help and gratuitousness to the poorest among us, especially in this time of economic recession. Volunteers are needed for the shifts collecting medicines in the drugstores. For information and contacts: www.bancofarmaceutico.org

Veni Sancte Spiritus

Good evening to you all.