

Fourth anniversary of the death of the Foundress of the Focolare Movement

A constellation of generations with Chiara

"Chiara and the new generations" was the focus of the meeting held to celebrate the fourth anniversary of the passing of Chiara Lubich, 14 March 2008. This theme was dear to the foundress of the Focolare Movement, as she once declared: "I have

always had a great faith in the young people: they are the future of the world!". The event looked back at the Foundress' life in order to inspire the youth today.

In preparation for the events Maria Voce, the current President of

the Focolare Movement, wrote: "Chiara trusted the young people and each one of us. Together, all as one, we would like to look at a future full of hope because God gave us a great ideal. This will be another occasion to express our gratitude to her who, corresponding fully to the light of the charisma that God put in her heart, opened up the way to many to be bearers of a new spirit". The President invited everyone to make this movement "a starting point... to contribute towards building universal brotherhood".

Throughout the month of March ecumenical and interreligious events, cultural conventions and musical gatherings are taking place across the world to honour this anniversary. India, the Philippines, Tanzania, Pakistan, the United States, Brazil, Portugal and Kenya are just some of the countries which are celebrating the life of Lubich and commemorating her passing. Most cities are holding memorial masses and panel

discussions, of particular interest is the exhibition including artworks inspired by Chiara's writings by people of all ages, which was held in Sydney, Australia on 18 March.

On Sunday, 11 March, at the Auditorium of the Mariapolis Center of Castel Gandolfo, Italy, an event in memory of the Foundress was held. It included reflections on freedom and justice, as well as scenes with revolutionary messages performed by young people. Chiara's legacy on the value of suffering was mentioned by Beppe Porqueddu, who was confined to a wheel-chair at the age of 18 following a motorbike accident. Many cities around the world were connected via-internet to the event



Witnesses to the revolution

The following is the address given by the President of the Focolare Movement, Maria Voce, on 11 March in Castel Gandolfo, Italy, in remembrance of Chiara's death.

In these two hours we had a way to emerge ourselves, not only in "Chiara's thought on the young people", as the title could make us think, but to penetrate, nearly to relive, an extraordinary experience which we want to see grow. The experience that Chiara's life passed on shone a particular light when it composed a second generation in the bosom of the Movement. That is, second, in relation to the first generation of people who founded the Movement with her. A new generation: it didn't exist before, but from a certain moment onwards it came about.

What have we admired today? Certainly, Chiara's relationship with this new generation: that special relationship that she established with young people from very different formations, cultures, backgrounds, societies and historical eras. It was a relationship which, whether she was meeting small groups or stadium crowds, Chiara always extended to all young people of the world.

And in a totally special way, I think, we were inwardly engaged by the reciprocity that this way she loved generated, and brought about in the young people just as much love, trust, hope and concreteness. In fact, Chiara gave them everything, all that light and those universal, concrete and demanding horizons that God opened wide to her. She accompanied these generations of young people closely, allowing them to live this experience directly. Hers was, or rather, is total, absolute trust. Total, as the total trust she felt God had towards her. Trust, which was also certainty that young people are made to contribute in first person to world unity: the dream of a God who makes history with us. From here came the unconditional hope which has been deposited in them.

Chiara knew how to dare; to dare to look in Heaven to know what to build on earth. From here she got the courage to place in front of our hearts, before placing in front of our eyes, the model for relationships which guarantees fruitfulness. Therefore, in order to describe

the existing relationship between the first and second generation she makes us look up, to the relationship between the Father and the Son in the Trinity. This is a paradigm which represents the maximum openness of love from both parts, the most evident demonstration of what is giving and receiving; receiving and giving. She was always inspired by this relationship and invites all of us to embody this model.

Chiara did not hesitate to speak to the young people about a "revolution". Revolution: meaning a complete change that is the effect of living with trust and without calculating Jesus' words. From this came all objections to more reduced and impoverished ways of living. She even invented a new language which fascinates. Such as when she indicates "the universal being" as the model for young people today, a Jesus who offers us the key and the capacity to transform suffering into love, and because of this, to embrace humanity with its contradictions fearlessly. Today, all of this passed through our soul, our mind and it was renewed in our heart. It was witnessed to us by pragmatic people, young people of yesterday and today, who with faithfulness, without escaping from pain, with commitment and imagination, have built and still build a new world on the rock, brick by brick. It is a very precious inheritance that we have in our hands. It is a legacy which will continuously be enriched with the alternation of new generations. Therefore, let us take this day as a stepping-stone.

Today we have not "remembered" or "celebrated", but, once more and all together, we let ourselves be engaged by the grace of the charisma. Chiara from Heaven thinks of us as one body and, I dare say, she already sees us like this. Let us feel newly and all together invested by her trust to face the new challenges which await us and to be a current of love in humanity. In this way we can bear witness to the revolution of the Gospel lived-out; we can be a seed of paradise spread all over the world, a multicoloured and pluralistic people which decidedly contributes to "that all may be one", universal brotherhood, with all those who do their utmost for the common good. We owe it to Chiara and to the charisma that she transmitted to us. We owe it to humanity which we love.



Chiara Lubich

in Castel Gandolfo, which drew participants from various countries. The afternoon concluded with an address by the President of the Focolare Movement.

Lubich once said that young people "are made for great ideals and they know how to follow them with radicalness. The discovery of the Gospel transformed into life and which fulfills what it promises, is that which attracts them the most. It is the ideal of a united world that fascinates them. They are the youth, the teens and even the children, who will transmit this ideal to their peers". It was precisely in this spirit that the fourth anniversary of her death was celebrated.

Way of the Cross meditations entrusted to Focolare Movement

Benedict XVI has asked Danilo and Anna Maria Zanzucchi, the founders of the New Families Movement, a branch of the Focolare Movement, to compose of the meditations for the Stations of the Way of the Cross, which will take place at the Colosseum on the evening of Good Friday, 6 April. Mr and Mrs Zanzucchi's reflections will focus on the family.