

## Blessed Chiara Luce Badano: A Legacy of Love

Chiara Luce Badano was born in 1971 in Sassetto, Italy to Ruggero and Teresa Badano (RCL Benziger, 2017). As she grew her love for God and life were evident in all that she did. She loved tennis, swimming and mountain climbing and had lots of friends (Real Life Catholic, 2013). From the outside she looked like an average teen. She wasn't moving mountains but she was undeniably extraordinary in the small everyday actions.

Even in her youth *"Chiara seemed aware of the needs of others. She would sort through her toys to give some to poor children, and she would never give away just the old or broken ones. She invited less-fortunate people into the family's home for holidays and visited the elderly at a retirement center. When other children were sick and confined to bed, Chiara visited them. She loved the stories of the Gospel and loved to attend Mass..... But when asked, she said she did not try to bring Jesus to her friends with words. She tried to bring Jesus to them with her example and how she lived her life."* (RCL Benziger, 2017)

When Chiara was only 17 years old she was diagnosed with an aggressive form of bone cancer and it became apparent that her bright life would be a short one. This, however, did not dampen her glow. She in fact became a brighter beacon, with her suffering bringing her closer to Christ. (RCL Benziger, 2017) *"Despite her pain she refused morphine so that she could remain lucid and offer all her suffering up to Jesus. Paralyzed in her bed, she kept loving."* (Bodenschatz)

Loving others seems to be Chiara's legacy: she encouraged her parents to go out to dinner together, trying to prepare them for life after her death (Bodenschatz), she left her entire savings to a friend who wanted to be a missionary in Africa (RCL Benziger, 2017), while in the hospital and despite extreme pain she took walks with a depressed, drug-dependent girl...when those around her encouraged her to rest she said, *"I'll have time to rest later...I have nothing left, but I still have my heart, and with that I can always love."* (Real Life Catholic, 2013).

She knew that how she loved others here on Earth reflected the love of God and brought others to Christ. She loved her friends and family, she loved the poor and vulnerable, she loved all those who she encountered in her daily life with her Christ-like spirit. She lived that legacy of love that until she succumbed to cancer on October 7<sup>th</sup> of 1990. Even in death her spirit glowed bright, reminding her family that she was going to be with Jesus expressing this joy even in her final words, *"Goodbye. Be happy because I'm happy."* (Real Life Catholic, 2013) It was this legacy of love that led her local bishop declaring her a "Servant of God" soon after her death and for Pope Benedict XVI to declare her the first "Blessed" member of her generation on September 25<sup>th</sup> of 2010. (Real Life Catholic, 2013)

Blessed Chiara Luce Badano, pray for us!

## Works Cited

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