

Mariapolis Luminosa



Dear friends!

We are happy to announce that Mariapolis Luminosa has reopened as of July 1st for visitors and groups. A re-opening letter was sent out outlining our effort to remain vigilant and continue following CDC and New York State recommendations and guidelines. We remain grateful for everyone's support and help during this past year. We await the chance to see you all back here in Luminosa soon!

Mike Morse and Julie Moon on behalf of your friends at Mariapolis Luminosa



A Wedding in Luminosa

On November 21st of last year a small group of family members attended the wedding of Elizabeth Garlow and Paul Hartmann which took place in Our Lady of the Light chapel here in Luminosa. Due to the pandemic, special permission was granted for this festive event. The ceremony was live streamed so many near and far could participate. Even though the Luminosa residents could not attend, we let the couple know how happy we were that the ceremony could be hosted in our little city and we wished them our best wishes for many blessings for years to come.



A New Crucifix

Many will remember the beautiful tapestry hanging in Our Lady of the Light Chapel which was donated by the community in Santo Domingo. It was truly a work of art that highlighted particular characteristics of the chapel. We recently took time to consider exchanging the tapestry for a crucifix. It wasn't an easy decision given the many years of having the tapestry and what it meant for the community when the chapel was built. But together we felt the time had come.



We didn't see it merely as removing the tapestry but a chance to understand, at the encouragement of some Focolare members, how the chapel could be a "home" for us and those who love it dearly. While we were not ready for a chapel renovation at that point in time, we liked the idea and found that it would be in the best interest of Mariapolis Luminosa. After discerning together, we arrived at selecting a crucifix that seemed appropriate. On Sunday, June 13 a mass was celebrated in the chapel followed by a blessing of the new crucifix. We thank Fr. Evariste, Fr. Kohlmann and Fr. Rider for celebrating this special mass with us. We look forward to when you all can return to visit us in Luminosa and see our new crucifix.



Luminosa Conference Center (LCC)

The Luminosa Conference Center staff continues to prepare the way for more groups to return to Luminosa. Recent upgrades have taken place in the bedrooms with new bedspreads, in Adsum with a new storage section for chairs and a coffee station, in Belcher Hall with newly painted walls and a coffee station and improvements in the houses with more amenities.



Dining Hall freezer-refrigerator

Last December we discovered that, for reasons unknown, the flooring beneath the kitchen walk-in freezer had rotted away. After consulting with various companies and experts, we arrived at the conclusion that the freezer-refrigerator unit needs to be removed and the floor replaced. Since it is advisable to not re-install the current freezer-refrigerator due to the unavoidable breaking of the seals when removed, a new freezer-refrigerator unit will need to be purchased and installed. The task of supporting the floor and bracing the walls has been completed. Next is to assess the cost of this work and begin with removing the unit.

Youth One Stop

Mariapolis Luminosa, through the LCC, has partnered with *Youth One Stop*, a comprehensive education and job-training program within The Chamber Foundation in Dutchess County.

Youth One Stop is a program utilizing local resources to benefit at-risk youth in the county. The program is open to income-eligible youth, ages 14-24 who are facing obstacles inhibiting them from completing school, finishing their HSE or gaining employment. This program is in cooperation with the Dutchess County Workforce Investment Board. In our partnership, the youth who are part of the program, along with their adult chaperones, come to Luminosa to perform volunteer service work. Their first day was June 9 which began with orientation which offered a mini lesson on safety in the workplace followed by an introduction to Mariapolis Luminosa. Their schedule will bring them to Luminosa throughout the summer.



General Counsel and local changes

This year's general counsel, which took place in January, was the moment the Focolare worldwide came together to review the past 6 years and plan for the next 6. During the process, the thousands of suggestions and reflections that came in from Focolare members around the world provided a great opportunity of collective discernment on which future paths to take. Soon after, a guiding document was shared called "Courage to Embrace the World".

As the counsel looked at the upcoming 6 years, it seemed clear that it was time for some changes in some parts of the world. A few of those changes are happening close to home. Here at Luminosa this summer **Julie Moon** will be moving to the Focolare house in Montreal

Julie arrived in the summer of 2018 beginning the adventure of being co-director of Luminosa with Mike Morse on a team with Donna and Sid Hayden. In August, after 3 years she will move to Montreal to be co-director of the Central East Canada region with Attilio Polsoni. Julie wrote in an email to the community: *"I have an immense gratitude to God and to each of you for the life of unity and precious relationships that I was able to live in these years."*

On many occasions, I felt that things that happened were like small (and also big) daily miracles and I know it is a miracle because there is so much love and support, starting from each one of you and of many across the zone and abroad for this beautiful City of Mary and also many “yeses” to Jesus Forsaken who came to meet us in different circumstances. I truly feel blessed and fortunate to be able to go back to Canada with a heart filled with beautiful memories and experiences that I had in this land of hope, prosperity and unity. Once again, thank you and I am sure that the unity that we built together will always grow more.”

