

#### **IV World Ultreya**

Stefania Lucent - Italian

My name is Stefania, I am 24 years and I come from the diocese of Aversa in Italy.

I spent my childhood like many adolescents, with the most absolute indifference to religion and the Church, believing that my small problems were enormous, placing my self, ideally in the center of the world.

Suddenly a series of serious problems and events, threatened to destroy my family, my only reaction was anger, an anger that came from the depths of my heart. I looked to the sky only to protest against God, a God that I did not know, that I never had wanted to know.

And I felt increasingly alone.

One day my uncle asked my mother to attend a Cursillo, she accepted taking with her all the suffering of a wife and mother. She came back completely changed, so changed that she wanted to forgive those who had tried so much to hurt us all.

In those days everything seemed absurd to me, I could not accept the insane desire to forgive that my mother carried in her heart after those three days. I could not understand, until one day my father was also attended the Cursillo, and he also returned a changed man.

That was too much! ... That is precisely the change that had seemed impossible but it was real and I felt that it was real.

In all this there was something I was not able to understand ... and so I also went the Cursillo. I was 17 years old.

In those days I felt an immense joy, knowing that a friend loved me from the sky, and so many brothers and sisters around me shared my feelings.

My head was still filled with confusion. I did not understand the plan that the Lord had prepared for me but was willing to follow where He wanted.

I alternated between moments of group study of the word of God to the catechism for children and, I especially lived a splendid friendship with people who are in love with Christ.

I had recently completed high school and did not know which type of study to pursue. A friend invited me to share an experience of a year of volunteer work in a housing complex for people with psychophysical handicap, an experience that changed my life.

I had many doubts but agreed. I had no experience and was almost afraid of those people who I did not know ... I slowly opened my eyes to a new reality and I praised the Lord who gave me that possibility.

I have seen the look of Christ in the eyes of each of those younger siblings and they have taught me to live with joy, despite the problems.

I thought that I could give something to them, I received a lot ... I learned the joy of helping others and that the Lord is alive in these brothers who are suffering and we must praise Him every day, every moment, for what we receive.

I finally realized the path I needed to begin, a path that gave me the possibility of being useful to the community and in particular, to the suffering. A job that would allow me to use the talents that Christ had given me, that were not mine, but for others.

I decided to obtain a license as a professional nurse.

It was not an easy thing because it was necessary to enroll in the university, overcome quite difficult objections. Many friends have tried in vain several times, without success.

Who know, perhaps because I believed that this was the will of God and that He walked beside

me I studied with obstinance and I finally realized my dream. Next year, God willing, I will complete my college courses.

Every day in the hospital I relate to people who often just need someone to listen and encourage them ... The Lord said "Surely, I say to you as much as you did for one of these, my little brothers, you did unto me .

With the help of God I speak, but mostly listen, trying to be a sign of the tenderness of God, a much-needed tenderness, and with joy, I continue my journey.

Surely, my life is not perfect nor am I as I have all my problems and my pain ... but thanks to the friendship that surrounds me and thanks to a group of other young people, who share the same experience, I will continue the way that somebody up there in the sky, has charted.

I have a very special friend who loves me and supports me, gives me strength, even in moments of greatest difficulty, to look ahead, believing that it is still possible to live the life filled with colors.

De Colores!