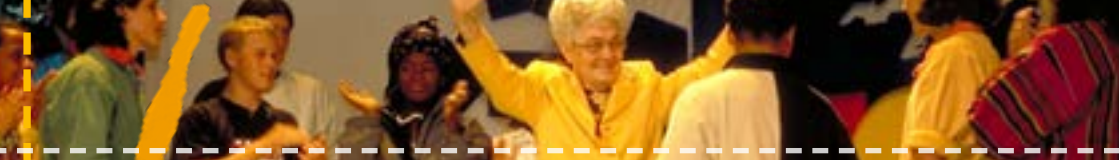


1920 **100** years 2020

Chiara



CHIARA AND SCHOOL

This year
Chiara Lubich
would be
100 years old!
With the Gen 3,
we take this
very special occasion
to **learn** more about
her story,
her city
and her passionate
commitment to make it
more beautiful with love.

1.1 SCHOOL AND OUR RELATIONSHIP
WITH OUR CLASSMATES

1.1

SCHOOL AND OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR CLASSMATES



Objectives

- get to know some episodes from Chiara's story as a student.
- revive the commitment of loving all schoolmates, without preferences.

Introductory activity

Objective: Start off from what the Gen live through in their school and allow them to talk about it.

Major difficulties could arise (mobbing ...). You are encouraged to carefully prepare a climate of full and respectful listening.

9 – 12 year olds

Materials: Buttons or bottle caps of two different colors (male and female).

Directions: Let us draw faces on the different buttons.

Each in turn represents their class by counting the buttons (male and female) and moving them to highlight the groups that are formed.

Report if someone is hanging back, form a large circle if all are united, or small and separate circles if rival groups prevail, and so on.



Sharing and reflection:

Each one will explain to others how his or her class is.

Is there anyone left out or excluded?

Is there anything that could be improved?

In a moment of reflection, each one imagines:

If Chiara Lubich were my age and my classmate, what would she do?

Which classmate would she choose? ...

13-17 year olds

Materials: a beautiful box with a lid, small pieces of colored paper, pens.

Directions: On the closed box, stick on a paper with the words: "My school and my relationship with my classmates".

Everyone is invited to write on two or three colored pieces of paper a word, a name, an adjective that describes his / her own school and his / her classmates. The pieces of paper that show a painful aspect are crumpled and, if we want, the pieces of paper on which are written joyful and luminous aspects are folded in simple origami style.

When everyone has finished, similar pieces of paper can be opened and grouped.

Sharing and reflection:

In silence let us carefully read aloud the groups of tickets that have been formed, and those who wish can start to dialogue and share their thoughts on one of the themes listed; then all the participants continue on the other themes.



EPISODES FROM CHIARA'S STORY

Ask the Gen3 first if they already know a few episodes of Chiara's life as a student, and invite them to tell.

"HER STORY AS A CHILD"

Chiara to the Gen girls:
Gen Mariapolis 1967 - Rocca di Papa, July 4, 1967

Then (Jesus) put inside me (...) a love for my classmates. Of course I was like you, it wasn't that I suddenly understood everything; (...) **I understood a little at a time.**

Once we were at school (...) during our Math class. My Math teacher was sick and another teacher came to replace him who didn't know us. I felt that I had to love my classmates as myself. And you know that when the teacher interrogates, he often takes the students' list and, according to the alphabet, first he goes through A, B, C, and calls those whose family name begins with A,

then those with B, C, and so on; they do that too in your classes, I think.

That time, the substitute teacher took the students' list and started from the bottom, from Z working up backwards. My surname starts with L: Lubich. And at a certain moment my classmate seated in front of me started moving her hands behind her, telling me: "I'm scared, I'm scared," because her family name started with M. There is: L, M, N, then going backwards she came first with M. Her name was fast approaching and she goes: "I'm scared, I'm scared!" **An idea came to me** and I told her: "Don't move, the professor does not know us. **When he calls you I will go**" The

M comes and he calls: "Mantovani", it was her, and zing! I stood up. All my classmates were dumbfounded and motionless, nobody objected, because by now they all loved me. I went to the blackboard and the professor said: "Solve this problem." **My legs were shaking**, I can't tell you how much, out of fear, but my love for my classmate was stronger.