Margaret Kelley, who has been co-director for the West region for almost 3 years, will move to Luminosa from the Focolare house in Los Angeles. She will join the management team with Mike, along with Naldo Messias (Maintenance manager) and Magdy Mishraki (Luminosa Conference Center director). Warmest welcome to Margaret and we are looking forward to getting to know her better and journeying together in building this City of Mary continuously.

To better assist some Focolare communities in other parts of the country, **Chiara Luce Catipon** will move to Corpus Christi after 3 years in Luminosa, **Nick Cianfarani** will move to the Atlanta Focolare house and **Birgit Oberhofer** will come to Luminosa from Corpus Christi.

Recently Chiara Luce wrote in an email: *“After almost three years here at Luminosa, the time has come also for me to leave for another destination: Corpus Christi, Texas. I will be switching roles with Birgit Oberhofer in YCNA and begin work in the campus ministry program of Texas A&M University this new school year. Because of its full time status, I will also have to leave my work with Living City. While I know it will be a cut from all the beautiful relationships built here, I assure you all of my continued prayers and unity at a distance.”*

Also Nick wrote: *“I write to let you know that after 2 wonderful years here at Luminosa, a need has come up for a focolarino to help out at our center in Atlanta GA. I have been asked to go there to help out. I will of course miss each and every one of you but I also know that the unity built together during my stay here will always remain! Thank you for all your love! United in prayer and unity.”*

A few months ago we welcomed **Patty Garcia** who came to Luminosa after 25 years living in Rome, working at Castelgandolfo and **Victor Ramos** who arrived after some years in India.

We assure our unity to those who are leaving, trusting in God’s plan for them and they will certainly be missed. We also look forward to hearing more later from our new arrivals. Welcome!

Let’s meet Patty!

“My name is Patty Garcia and I am from Puebla, a city near Mexico City. I have 3 sisters and 1 brother. I grew up in a simple, beautiful family where my parents loved us very much. I studied

mass media because when I was a gen, Chiara said that gen should study mass media to bring the spirit of the Focolare into this important field. After finishing my studies, I worked for a local TV station in my city with another gen offering a live program for kids every Saturday for two hours. It was a very nice experience of having Jesus in the midst in the workplace. I later moved to the focolare little city “El Diamante” in Mexico. The little city was just starting so it was a special experience as we began a bakery making cakes, pizza and donuts.

After that I went to Loppiano and worked in the audio/visuals department and then to the Mariapolis Center in Castelgandolfo for 25 years. There were many special moments that I experienced in the movement, with Chiara, with the first men and women focolarini at the headquarters. I always felt that this wasn’t a job but a service for all those who come for meetings. Now I am at Luminosa, very happy to continue being of service to the movement through Living City magazine, the audio/visuals and the Luminosa Conference Center. It’s a new experience for me but the most important thing is to continue building Jesus in the midst with each person that I meet.”



Patty Garcia



Margaret Kelley

Donations

We remain ever so grateful to our donors! This year we were able to purchase a new tractor which was much needed for year-round work in landscaping upkeep, leaf collection and snow plowing. Donations continue to help in ongoing maintenance needs of Luminosa, from our houses and buildings to the flower arrangements that brighten the entrance and porches, rendering Luminosa a “home away from home” for all who visit. A huge thanks once again!!



Sessions on the points of the spirituality are offered on the last Tuesday of each month. The first session which took place in May covered the discovery of God who is love. To join the sessions contact Tes Lee at teslee60@gmail.com.

Volunteer service opportunities

Volunteer Service Work opportunities are available in Mariapolis Luminosa, the Focolare's little city.

Tasks can include administrative work, projects and developments of the little city: painting, weeding, cleaning, landscaping,...etc. Free lodging is set up in a house or apartment so that you can prepare your meals. Each applicant is responsible for purchasing their own food/groceries and all other expenses. You must provide your own transportation to and from Mariapolis Luminosa.

If you have the time and are able to complete these tasks, please consider coming to give us a hand. Be ready to stay at least 1 week, working at least 5 hours a day. Schedule and times and total hours to be arranged with the onsite supervisor. To apply, simply send an email of request to luminosa@focolare.us.

Mariapolis 2021

The Mariapolis is the Focolare's annual summer gathering. It's a place to live Focolare spirituality together, a place to experience unity (and not just talk about it). It's sort of like a conference, but for families and people of all ages, including those who have a lot of experience with Focolare spirituality and those who have only just heard about it. This year the Summer Mariapolis gatherings are online. You can choose among three dates. <https://www.focolare.us/mariapolis/>

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