

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.

1.4 SCHOOL AND TEACHERS



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Objectives

- grow in respect for the teacher as a person and in the acceptance of his / her fragility
- develop a constructive attitude in the teacher-pupil relationship

Introductory activity

Materials: Two posters, markers or magazines, and scissors.

Directions: Draw a teacher in one poster and a student in another poster, or cut photos from the newspapers to compose the two posters. First, the group impersonates the pupils of a class and lists down on the teacher's poster the ideal characteristics of an ideal teacher. Then the group impersonates the teachers of a class and lists down the characteristics of an ideal pupil on the student's poster.

Dialogue and sharing: How many of your professors and how many of your classmates fully reflect this profile? What are the benefits of a class where everyone is accepted and knows how to accept others even with their frailties? What helps us to develop this respectful relationship between teachers and pupils?



"HER STORY AS A CHILD"

Chiara to the younger Gen 3:
Gen Mariapolis 1967 - Rocca di Papa, July 4, 1967

The philosophy teacher

"I was 15, 15-16 years old, and I was already starting Normal school to become a teacher. Jesus was then beginning to put in me the two things I had asked from him as a child: **light and love.**

Let me give you an example of light. I was at school and we had Philosophy professor who was an atheist: he didn't believe in God, he didn't believe in the Church. However he spoke in a very fascinating way, for which reason my classmates followed him like a demigod, as if he were some kind of hero! And he told so many wrong things against the Blessed Virgin Mary, against the Church. I felt deep inside that one thing he said was not true, and another thing he said was not true, so I kept raising my hand, saying: "No, professor, you are wrong, things are not like this." Because **Jesus had put inside me the light of truth.** And instead of doing like my companions

who were dragged by the professor's mistakes, Jesus made me understand that the professor was wrong.

For me this was a very serious danger because, thanks to God, since Jesus had taught me to study so much, I had a very good report card. But in philosophy I was in danger of getting a bad grade, because during all his lessons I always raised my hand and interrupted him, saying: "It's not true, it's not true!" because I wanted to save my classmates from error.

My classmates were agitated! There was one close to me, Valentina, we had then a black apron, and she would pull me by the apron - because I would stand up - so she would pull me by the apron, telling me: "I beg you, keep quiet, you will ruin your report card, then what will you do? If you don't have a high average you can't go on with your studies," because you have to have a high average to avoid paying the tuition fees. If you have a low average, you have to pay the tuition fee. And I was poor.



"Keep quiet, keep quiet!" And I said, **"How can I keep quiet? I can't, I can't!"** And up with my hand: "No, professor - I begged him - what you said is not true, it's not true!"

But I didn't even know how to explain what the truth was; **I understood that what he said was not true.** And he, however, was also quite fond of me, because it's not that I was interrupting him with disrespect. I was all red and I felt embarrassed every time I said: "It's not true, professor!" Then he would say, "Calm down now, calm down!" And he would make me sit down.

The end of the first quarter came. You can imagine how hard my heart beat! My classmates were all looking at me, and they said: "Now, what a disaster for Chiara - who was one of the top of the class! Who knows what grade she will get! Now she's in a mess. She won't be able to continue studying. We will no longer have her as a classmate next year." And I had a classmate who was right next to my desk, who wrote down everything the professor said, even the errors, she wrote them down, memorized them for later when she would be questioned, so she could tell

them all well, I mean the errors.

The principal came and handed us the report card. In high school grades are different from elementary school. The highest grade is ten, after that there is nine, eight... which are lower. So we opened the report card. I looked and I found I got ten in philosophy! The only ten of the whole class. Do you understand what it means to save the truth? And my classmate who had learned the mistakes by heart, to get a good grade, to be loved by the professor, got a grade of six.

So **I realized that I had to defend the truth,** and that I had to go on. And my classmate, Valentina, the one who used to pull me by the apron, began to help me, and at the second quarter she also raised her hand with me: we were already two. And the others looked on, admiring us, to see how it would end up, because they understood that God was helping us and not them. We continued to raise our hands.

One day the professor couldn't stand it anymore, because we always interrupted the lesson, because he was full of errors, and he said to me: "Please, Chiara, keep quiet now; maybe you can remain after class, let's have a little talk later." **But by now I had gained a whole bunch of friends,** who always went to church with me to pray for the conversion of the professor: "Hail Mary, Hail Mary, Hail Mary ...," we were already so many who wanted to convert the professor.

So I kept silent and remained after class. And I remember that I was seated at the desk and the professor sat on the bench. He spoke to me about St. Augustine, saying so many wrong things. My classmates were

waiting for me, many of them, outside the door, to see who would win - me or the professor. They left the door a bit open, and they would peep inside, and I could hear them saying: "Hail Mary full of grace, the Lord is with you ...," all of them saying the 'Hail Marys' for me to win. As you see, my friends were really smart.

