



The Holy See

**MESSAGE OF JOHN PAUL II
FOR THE 50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE
"SERVICE OF COMMUNITY ANIMATION OF THE
MOVEMENT FOR A BETTER WORLD"**

*To Rev. Fr Gino Moro, F.D.P., General Director of the
"Service of Community Animation of the Movement for a Better World"*

1. I am pleased to send my greetings and good wishes to you and to all the members of this "Service of Community Animation of the Movement for a Better World" on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the promoting group that began with the radio message of Pope Pius XII to the Diocese of Rome that has the name "Proclamation for a Better World" (*Proclama per un Mondo Migliore*). "It is a whole world that needs to be rebuilt from its foundations", the Pope said with his unforgettable words, a world "that must be transformed from savage to human, from human to divine, according to the heart of God" (*Discorsi e Radiomessaggi di S.S. Pio XII, XIII, p. 471*).

The "Proclamation for a Better World" was addressed to the Diocese of Rome. Pope Pius XII wanted Rome to be the first to be renewed, so he mustered the whole diocesan community with prophetic and timely words: "We desire to pass on to you the banner of a better world, beloved children of Rome.... Accept the sacred mandate that your Pastor and Father consigns to you today: to give rise to a powerful reawakening of thought and deeds. A reawakening that involves everyone without exception: clergy and people, authorities, families, groups and every single soul on the front of the total renewal of Christian life along the lines of the defence of moral values, the practice of social justice and the rebuilding of the Christian order" (*Discorsi e Radiomessaggi, cit., p. 471*).

2. The 1952 initiative that is commemorated this year, can only call to mind further developments, from the Second Vatican Council to the vast post-conciliar movement, from the Diocesan Synod of

Rome to the most recent City Mission, undertaken in the years from 1996 to 1999 in preparation for the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000. The same inspiration has guided the mission of the Church through these years: the breath of the Holy Spirit is filling the sails of the Church whose route now takes her into the deep waters of the third millennium.

With all my heart I hope that the blessed jubilee observance may help you all, dear brothers and sisters, to rediscover the spiritual heritage of Fr Lombardi as a source of enthusiasm with an apostolic effectiveness. In recent decades, the movement has spread to about 40 nations, and it strives to incarnate in concrete projects the broad vision of the Second Vatican Council and of the magisterium that followed, for a more intense ecclesial "communion". Continue in this work, in docile and constant cooperation with the pastors, and be ready to grasp the "signs" of the times.

3. Promote specifically the common priesthood of the faithful and the prophetic vocation of the laity in every field of human endeavour, so that they may discover "a keener awareness of their own destiny, to make the world conform better to the surpassing dignity of man, to strive for a more deeply rooted sense of universal brotherhood, and to meet the pressing appeals of our times with a generous and common effort of love" (*Gaudium et spes*, n. 91). Indeed, the lay faithful are the first to be challenged to act in building a society that is guided by the values of the civilization of love.

Aware of the needs of the culture today and with the ecclesiological vision that reached maturity in fidelity to the Council, the Church brings her influence to bear on the transformation of society through a laity who are mature in faith and ready to express it in history through their irreproachable witness and serious competence (cf. Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles laici*, nn. 36-44).

May Mary, Mother of the Church to whom Fr Lombardi attributed the inspiration for his work, assist your endeavour with her constant goodness and make it fruitful. May she comfort you in the difficulties you meet on your way.

May my Blessing, which I cordially impart to each of you, to your local groups and to all who in various ways uphold your service in the different parts of the world, also go with you and encourage you.

From the Vatican, 10 February 2002.

JOHN PAUL II

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