

Press Release, January 19, 2015

Chiara Lubich: the Bishop of Frascati, Msgr. Martinelli, initiates the cause of beatification

Frascati (Rome), January 27, 2015, at 16.00hrs.

It will be the Cathedral of Frascati (Rome), chosen by Msgr. Raffaello Martinelli for the official opening of the “process on the life, virtues, reputation for holiness and signs” of Chiara Lubich, that will highlight “the ecclesial nature of this act”. The Diocese of Frascati is the territory where the International Centre of the Focolare Movement is located. It is in the vicinity of this Centre that Chiara Lubich spent most her life and died. Her body rests in the chapel of this Centre.

The opening ceremony of the “Cause of beatification and canonization”, termed as *Prima Sessio*, will take place on Tuesday, January 27, 2015. It will start at 16.00hrs with the recitation of Vespers, and then there will be the reading of the Decree of the introduction of the Cause and of the Rescript of the *Nulla Osta* of the Holy See, the official appointment of the diocesan tribunal nominated by the Bishop and the oaths taken by the Bishop, the members of the tribunal and those of the postulation. The ceremony may be followed live via internet.

Maria Voce, president of the Focolare Movement announced this news to the members of the Movement, while wishing all those who live its spirituality to be “a living witness” of the collective holiness proposed and lived by Chiara Lubich.

Her life was nourished by an idea of holiness rooted in the Gospel. She wrote: “*We find holiness in Jesus; it blossoms in us because we love... If we search for holiness itself, we will never achieve it. Love, then, and nothing else. Lose everything, even the attachment to holiness, so that you aim only at loving*”. She explained that we can become saints “*if (ante omnia, even before holiness) we put mutual love: Jesus in our midst as premise or principle, as a means to our holiness and as an end*”.

Her testimony continues to be a light to many as is revealed by the constant flow of people who continue to visit the places where she has lived and where she now rests. More than 120,000 people from different continents and religious traditions, cardinals and bishops, academics, politicians, families and young people, members of associations and movements, people with non-religious beliefs, children on the eve of their first Holy Communion and adults in search of hope have visited these places during the six years since her death.

The process to promote the Cause started on December 7, 2013, on the seventieth anniversary of the beginning of the Movement, when President Maria Voce presented a formal request to Msgr. Martinelli, Bishop of Frascati. With this presentation, she gave voice to those who expressed hope that such a request would be made in order to intensify the spiritual and moral commitment in many for the good of humanity.

In the months that followed, Bishop Martinelli saw to the fulfillment of the established canonical norms. Once the Cause has begun, Chiara Lubich is called *servant of God*.

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