I solved the problem, the teacher gave me one of the highest grades, and I went back happily to my desk. When I'm was about to sit down - the teacher had given the grade to my classmate, because he didn't know us - when I was about to sit down, I suddenly realized that after the "M" comes the L and that he would call me next, and who would go to the blackboard? But I did it out of love for God. **I sat down, feeling half dead**

at that thought ... when **riiiiing, the bell rang**. Everybody stood up and went out of the classroom happily. It had all gone well.

And none of my companions ever reported that incident. Of course when I got home I told my mom about it very happily. My mother, to tell the truth, scolded me a little, because she told me: "What if he caught you? But don't you understand that this is something you should not do?" I was a bit upset and said to myself, "Do you mean that one should not love?" Because I really didn't understand everything all at once. **Jesus was teaching me a little at a time**, he was bringing me onwards one step at a time.

In the meantime Jesus taught me another thing, he taught me that our parents represent the will of God."

CHIARA ANSWERS THE GEN 3 BOYS AND GIRLS

Istanbul (Turkey), February 25, 1995

At school I try to love my friends, but they don't do the same with one another. What do you suggest I should do?

"You have to love always. And so you have to love your friends all the time, without expecting anything from them. Then sooner or later, you will see that one of your friends will be won over. Then you will have Jesus in the midst with him and you will be strong. Your other friends will ask you, "What is it about you? Why are you so good? Why do you act like this? **Why are you so different** from the others? Why do you lend me your pen? Why do you let me use your eraser?" And you will explain, "It's because we see Jesus in everyone, because we want to love." So then you win over another friend, and you keep Jesus in the midst with this other friend too, and then **you will win over another....**

But if things don't work out and your friends are really deaf to the Ideal, if they don't understand anything at all, don't worry about it, because maybe you have to win over other people, other boys and girls outside of school and help them to become Gen 3.

Or **you might have to win over an adult**, maybe a father, a mother or a young lady. We don't know. We have to abandon ourselves to what God wants."

KNOWING HOW TO ACCEPT AND VALUE ALL OUR CLASSMATES

9 – 12 year olds

Activity

Fondgrams

Write “fondgrams”, that is, warm messages, to your classmates, especially those who are difficult to make friends with. The messages must have a positive content, an encouragement, a compliment.

13-17 year olds

Put yourself in the other person's shoes

Each one tries to think of a classmate who is excluded or marginalized at school. Write the answers to these questions on a sheet of paper:

- What is his emotional state?
- What are his thoughts, his feelings?
- What life experience has he gone or is going through so far?
- What does he expect from his classmates, from the whole class?
- What step could he / she take to make relationship with the other classmates easier?
- What are the benefits to the class if he / she were included in the group?

Try to think of two things you could do: one towards the excluded classmate and one towards the other classmates to facilitate his / her inclusion in the class.

After personal reflection, those who want can express their own reflections; others can give **feedbacks** such as additional advice or encouragement.

BULLYING AND CYBER BULLYING

Videoclip on cyberbullying

“I love Andrea – Short film on Cyberbullying”:

<https://youtu.be/QkS4CiCHZLA>

Short film produced by the students of class 1E of the G. Capuozzo Cultural Institute of Naples as part of the Bulli with a Click Project.

Dialogue

Has it ever happened to you?

What did you do?

How can we express a different thinking without breaking the relationship with our classmates?

How can we be forceful?

Assertiveness is the ability to express what we think and feel, straightforwardly but respectfully.

To train to communicate assertively, we can follow 3 steps:

1. Start communicating with objective terms (concerning facts) and not with emotionally-charged terms. For example to say: “You are offensive” does not help to build communication. It would be sound better to say: “The words you said yesterday to M. have offended him and made him upset ...”
2. Respectfully request what you expect from the other person. For example: “I wish you would speak to him with respect ...”.
3. Say how the whole class / group can benefit from that request. For example: “If M. feels accepted, he will be more helpful and cooperative in class ...”

We can train ourselves together in these three basic steps in communication. Through simulation, we can present situations that happened at school and put ourselves to the test, to practice assertive communication in situations like those. Let's explore these issues together, if possible with the help of an expert.

Focus attention on each of the possible characters: bully, victim and onlookers.





SPAIN

I've been bullied since I was ten, until I was sixteen.

They have been six very hard years for me. It all started when one of my classmates saw to it that the whole class would tease me and do me practical jokes. The thing then went on and from there began six years of dark solitude. Suddenly, without a valid reason, nobody wanted to be my friend anymore, nobody wanted to play with me. In short, everything that would make a twelve-year-old boy suffer happened to me.

