



THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
Department for External Church Relations

Representative of Department for External Church Relations attends Chiara Lubich memorial evening



On March 14, 2020, the Rudomino Library for Foreign Literature held a memorial evening devoted to the centenary birthday of Chiara Lubich (1920-2008), the founder of the Focolare Movement.

Participating in the event were Mr. Guido De Sanctis, minister of the Italian Embassy in Russia; Mr. Alessandro Salacone, representative of the Community of Saint'Egidio in Moscow; Archpriest Vladimir Fedorov, associate professor at St. Petersburg Theological Academy; Hieromonk Ioann Guayta, a cleric of the Ss Cosmas and Damian church in Moscow; Father Alexy Dikarev, Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relations; Mr. A. Yudin, associate professor, State University of the Humanities religious research center, and many others.

Participants shared their memories of the outstanding religious worker of the 20th century, who initiated the first movement of lay people in the Catholic Church, and spoke about the influence the Focolare Movement made on their life. They were also shown a film about Chiara Lubich and the work of the movement she founded.

Father Alexy Dikarev read out a message of greeting to the organizers and participants of the memorial

evening from Metropolitan Hilarion, head of the Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relations, which reads in particular:

“I cordially greet all the participants in the memorial evening devoted to the centenary birthday of the founder of the Focolare Movement, Chiara Lubich.

The centenary birthday of the outstanding daughter of the Roman Catholic Church marked this year throughout the world is a remarkable opportunity to pay tribute to the fragile but spiritually strong woman whose service has gone beyond the boundaries of the Catholic Church.

In 1943, in the midst of World War II, which brought innumerable miseries and sufferings to nations, an ordinary girl from Trento felt a call to a special mission to devote herself to the cause of peace, mutual understanding and unity between people of different faiths, beliefs and ethnic backgrounds. Amidst death and destruction caused by hatred, Chiara Lubich came to perceive with a special force the meaning of the word said by the Lord at the Last Supper: “May all be one” (Jn. 17:21). These words became the motto of all her further activity.

Chiara Lubich is a brilliant example of a Christian who felt the call of God and who followed it to the end. She dedicated all her life to her service like a good worker from the Lord’s parable, who multiplied his gifts (Mt. 25:14-30). Suffice it to say that the Focolare Movement communities are present in 180 countries and the number of the followers of the movement amount to over two million people.

Chiara Lubich made a great contribution to the inter-Christian dialogue and in the dialogue with other religions: ideals of peace and unity lived up by the movement participants attract people of various Christian Churches, people of other religions and even non-religious people.

In today’s world torn by wars, conflicts and contradictions, the living witness of Chiara Lubich and her followers is still relevant. May the personality and legacy of the outstanding worker be a source of inspiration for new generations of Christians, a guarantee of the achievement of a lasting peace and the building of ‘a civilization of love’ so much needed by humanity.

I invoke God’s blessing on all of you!”

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