

Thank you for your attention.

**"The Second Vatican Council and the Charism of Unity of Chiara Lubich"
Florence, 11th-12th March 2022
Faculty of Theology of Central Italy
Salone dei Cinquecento – Palazzo Vecchio**

The conference will explore the novelty that the Second Vatican Council continues to represent for the universal Church, promoting the participation of the laity in the life and mission of the Church, a journey in which the charism of the Focolare, centered on fraternity is also engaged.

Speakers will include: **Erio Castellucci**, Bishop of Modena-Nonantola, Vice-President of the Italian Episcopal Conference; **Brendan Leahy**, Bishop of Limerick – Ireland; **Severino Dianich**, Theological Faculty of Central Italy; **Piero Coda**, Sophia University Institute; **Angelo Maffeis** (Theological Faculty of Northern Italy); Stefan **Tobler** ("Lucian Blaga" University Sibiu – Romania). Margaret Karram, President of the Focolare Movement, will be also present.

The program will be streamed in Italian and English

"The beginning of a new beginning": was the definition of the extraordinary novelty of the Second Vatican Council, which catapulted the Church into an intense and unprecedented dialogue with contemporary culture, moving towards a greater rapprochement with secular society; accelerating the ecumenical journey and contacts with the great religions of our time; it enhanced the role of the laity and the contribution of Christians to the fight against social inequalities, violence and wars between peoples. All of these are topics of extraordinary relevance, especially at this time. The charism of unity of Chiara Lubich, founder of the Focolare Movement (which has over two million members throughout the world), is also situated in that time of the Council.

"Even today", explains Prof. Vincenzo Di Pilato (Apulian Theological University), "while everything seems to collapse again under the blows of a short-sighted and forgetful policy, there is no other certainty left in our hands but the Word of Life, the only thing capable of regenerating the Church. And it is on this witness that the Church can become for the whole world the authoritative Word of peace and unity". Since the dawn of the Focolare, "Unity" is also the charismatic core of Chiara Lubich's spirituality, which is derived from the Gospel.

The conference aims to highlight the consonances between the path traced by Lubich and the great themes addressed by the work of the Second Vatican Council. It will also examine how the message of the Council was grafted into the experience born of the charism of unity, but, at the same time, how the ecclesial flowering of the charism was possible precisely thanks to the Council.

Over twenty scholars from various European countries will develop the link between the charism of unity and two of the four constitutions issued by the Second Vatican Council, the *Lumen Gentium* and the *Dei Verbum*. The conference consists of three sessions: A Council and a charism; The Word becomes Church; The Church becomes Word.

The event, which was originally organized for the occasion of the centenary of Chiara Lubich (1920-2020) and then postponed due to the pandemic, came from a collaboration between the Chiara Lubich Center and the Sophia University Institute of Loppiano (Florence), the international little town of the Focolare. The event is sponsored by the Municipality of Florence and includes the participation of the Theological Faculty of Central Italy, the Italian Theological Association, the Paul VI Institute, the International Student Center "Giorgio La Pira", the Focolare Movement, the Abbà School and the Città Nuova Publishing House.

TECHNICAL NOTES FOR STREAMING:

11 March 2022 - Faculty of Theology Central Italy - 15.00- 19.30

12 March 2022 - Salone dei Cinquecento - Palazzo Vecchio - from 9.00 to 13.00 and from 15.00 to 18.00

You can follow the conference in Italian and English at live.focolare.org/Firenze2022

Stefania Tanesini - (+39) 338 5658244