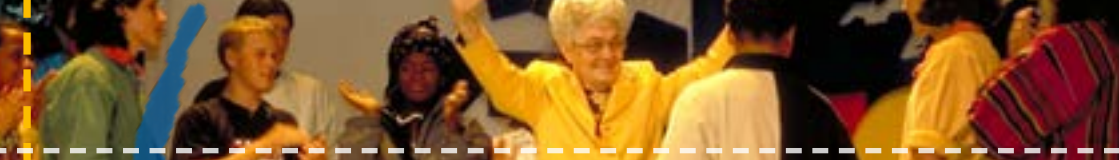


1920 **100** years 2020

Chiara



# CHIARA IN HER CITY

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.

**12 WHO ARE LIVING IN MY CITY?**

# 12 WHO ARE LIVING IN MY CITY?



## Objectives

- Identify people who have contributed to improving the life of the city (or nation) as an inspiration to do the same (Chiara said: "We are few, very young, poor, but God is with us!")
- Identify the people most in need of our love and take action with the support of the community.

## Introductory activity

Who are the significant people who have lived for your city/ country and have influenced history? Why? What did they do?

Prepare cards with names or photographs of well-known personalities (contemporary or historical): sportsmen, politicians, religious, artists ...) close to the cultural context of the young people, who have lived or are living for the good of others.

Write in other cards sentences or facts done by these people.

Break up into teams and, by turns, draw out a card with a sentence, consult with your team and match it with the corresponding personality. If the team did not guess right, the other team tries to answer. Every correct answer is a point. The player with the most number of points wins.

Anyone who knows an additional positive detail about that personality concerned accumulates more points for his team.

**Note:** Older Gen 3 could prepare this game for the younger ones. Playing by teams with scores is particularly suitable for 9-12 year olds. With the older ones, give more space to dialogue, to reflection on the influence brought forth by these models.



*Silvana Veronesi,*

*Castel Gandolfo, June 16, 1990*

(...)We had read in the Gospel that at the end of our life, Jesus will say: **"Come with me in my house,** because when I was hungry, you gave me food, when I was sick, you came to visit me; everyone abandoned me but you stayed with me."

Then we will say to Jesus: "But Jesus, I never met you on the street, I never visited you."

And Jesus will reply: "You didn't see me, but I was there in that little boy who didn't have any friends, **in that poor man who came** to your house, and you helped **me,** you played with me. So now I say to you: 'Come with me forever, in heaven.'"

(...) And so we went out to look for the poor in the city of Trent so that we could love Jesus in them. Whenever we

met the poor, we asked for their address. "Where do you live?", so we could visit them. **And we couldn't wait for them to tell us what they needed so we could try to find it for them.**

One day, **a mother with many children** didn't have any light in her house because she didn't have the money to pay the electricity bill. It was during winter and so it was hard to live without light. So we put together the little money we had, even what we had to buy food, and we brought it to her.

Another time, **a little boy didn't have a coat**, not even a pair of gloves his hands were turning purple from the cold. One of us had just received a nice pair of gloves, with a warm lining inside. And so as soon as she saw the gloves, she said: "Jesus doesn't have gloves; I'm going to give these to Him." And so the boy was able to keep his hands warm.

Another time, a poor man whom Chiara had met some time before... because every day, also with her

sisters at home, she used to take something from her lunch a fruit or a slice of bread put it aside and then bring it to him.

But one day this poor man didn't have enough, understand, the bread and fruit that Chiara brought him wasn't enough. And so he said to her, **"Listen young lady, do you have a jacket for me?** If only you could find one for me." Chiara didn't have a jacket, nor did we because we were all girls.

So we **ran to Jesus** and we asked Him: "Give us a man's jacket for you in that poor man, because we don't have one."

After a while we went out and we met a lady. This lady said to Chiara but she didn't know anything she said: "Maybe you need a man's jacket for one of your poor people, because I know that you have many." "Yes, of course." Chiara took the jacket and we ran to give it to that poor man (...)

Chiara



Taken from:  
**"IT WAS WARTIME"**  
**SILVANA VERONESI**

Città Nuova 2005 pp 38-40

*Dori and Silvana were among the first companions of Chiara (they were 17 and 15 years old then). Here they narrate how they lived for the needy.*

**Dori:** "I always felt very bad every time we went to visit Carmelina, because it seemed that everything annoyed her, that she wasn't even happy that we were putting things in order in her home, or that we

scrubbed the floors. We no longer knew what to do for her, she always answered us with a grumble and almost never looked at us as if we made her angry. But, well, ... we would sing her a few more songs and act as if she were smiling at us ... Today she opened up her soul, she cried a lot, she told us that she had lost her children, that she no longer wore her wedding ring, because it made no sense to anyone anyway.

When we started going to her she was so happy for the help, but she suffered very much, because we were there instead of her children. But today enough with all this, she told us, and that **we had won her over with our love**, that we were no longer strangers and that she found her daughters again in us “.

**Silvana:** “You know Dori, I understood why you told me that going to the poor is the most beautiful thing. Some days ago a poor man came to my house, up in the country. He asked me if I had a pair of shoes for him. I found myself uneasy because I didn’t have them, but I remembered that time when Chiara, Graziella and perhaps you too, had prayed in the small church of St Claire, the one near to the hospital: for “a pair of shoes size 12, for You, Jesus, who asked them from us in that poor man just now and we didn’t have them...”. That time, after you walked just a few steps, Duccia came to meet you on her bicycle and offered you a pair of men’s shoes size 12, which was the hard part!