Well, the professor spoke to me for an hour - and I was then just a bit older than you - to convince me that what he was saying was true, and I answered: "It is not true, it's not a true professor." But I don't remember what I told him, I know that in the end he said to me: "Listen, Chiara, don't tell anyone: you're right, but please, don't tell anyone."

So I kept silent. When I went out my classmates asked me: "How did it go, how did it go?" And I said: "Let's go to church to thank God", and that's all. We

went to church. I didn't say anything else until the professor died.

Some days later, I met the professor on the street. I was on a sidewalk and he was on the opposite sidewalk. When he saw me, he called, "Chiara!" So I went to him and he told me: "You know, I have so many sorrows in my family, I have so many sufferings, and so **I went to that church where you always go and I prayed to the God you love and I hope he helps me.**" That was the last I saw of him.

Then the war came, he was a naval captain, he died and I'm sure he went to Heaven.

Do you see how Jesus brought me the light of truth, through the prayer that I said as a child?"

CHIARA ANSWERS THE GEN 3 BOYS/GIRLS

Castelgandolfo, January 12, 1988

At school, it often happens that we have to contradict the professors because we know that what they say is not true. But we cannot explain that Jesus said something different because we are not allowed to speak about God. Up to what point must we go against the current?

Always. You must go against the current always. The professor might object saying, "You are preventing me from going ahead with the lesson. I cannot teach!" Try to say with much love, "Sir, I am sorry that I must say this, but I really cannot share your ideas." Say it with much love so that he does not feel offended and send you out of the classroom.

However, we can never be silent about the truth. We cannot be silent. We must always go against the current. Say what you have to say with much love. Say it with much love. And then he will see you so, I don't know, almost frightened, that he will not have the courage to harm you. But we cannot tolerate certain things. Your classmates also hear these things, because they are interested in what you say. "Oh, she says this and that. Well then, I wonder if what the professor says is true." By speaking up you will also help your classmates.

CHIARA ANSWERS THE GEN 3 BOYS/GIRLS

Teens for Unity Supercongress

Marino (Ice Palace), May 10, 1997

At school we are exposed to many different ideas. The teachers also influence us with their opinions and at times we are confused because we no longer understand where the truth really lies. We know that when you were our age, you also wanted to discover the truth. Were you able to do so? Can you tell us how you did it?

When I was your age I was anxiously searching for the truth. I searched for it above all in philosophy books, those you will study when you are a little older. I searched for truth.

At the same time, I learned from my family to be a good Christian, and so I would often go to receive Jesus in the Eucharist. And Jesus is truly present there, Jesus who said, "I am the way, the truth and the life". So I thought, "Why am I looking for the truth in philosophy when there is Someone who says, 'I am the truth'?" So I started allowing myself to be taught by Jesus, the Teacher. And the book he used was the Gospel. He taught me how to live the Gospel which completely transformed my life. So the fruits we now see are not mine alone, but are of many people who live in this way. Not only this but, living in this way, all the other sciences - like theology, philosophy, sociology, psychology - were enlightened by the light of God, by the light of Jesus, the Truth.

1 Jn 14:6

Songs

Daniele Ricci

"Il metodo del primo banco"

<https://youtu.be/cdKk47fTWkY>

"Il voto più alto"

<https://youtu.be/XN7ogyvrRe0>



SPAIN

In junior high school I had a technical drawing teacher who normally would not show any affection towards the students and, despite the attempts of the whole class, it was not easy to receive a smile from her.

On the day of the final exam, which we started late even if we needed a long time to complete it, I was unable to submit my work on time. As soon as I finished, I ran to give it to her, but she got very angry with me and treated me really hard: she took my work, tore it up and threw it in the trash.

I was shocked, helpless: I felt deeply wounded. I was sad, I felt so much anger and hatred towards her.

The first reaction I had coming to school the next day was to keep this feeling of hatred, to make fun of her and not talk to her anymore.

But then before God I felt that I wanted to overcome hatred with love, I decided to go to her and apologize. Taking this step was very difficult for me, I was so torn up because it seemed absurd to me to apologize to someone who had treated me in such a humiliating way.

I apologized and at that moment I felt that everything inside me was set free, and I felt great joy. To my surprise,





the teacher started crying and asked the whole class for forgiveness for behaving so badly the day before.

From that moment on her way of acting with all of us has changed radically.

BURUNDI

One day a classmate of mine forgot to put her name on the exam paper. The teacher gave her a zero mark, so she started crying. I consoled her and after a while she calmed down; I felt however that I had to do something more for her. So I went to our teacher and asked him to forgive her and give her the grade she would have got had she put the name on the test paper. The teacher did not answer me, but later this classmate came to tell me that the teacher had reconsidered his decision and had given her the grade that her test paper deserved. My joy and hers was truly great.

