

THE CHARISM TODAY

THE GREATEST SACRIFICE is to give your life FOR AN OTHER'S WORK

To give your life for an Other's work; this "other," historically, phenomenally, as it appears, is a particular person; in the case of our Movement, for example, I am the one. As I say this, it is as if all that I am were to disappear (because the "Other" is Christ in His Church). A historic point of reference remains—the whole flow of words, the whole torrent of work that was born from that first moment in the Berchet High School.

To lose sight of this point is to lose the temporal foundation of our unity, of the usefulness of our actions; it is like making cracks in a foundation.

Each one has the responsibility of the charism; each one is the cause of the decline or the increase of the charism's effectiveness; everyone is either a stretch of land in which the charism wastes away or a stretch of land in which it bears fruit. So **we have reached a very serious moment, which urgently requires everyone, as a matter of loyalty and fidelity, to become aware of his own responsibility.** It is the moment for each of us to take up his own responsibility for the charism.

A LIVING CHAIN TO GUIDE US. To obscure or underrate these observations is to obscure or underrate the intensity of the impact that the history of our charism has on the Church of God and on present-day society. At this point, we are back again at the **ephemeral**, because God makes use of the ephemeral.

I may dissolve, but the texts I leave behind and the uninterrupted following—God willing—of the people indicated as points of reference, as the true interpretation of what happened in me, become the instrument for correction and re-awakening; they become the **tool of morality**. The chain of individuals indicated as points of reference is what is most alive in the present, because even a text can be interpreted; it is difficult to interpret it wrongly, but it is possible.

To give your life for an Other's work always implies a link between the word "Other" and something historical, something concrete that can be touched, felt, described, photographed, and has a name and surname. Without this, our pride imposes itself—this is ephemeral, yes; ephemeral in the worst sense of the word. To speak of charism without a historical reference is not to speak of a Catholic charism.

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I always told Fr. Giussani, "I will be forever grateful to you, because by introducing me to the Movement, you gave me the opportunity to make a human journey." A journey that helped me to perceive the true nature of Christianity and to understand myself. Without Fr. Giussani's friendship, we never would have understood the full meaning of human experience or of faith.

Julián Carrón