

St. Anthony of Padua R.C. Church

Buffalo, New York

TRADITIONALLY SPEAKING by S. Casarotto, cs July 27, 2008

CHIARA LUBICH died in March 2008 in Italy where she was born. She led the Focolare Movement she founded for more than 60 years. Lubich was one of the most representative figures of inter-religious and intercultural dialogue. Endowed with a deep spirituality, she addressed in St. Peter's Square the participants in the World Youth Day 2000. Card. Tarcisio Ber-tone said that Lubich offered "a silent and effective service, always in harmony with the teachings of the Church". Today, the Focolare Movement is present in 182 countries and has about 150,000 internal members and more than 2 million adherents, including about 50,000 belonging to more than 350 different Churches and ecclesial communities, over 30,000 of various non-Christian religions, and 70,000 friends of non-religious beliefs. The fortnightly magazine "New City" is published in 38 countries and 22 languages. Their publishing house prints 85 titles per year in Italy, and over 215 foreign editions

THE EUCHARIST is the "Blessed Sacrament" of nourishment for the soul. It is also a sacrament of forgiveness for venial sins and a remedy for human fragility. In the older Latin rite, before receiving Communion, the priest and the faithful repeat the prayer of the Roman official: "*Lord, I am not worthy that You come under my roof, but please say a word and my soul shall be healed.*" In the Byzantine liturgy, before distributing Holy Communion, the priest announces: "*Holy Things for holy people!*" In a series of sermons to his newly baptized (among whom there might have been St. Augustine), commenting on the Lord's Prayer, St. Ambrose applies the words "Give us each day our daily bread" to the Eucharist. He wrote:

"If we ask the Father a daily bread, why do we receive It [the Eucharist] once a year? You must receive each day what you need every day!. Live in such a way that you may deserve to receive It every day. If you don't live in a manner worthy of the Lord every day, you are not worthy of Him not even once a year! You hear that every time the divine sacrifice is being offered, we announce the Death of the Lord, the Resurrection of the Lord, and the Ascension of the Lord... and then you don't receive every day this Bread of Life? Because each day I am a sinner, I always need the medicine."

REACTIONS by U.S. Catholics to the recent visit of the Pope:

- 45% - They now plan to attend religious services;
- 41% - They now plan to vote in the November elections;
- 39% - They now plan on becoming more active in the community;
- 38% - They now plan on becoming more active in the Church;
- 33% - They now plan to contribute money to the Church.

The article from which these figures are taken (Columbia, June 2008) points out that they mark a great improvement compared to the attitudes immediately prior to the Pope's visit. Obviously, there is a long way to go and to be a Catholic means more than saying "Viva il Papa!"