

# An Endless Desire

Chiara Lubich

*Excerpts of a letter written on March 15, 1944, from one young person to another. Although decades old, it still strikes a deep chord, resonating in the hearts of many who find themselves before the countless life challenges of today's world.*

Dear Fosca,

[...] You're young like me, and that is why I do not hesitate to suggest this to you, because, so long as youth continues to smile upon us it will be easy for us to follow any path. But once age has set in, thoughts, inclinations, tendencies and personal ways of doing things – oh, then it's nearly impossible to point life in the direction of an Ideal and give your all, all the energy of your spirit, toward its realization.

Two thoughts, or rather, two driving forces give intonation to my life. And they satisfy this little heart of mine that is ever so restless until it rests in that Something<sup>1</sup> where it can say: Here's what I tried so long to find. Finally, I've found it!

These two driving forces are:

- 1) An endless, overbearing, and ongoing desire to love.
- 2) A thought: Time flies at maddening speed. You only live once; either you spend your life well or you spend it badly! [...]

[We] move from one moment to the next constantly dissatisfied. We know that nothing can give us that happiness which we long for, yet we delude ourselves that we will find it "farther on." But when that "farther on" arrives, complete happiness is never there! Our life is a constant alternation between anxiety and relative peace – never a moment of pure joy!

Still our hearts cry out for it. They feel its strong attraction!

Why?

Look on high, to the Ideal<sup>2</sup>, dear Fosca!

Put all your strength into it! At last you will find Happiness.

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<sup>1</sup> The reference is to St. Augustine, *The Confessions* (1, 1).

<sup>2</sup> Chiara used the word, 'Ideal' to describe the light which she felt invested her from above and which she shared with those around her.