So **I told the poor man right away to come back the next day** because I would certainly have looked for them. As soon as the door was closed, my cousin and I asked together God the Father, in

the name of Jesus, a pair of shoes for the poor man.

You know that in the evening after dinner, my aunt, who is one of those people who never gave anything away, because nothing was a surplus to them, since everything can always be useful, this time told me she had a pair of shoes of her son, which were still good, but that he didn’t need them ... I looked at her, speechless: I would have expected it from everyone except her! I grabbed the shoes right away, ran up the stairs and **cleaned and polished them with care in my room**: they were really beautiful!

The next day, the poor man came, punctually at noon, and I ran to meet him, but **my heart was beating**: would the shoes fit? I didn’t ask him what his size was ... but we had prayed together to the Heavenly Father and he does know all our needs ... but ...

I bent down to put them on his feet, my hands were shaking ... Yes, they do fit. Then he stood up, and said: “Miss, it seems you had them tailor-made just for me!”

**I was extra-happy, more than him** who looked at his polished shoes with satisfaction, because I had experienced myself that Jesus listens to us. He himself had given me those shoes and I had slipped them into his feet ... “.



## Activities

### Gioco

To be done preferably outdoors or in a large space

*Remembering the boxes filled with food and medicine that piled up in the corridor of Chiara’s house and which she distributed to the poor with the first focolarine, the Gen3 have to take the cardboard boxes, get into them and pass them to others as quickly as possible to get to the finish line first.*

#### Material:

A cardboard box for each player (big enough to put both feet inside)

#### Procedure:

Form the teams.

Draw a start line and a finish line.

The first player stands in front of the start line and the other players are behind, each holding his or her own box.

At the “go” signal, the first player puts down his or her box on the ground and gets into it. The second player passes on his/her box to the first player.

The first player puts it in front of him/her, gets out of his own box and enters the second box. The second player enters the box left by the first player, and so on, with the whole team, until all the players on the team have passed the finish line.

The box of the last player in the game must always reach the first player so that he/she can go ahead.

It is not allowed to put one foot out of the boxes. If that happens, the team has to start from the beginning.



## SLOVAKIA

We meet with the small Gen3 every month and in these meetings we also do workshops where we try to use our talents for others.

At the beginning of the year we decide together what to do and whom to help. This year we thought of those who are suffering in Africa. This idea helped us to go out to the city among the people, sell our products, tell them who we are and why we do all this.

On several occasions, such as community meetings and different Christmas bazaars, we offered the typical biscuits we baked. Together with the Gen 4 we distributed the small statues of Baby Jesus and other objects we have made.

To our delight, we were able to collect about 800 Euros which we immediately sent to Burundi.

At that point we thought of contacting the Gen 3 of that place and asked them to connect via Skype so we could talk. The Slovakia-Burundi meeting was a great joy for everyone: it was great to be able to exchange experiences and get to know each other through songs and dances. The greatest gift was to discover that with our contribution, they managed to travel and bring the life of the Ideal to many young people who live far away and were not able to join the Mariapolis.

This was a boost for us Gen3 of Slovakia. We told each other that we can do the same! We then decided to go and visit the Gen 3 who cannot come to the meetings in the capital, and meet the boys and girls who live in the most distant villages.



## PORTUGAL

In my city, I try to color the areas around me that I identify as the most gray.

A few years ago I received a request from a group looking for volunteers to help distribute food baskets to people in need. Without thinking twice I responded to the request and, since then, every month I go to help the ladies in charge of the activity.

For me, the effort is very rewarding and I feel it is time well spent: I have never lost the desire to go and help out. This experience gives me the opportunity to get my friends involved in my way of life. From time to time I ask a classmate if he wants to help me, and generally everyone is deeply touched and happy about the experience.

I also have the opportunity to meet the people who are the recipients of the baskets and I listen deeply to their stories, which are

often very difficult (about illness, widowhood, unemployment ...). Their stories and their testimonies have greatly marked my way of seeing the world and every "thank you" I receive fills my heart with joy.

When I'm on vacation I also help to unload trucks that arrive loaded with food.

This is the way I have found to help support the needy people in my city.

## ARGENTINA

Last year there were big floods in the city next to ours and many families lost everything they had. So my grandmother and I decided to collect food and clothing for them. We also asked our neighbors to contribute.

We collected a lot of things and brought them to the Cathedral where they were distributed. I was very happy to have been able to do something for others.



## Points for deepening

Let's go back to the map of our city and the gray areas we have identified.

**What can we do** concretely in our city to uplift Jesus Forsaken in the least, in the poor, in those who suffer, in those who are hungry?

Let us think together, as a group, of **"where the city needs us"** and take action, also getting others involved.

Remember the common commitment to reach the **"Zero Hunger"** goal.

Even on a personal level, let us think of a person we know who is alone and poor, and love him or her concretely. Let us talk about it together to understand what can be done for him / her.

**In a personal "notebook"** we can write down our ideas and how much we act on them from time to time.

## Private talk with Jesus

Let us go to church and **pray together** for all the needs of the poor of our city and the world.

Let us propose the **TIME OUT** as a daily "appointment" for those who suffer because of hunger, war and many other evils.

We can write a prayer together and find a way to remind each other of this daily appointment.

