

### Bishop is asked to open Cause of Focolare founder Chiara Lubich

By **Carol Glatz** on Tuesday, 10 December 2013

#### In This Article

[Chiara Lubich](#), [Focolare](#), [Maria Voce](#), [Pope Benedict XVI](#), [The Congregation for Saints' Causes](#)



Benedict XVI said Lubich was a "woman of fearless faith."

The head of the Focolare Movement formally requested the opening of a diocesan inquiry into the life and holiness of the movement's founder Chiara Lubich.

Maria Voce, president of Focolare, presented the request to Bishop Raffaello Martinelli of Frascati, on December 7, the anniversary of the movement's founding in 1943.

A sainthood process normally can be initiated only five years after the death of the potential candidate. Lubich died in March 14, 2008, at age 88.

The Congregation for Saints' Causes would have to authorise the opening of the diocesan inquiry, which would study Lubich's writings and interview people who knew her.

The collected information would be the basis for deciding whether Lubich lived the Christian virtues in a heroic way and deserved to be declared venerable. If so, the attribution of a miracle to her intercession would then be required for beatification, and another miracle for canonization.

Lubich was born in Trent, Italy, in 1920, and was christened Silvia. Her admiration of St Clare of Assisi led her to adopt the name Chiara, the Italian form of Clare.

In 1943, after consulting a priest, she privately took vows consecrating herself to God and gradually began forming a circle of friends who read the Gospels together.

Gradually, the women decided to form a community and share everything they had with each other and with the poor. They sought a sense of family gathered around a hearth — "focolare" in Italian.

The lay movement aims to promote world unity through the living witness of Christian love and holiness in the family and small communities. It opened an ecumenical chapter in 1961 and began forging ties with Jews, Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus and others in the 1970s.

Focolare now has more than 2 million members and associates in 182 countries.

Retired Pope Benedict XVI said Lubich was a “woman of fearless faith.”

In a message read at her funeral in Rome’s Basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls, Pope Benedict called her “a messenger of hope and peace, founder of a vast spiritual family that embraces multiple fields of evangelization,” from spirituality for families to a project that encourages business owners to embrace an “economy of communion” or sharing.

He wrote that she always was guided by the thinking of the popes, and “almost had the prophetic ability to intuit (that thinking) and put it into action ahead of time.”

Blessed John Paul II appointed Lubich to serve as an observer at four synods of bishops in the 1980s and 1990s, and she served as a consultant to the Pontifical Council for the Laity.

She was awarded the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion in 1977 and the UNESCO Peace Education Prize in 1996.

<http://www.catholicerald.co.uk/news/2013/12/10/focolare-president-requests-opening-of-founders-sainthood-cause/>