CHRISTLICHE BEWEGUNGEN UND GEMEINSCHAFTEN **MITEINANDER FÜR EUROPA**
CHRISTIAN MOVEMENTS AND COMMUNITIES **TOGETHER FOR EUROPE**
COMMUNAUTÉS ET MOUVEMENTS CHRÉTIENS **ENSEMBLE POUR L´EUROPE**
MOVIMENTI E COMUNITÀ CRISTIANI **INSIEME PER L´EUROPA**
WSPÓLNOTY I RUCHY CHRZESCIJANSKIE **RAZEM DLA EUROPY**
ХРИСТИАНСКИЕ ОБЩИНЫ И ДВИЖЕНИЯ **ВМЕСТЕ ДЛЯ ЕВРОПЫ**
MOVIMIENTOS Y COMUNIDADES CRISTIANOS **JUNTOS POR EUROPA**
MOVIMENTOS E COMUNIDADES CRISTÃS **JUNTOS PELA EUROPA**
ΧΡΙΣΤΙΑΝΙΚΕΣ ΚΙΝΗΣΕΙΣ ΚΑΙ ΚΟΙΝΟΤΗΤΕΣ **ΜΑΖΙ ΓΙΑ ΤΗΝ ΕΥΡΩΠΗ**

MITEINANDER FÜR **TOGETHER FOR**
ENSEMBLE POUR L´ INSIEME PER L´
MAZI ΓΙΑ ΤΗΝ ВМЕСТЕ ДЛЯ
europa

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PRESS RELEASE

„Called to peace“: the „Together for Europe“ network on its way to Rome 2028

From October 29 to 31, 2026, the European network „Together for Europe“ (TfE) gathered for its annual Meeting of Friends, held this time at the venue of the Vineyard community in Würzburg, Germany. The event was attended by more than 100 participants from 14 countries, representing 26 Orthodox, Evangelical, Anglican, Free Church, and Catholic communities, churches, and movements. This year, the intergenerational gathering (with participants aged 16 to 86) was deliberately opened to people of other ideological backgrounds, who enriched the meeting with their perspectives.

The Core Themes

Inspired by the motto „Called to peace“, Sister Nicole Grochowina (Christusbruderschaft Selbitz) gave a thematic keynote address on „**The Soul of Europe as a Potential for Peace**“. In her speech, she referred among other things to the thought of Jacques Delors, who stated that successful European integration cannot be based solely on laws and the economy. On the contrary, Europe needs a „soul“ made of inspiration, love, and shared values to generate lasting peace and give meaning to its path. Furthermore, thanks to the „Paschal paradox“ of death and resurrection, of crises and overcoming them (according to the vision of Tomáš Halík), the Christian faith carries within itself the potential to serve as the foundation of a new united Europe.

Building upon this idea, the conference outlined the guidelines for the future: a new visit to the **European Parliament in Brussels** is planned for May 2027. The next **Meeting of Friends** will take place from October 21 to 23, 2027, in Warsaw, Poland. Furthermore, a **large gathering** with around 800 participants is scheduled from May 4 to 6, 2028, in Castel Gandolfo (Rome), along with a public prayer event in Rome. Various locations across Europe will be temporarily connected digitally to share the moments of reflection. The participants offered their contribution within working groups dedicated to the program, communication, logistics, technology, and music, already taking an active part in the preparations in Würzburg. „The starting signal for 'Rome 2028' was given for us here today,” a participant noted.

The New Generations

The presence of over a dozen young adults sustained the fresh dynamic of the meeting. With their concrete initiatives, they are sending strong signals for European cohesion. Among these are the **Intergenerational Pact**—a mutual promise of cooperation between young adults and politicians for a peaceful Europe, delivered in 2026 in Brussels to several MEPs—and the proposal for an „**Ecumenical Passport**“, which was further developed during these days from an intergenerational perspective. The passport is designed as a bridge project inspired by Christian values, aiming to unite people of all faiths across Europe through dialogue, respect, and solidarity.

Blessed Are the Peacemakers

On the 1,711th day of the **war in Ukraine**, the meeting in Würzburg connected via live stream with three conflict-affected people from different Christian communities (Church Spiritual Renewal GGE, Community of Sant'Egidio, Focolare Movement) in Kyiv and Uzhhorod. Through the account of their

concrete experiences, the shared responsibility of Christians in the delicate balance between war and peace emerged clearly. „We cannot change the situation, but we know that peace begins with each of us in a very concrete way in daily life—in listening, comforting, and, of course, also in material and humanitarian aid," was the message sent from Ukraine. The visibly moved audience paid tribute to this testimony with long applause and a standing ovation.

The desire for understanding and hope culminated on Friday evening in a solemn closing celebration. A **solemn prayer for peace** was held at the Marienkapelle in Würzburg, led by Auxiliary Bishop Emeritus Ulrich Boom, Evangelical Dean Dr. Wenrich Slenczka, and Father Matthias Leineweber (Community of Sant'Egidio). The celebration concluded with the **covenant of mutual love**, as expressed in the Gospel of John (Jn 13:34). Maria Wienken emphasized the unifying power of this moment: „This covenant goes beyond all differences because, in shared faith, Jesus' promise is fulfilled: 'Where two or three are gathered in my name' (Mt 18:20). In this way, He becomes tangible as the 'true soul of Europe'."

Generational Shift in the Steering Committee
The International Steering Committee of *TfE* had reorganized in April 2026 with a core team of three people and officially introduced itself in Würzburg. **Sister Nicole Grochowina** (Communität Christusbruderschaft Selbitz), **Matthias Bühlmann** (Vineyard DACH), and **Father Raffael Rieger** (Schoenstatt) together assumed the role of moderators of the coordination team. **Maria Wienken** took over the position of General Secretary, supported by **Elisabeth Danner** (both from the Focolare Movement). The new members of the Steering Committee are: **Cesara Perian** (Focolare Movement, Romania) and **Ľuboš Jančík** (European Network of Communities ENC, Slovakia).
Already in April, **Gerhard Pross** (CVJM **C**hristlicher **V**erein **j**unger **M**enschen (YMCA) Esslingen and long-time moderator of *TfE*), **Thomas Römer, and Walter Kriechbaum** (both from CVJM Munich) had left the coordination committee. **Diego Goller** (previous General Secretary) and **Ilona Toth** (both from the Focolare Movement) also passed the torch to the next generation.

Save the dates:

- **May 2027:** European Parliament, Brussels (Belgium)
- **21 - 23 October 2027:** Meeting of the Steering Committee in Warsaw (Poland)
- **4 - 6 May 2028:** Large gathering in Rome (Italy)

For more information and photo material: www.together4europe.org

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