

# Both alone and united

Chiara Lubich

*Fruitful forms of accompaniment need the broader contextual support of the life of a community. A community rich in human values and rooted in a radical, authentic life of the Gospel can bring about a true experience of the presence of Christ.*

*The excerpt is taken from: C. Lubich, Tutti uno, Scritti spirituali/3, Città Nuova, Rome (pgs. 165 – 167) and translated from the original version in Italian.*

In commenting on Psalm 133, John Chrysostom wrote: "Oh, how beautiful and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together! ... for it is there that the Lord bestows his blessing". He explains: "There, where? On such a dwelling, on such harmony, on such agreement, on such living together. For in this is a blessing, just as in its opposite lies a curse. That is why this is praised by saying ... 'A brother that is helped by his brother is like a strong city.'"<sup>3</sup>

Chrysostom also beautifully stated, "Great is the strength that comes from being brought together"... "For in gathering together, charity grows. And if charity grows, the reality of God necessarily grows [among us]"<sup>4</sup>.

This same Church Father also gives us the example of the unity between Peter and John. Commenting on the phrase from the Acts of the Apostles: "Peter and John went up to the temple to pray at about three o'clock in the afternoon,"<sup>5</sup> Chrysostom writes: "Do not overlook the importance of this passage. Rather, dwell immediately on its significance. Try to learn how great was their charity, their concord and their agreement; how they communicated everything to one another and were bound together by the bond of friendship according to God in all things. [See] how they appeared together at table, in prayer, in walking and in every other action. For if those who were pillars and towers, and who trusted greatly in God, needed one another's help and corrected one another, how much more will we, who are weak, wretched and of little value, also need such mutual help?"<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Eccl. 4:10.

<sup>2</sup> In Eccle., IV: PG 98, 914.

<sup>3</sup> Prov 18, 19. Expos. in Psalm. 133: PG 55, 385.

<sup>4</sup> In Epist. ad Hebr. 10, 25, Hom. 19, 1: PG 63, 140.

<sup>5</sup> Acts 3:1.

<sup>6</sup> In Inscript. Act. Apost. 2, 4: PG 51, 83.