During those years my relationship with God seemed to disappear. I did not understand why a God full of love could allow me to live through all this. In spite of everything, I continued to attend the Gen meetings and to go to Mass, but I did not live all this with conviction.

Then came a moment when everything changed. How did I manage to go from such a sad and negative situation to one in which I felt happy?

To get out of this situation the first step was to ask for help. It was very important for me to become aware that I could not make it on my own and so I asked my parents for help. It was a hard blow to them, because they understood the gravity of the situation and realized that during these six years I had not said anything to them

and they had not noticed what was happening! The first thing they did was look for someone who could help me overcome this situation, accompanying me in making a change within me.

We found a person, a psychologist, who helped me change my life completely. One important thing he told me is this: "Take control of yourself. Don't let yourself be influenced by what others thought of you."

It is not easy, but I assure you that if you manage to live without letting yourself be conditioned by what others think, a good part of your worries disappear.

This person then told me a phrase that will remain in my head forever. A quote from Gandhi: "First we suffer, but afterwards it is important to love, because suffering and love is, over time, the only way to live with fullness and dignity".

There is suffering, but it is important to pass from pain to love, and not to hatred or anger.

This whole process with the psychologist lasted seven months. Mine was not an illness from which one gets cured overnight: time is necessary and important.

The next step was my personal reconciliation with God.



This moment arrived during the World Youth Day. There I discovered something I had missed: forgiveness.

It is easy to say, but it is not at all easy to live it to the innermost. So, talking to a priest, I started an interior process: to forgive all those who had hurt me.

It was at that very moment that I really felt God for the first time in my life. I felt like He made every step easy for me, everything I was experiencing, plus He gave me the courage to take a few more steps ahead.

It was not easy to accept what I had lived through, but I knew that if I had lived such a strong and painful experience, there was still a "why" and a connection with God's will, because he had allowed it.

Why do I tell you my experience? For two reasons.

The first is to tell you that God loves us immensely, that so many things can happen in our lives, but each has a meaning, each is a part of His love for us.

In my case, everything was useful so that I can now help all those who are in a situation similar to the one I experienced.

The second is to tell you that we need to talk. It is the help you can give! Whether you are an observer or a victim, you must tell what you live through without fear. If we do not talk, we cannot act against bullying.

BRAZIL

My name is G. I am 16 years old and I am in the last year of high school.

A few days ago, some companions decided to have a surprise party for one of our friends during snack time, but they invited only some girls from the class.

I was not among the invited, and along with two other classmates, I went to the secretariat to print out a Physics assignment for the following lesson. At a certain point I realized I had forgotten in the classroom the evaluation sheet that was mandatory to submit the paper. So I ran to get the key to the classroom and took the sheet I needed. We were able to print out the assignment, but as I was returning to my classroom I heard shouting because the girls who were celebrating there were locked inside. I immediately realized I had locked them up! In my haste as I left the classroom I locked the door thinking they had the keys and imagining that they didn't want to be disturbed while they celebrated.

When the teacher arrived, they accused me of wanting to lock them up because I had not been invited to the party and made so many bad comments about me. They talked against me without giving me the opportunity to explain myself. I was sad and bitter. I would have liked to get angry and cut the relationship with them, but I remembered Jesus who, despite being insulted, abused and after receiving all sorts of offenses, loved everyone and also assumed a fault that was not his. So I decided to write a message apologizing to my classmates for closing the door and I opened my heart to them to restore our friendship. Today we are friends and this is because the greatest example was given to us by Jesus who died for us.



BURUNDI

In the 2nd quarter, there was a moment of strong tension among the students in my class.

I didn't know what to do to recompose unity because my classmates are young people who can't easily forgive and apologize.

I remembered that this "divide" was a face of Jesus Forsaken and that I had to embrace Him and love Him seriously, all the way.

I tried to talk and understand both sides of the two groups in conflict: the cause of the quarrel was actually a small thing, but due to a misunderstanding it was magnified.

So I suggested we find a moment to talk together; in this way, they apologized to each other. I was happy to have helped to restore peace in our class and everyone thanked me so much.



Songs

"La mia vita è vita"

(My life is life)

Daniele Ricci

https://youtu.be/iIFBwVG_Z88

