

# Carried by the Fire of Love

**Chiara Lubich**

*The following is an excerpt from a letter written by the author to her mother just before Christmas 1944. At that time the city of Trent was being bombarded because of the Allied advance through northern Italy. Chiara's family was displaced while she remained in the city. These are the words of a twenty-four-year-old woman who just over a year earlier had consecrated herself to God forever. She conveys her 'feelings' with openness and sincerity but also of how her focus on God, especially on Jesus crucified and abandoned, leads her beyond her own feelings. The letter is signed with her baptismal name: Silvia. [1]*

Dearest Mamma,

I have been living with anguish in my heart for a few days now.

Dad has arrived to discover that I have the 'flu. The [air-raid] shelter is freezing and the sirens keep going off.

I don't know what I could have done to come up and stay with you, Mamma. Having thought about it, Dad realized that it was not possible and I see that too. I would need some means of transport and that is hard to find. Christmas away from you makes me cry, Mamma, and I wish I had you here with me so I could tell you how I feel.

Sadness often takes hold of me which only God's Love helps me to overcome.

I see Him there on that Cross also suffering the longing for home and the Abandonment of His Father and I really see Him fulfil in me what I so often ask Him: "Let me feel something of Your sorrows, especially a little of Your terrible abandonment so that I may be closer to You and be more like You, who in the infinity of Your Love chose me and took me with You".

Then I feel Him consoling me and telling me that when I left everything for love of Him when He called me, and I left father and mother and home to live where the danger was and where the need was, He will be my consolation!

He puts the Fire of Love in my soul and makes me cry out: "Love is not loved! [2] [...].

I married Him and tried to extinguish every other desire for Him. He is my life and my greatest love! He and His Cry of Abandonment has dragged me along, Mamma, and made

me go forward when we seek only His kingdom! And what is His kingdom if not to tell everyone to love God and to love one another? [...]

With a heart you may not yet know, Mamma, I send you a kiss,

Silvia

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1 Taken from: *C. Lubich, Lettere 1939-1960*, edited by F. Gillet, *Opere di Chiara Lubich 4/1*, Città Nuova, Rome 2022, p. 79.

2 The Franciscan tradition uses this expression to summarize a spiritual and mystical experience of St Francis of Assisi.