

## "A CHANCE IN LIFE"

### CELEBRATES THE ROOTS OF ITS FUTURE

#### **Creative Intuitions**

In 2020, *A Chance In Life* celebrates the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its foundation. The generous vision that inspires *A Chance In Life* and the astonishing changes it has gone through during its history have made it an institution whose influence can enlighten the whole world. It is revealing to note that the prophetic actions of its founder – Monsignor John Patrick Carroll-Abbing - and his many faithful collaborators over the years, keep bearing plentiful fruit: first in Italy in the aftermath of World War II, and today as far afield as Africa (Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda), South-East Asia (India), and Latin America (Bolivia, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico and Peru). This institution's name has also changed over time, it has naturally become globalized, from the initial *Boys' and Girls' Towns in Italy* to become *A Chance In Life* worldwide. Thus, we are witnessing the slow evolution of an amazing venture that invites us to sail with confidence towards the new shores of the future, and always take a committed look at the challenges of our contemporary world, especially at the most pressing needs of younger generations. Finally, it invites us to draw the treasures of imagination and creativity from our personal and collective resources, and to become increasingly alert to the many challenges our world is facing. The daring progress this institution has made, at times, no longer allows us to look at the emergencies of our societies from the comfort of our home!

#### **A Tradition for the Future**

A well-established and fruitful tradition has gradually taken root and the vocation of *A Chance In Life* is inevitably driving us into the future. It is legitimate and comforting to remember - and anniversaries provide us with an opportunity to do so -, but at the same time, we must keep focusing on building a road for today and for tomorrow. In the same line - and we have high hopes on this -, to look with new eyes at this institution's history will prove to be valuable, since it would allow us to separate « *wheat from chaff* », as is the case with any human endeavor. I

believe that the immense richness that can come from a return to our roots, to the creative intuitions that have inspired the concrete implementation of such a noble and useful ideal will become necessary, if we wish to continue to serve the future. Knowing their secrets allows us to avoid being locked into past practices and paves the way to new horizons. Faithful to its inspired founder, *A Chance In Life* is no longer the institution of the past, and not yet that of tomorrow. In fact, analyzing, evaluating, and re-directing our action, in the light of current developments, enriches individuals and institutions alike. By gaining a better appreciation of its struggles and attempts, we can gradually discover the perennial meaning of any mission that is called upon to adapt and transform itself, without ever losing its soul. Quality, development, and solidarity today have new features and requirements; hence, renewed efforts, investments, and commitment are needed. Little by little, we must become convinced that the profound meaning of the mission of *A Chance In Life* must be reinvented, together, with courage, continuity, and openness, combining moving memories with new dreams. Often, it is there that the strength of the original intentions can be found and tapped into, together with the inspiration, spirit, and light that lead to the establishment of institutions and their long-lasting survival. *A Chance In Life* is no exception to this rule, even more so because it is a Christian institution. It is marked at the same time by Incarnation and Redemption, never ignoring the tribulations and limits that it met along its journey, nor the joys, like a Paschal morning, that lead to humble victories. Shadows and lights dance and mingle in the dawn of a new day.

### **Prioritizing Quality Formation**

Therefore, the quality of our commitment requires a sober but rigorous and lucid return to our past. In this perspective, *A Chance In Life* has, among other things, decided to equip itself with a retrospective and prospective analytical tool whose mission is to cast a new, peaceful, and non-binding look at past developments, in order for their light to enrich the choices for today and tomorrow. The target includes prioritizing activities, pinpointing clear objectives, their location, their feasibility, partners, and possible local supports. In this spirit, the Scientific Committee will focus on the overall quality of the services offered to younger generations and on the continuous evaluation of all actions, without forgetting the paramount importance of the training of those in charge of their full implementation. To this end, *A Chance In Life* continues to work within a framework of respect for people's promotion and in the very spirit of sustainable

development, where the formation of the various actors involved in our projects becomes essential. In addition, we have to work in this direction all together: so that everyone's diverse and varied gifts and cooperation can achieve their full meaning and relevance. The effectiveness of our services to young people and the places they live in also depends on this.

### **Giving Thanks**

The longevity enjoyed by *A Chance In Life* is a wonderful achievement that we should celebrate with joyful pride and renewed hope. We must give thanks to God, to the Church, among others the Congregation for Catholic Education - Holy See - and to all those who have given their best energies, talents, skills, and generosity, to keep *A Chance In Life* alive and growing. They are many, from diverse geographical, cultural, and even religious, academic, and professional backgrounds. May they receive the expression of our acknowledgement and warmest thanks, even more so may they be as deeply convinced that the personal, social, and professional well-being of all the young beneficiaries of *A Chance In Life*'s actions will forever remain a tangible gratitude. We are already moving towards the celebration of the first Centennial of *A Chance In Life*. Let us save the date right now! I am sure that if we all make a commitment to be there, to accompany its impressive evolution, we will also continue to embody together its remarkable mission.

Prof. Msgr. Guy-Réal Thivierge,  
President of the Scientific Committee.

Rome, May 18, 2020.