

## Message of “Together for Europe 2004”- Stuttgart

(May 8, 2004)

1. Europe has reached a decisive moment in its existence and in the project for its future: it cannot limit itself to being a market or a union aimed at the security of its citizens. We are aware that the influence of the love of God is urging the peoples of Europe to be much more than this.

A continent with variety and beauty, it has lived moments of splendour and growth, but it has also experienced the bitter truth that, without reference to deep values, human beings are uprooted from their humanity and show themselves capable of the worst evils.

In the last century, two world wars, concentration camps, Gulags and, in particular, the Holocaust (the Shoah) witnessed to the darkness which inhabited our continent and which painfully touched the rest of the world. And now marginalisation, injustice, exploitation and the scourge of terrorism cry out for solutions.

However, in spite of all these evils, today thankfully we can see a Europe that is moving toward reconciliation. A free and democratic Europe. *(read by Helmut Nicklas, YMCA of Munich, in German)*

2. Inspired by the transforming power of the Gospel, we feel called to work for a continent which is multifaceted and united.

We, members of more than 150 Movements and groups of different Christian Churches and Communities gathered in Stuttgart from every corner of the continent, want to witness to the newness of the growing fellowship and communion among us, set forth by the Spirit.

This communion of life is another consequence of the cultural traditions which, in the light of the Judaeo-Christian revelation, have built up our continent through the centuries.

We offer this fellowship as a contribution to a Europe which will be able to respond to the challenges of our time. *(read by Andrea Riccardi, Community of St. Egidio, in Italian)*



3. The charisms, gifts of God, compel us to follow the path of universal fraternity, which we feel is the true vocation of Europe. Fraternity is nothing other than evangelical love lived among all, always renewed, beginning here and now.

Fraternity is:

- sharing goods and resources;
- equality and freedom for all men and women;
- deepening our common cultural patrimony;
- openness to people of other cultures and religious traditions;
- love and solidarity with the weak and the poor in our cities;
- a deep sense of the family;
- respect for human life in all its stages;
- care for nature and the environment;
- balanced development of the means of communication.

By living this fraternity, Europe itself becomes a message of peace; an active peace which is built every day on the basis of forgiveness asked for and received. A peace which would like to build bridges between peoples "globalizing" solidarity and justice. *(read by Marie-Christine de Roberty, Equipes Notre Dame, in French)*

4. This message is not aiming to be simply a statement of intention, but a witness to something which, although just beginning, is already a reality among us.

We who are gathered together in Stuttgart and linked up with parallel meetings in more than 150 cities throughout the continent, wish to work together with all men and women of good will so that Europe may be a place of love and fraternity, that it may be aware of its responsibilities and show itself to be open to the whole world. *(read by Kitty Arbuthnott, Alpha Corse, in English)*