

2016

COMMUNION AND LIBERATION INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE

# TRACES

7

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LITTERAE COMMUNIONIS

 MEETING 2016

## YOU ARE A GOOD FOR ME

What if the *other* could be a great possibility for my life? This is what the upcoming Meeting for the Friendship Among Peoples is betting on.

# HERE, WHERE WE ARE

**H**ow do we experience mercy? Above all, “when have we discovered we need mercy to live?” This question is the theme of the summer vacation for CL communities. It is a pressing question, at the end of such an intense year, marked by terrible events and high tension (the terrorist attacks in Paris, Brussels, and now Istanbul, the onslaught of refugees, the many fraught electoral battles, the worsening economic and political crisis after the Brexit referendum...), but at the same time an extraordinary year because the Pope has proposed imprinting it with the seal of the one fact that can embrace all this anguish: mercy. A fact capable of judging everything, filling every circumstance, begging for our wounded humanity, giving it “a heart that... is not old and patched, but new and re-created,” as the Pope said during his June 2<sup>nd</sup> meditation at his retreat for priests, a heart regenerated by a “second creation [...] even more wondrous than the first.” Francis reminds us of this continually in a thousand ways: mercy creates anew, that is, it causes something new to be born. *It changes us*. But how and when?

Answering this question is crucial. Or better, *becoming aware of it* is crucial, because there is only one road for answering a question like this without getting lost in generic, abstract discourse: experience. This experience is becoming aware, discovering the moments in which we realize we need mercy to live, and not only in extraordinary circumstances, but in normal, daily life, at home, at work, in our studies, in our relationships. Here, in daily life, is where we are, not elsewhere. We need help here, in daily life. Either the newness emerges in our daily life, or it simply does not exist.

**At one of these vacations**, having listened to a series of testimonies about very “daily” happenings (getting angry at a friend, but finding it is “an opportunity for understanding myself better”; a marriage in crisis, which however provides a glimpse of “the possibility that God is asking me for everything”; a difficulty at work that changes the person’s outlook, so that “maybe I won’t leave my daughters any money, but I will leave them what counts most in life”; and similar things), Fr. Julián Carrón, the leader of CL, observed, “The difference that an Other introduces as a help is to look at reality in a true way, deep down. It is not that I look at it the way I want, and then someone just shows me mercy in helping me live it. Christianity introduces a new gaze.” Again, “It is not a matter of continuing to see reality like everyone else and then enduring it, but of a change of judgment: this is what Christ introduced.” This is how mercy acts.

**It is the “new heart, created anew” of which the Pope spoke.** Not a “supplement of goodness” or a greater capacity to endure: a *different gaze*, a *change of judgment*. This different gaze is what enables us to glimpse in our relationship with others (anyone, an immigrant, a colleague, a friend, or a stranger) the aspect of these relationships that is truest and at the same time too often forgotten: relationship serves to help me understand myself, to help me grow in my humanity. “You are a good for me,” is the title of the upcoming Meeting of Rimini. This statement is also seen in the pages of this issue, beginning with those dedicated to Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

We propose the articles here first of all as a help in reflecting on the past year, to discover the traces of this different gaze *in us*, if and when it happened to us. We also propose these articles as an instrument for the coming weeks, so that the “free time” of summer can be “a beautiful opportunity to discover episodes of this kind,” as Carrón recently wished for us, and “to verify even more whether the method of God truly works,” here where we are, in our daily lives. ■

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**Editorial Office:**

Via Porpora, 127 - 20131 Milano  
Tel. ++39(02)28174400  
Fax ++39(02)28174401

E-mail: traces@traces-cl.com  
Internet: www.tracesonline.org

**Editor (direttore responsabile):**

Davide Perillo

**Vice-editor:**

Paola Bergamini

**Editorial Assistant:**

Anna Leonardi

**From New York, NY:**

Holly Peterson

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Davide Cestari, Lucia Crimi

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e Liberazione for the texts  
by Luigi Giussani and Julián Carrón

CLOSE UP

**ANOTHER GOOD**



Today, in our society the “other” is perceived as a threat. This year’s **Rimini Meeting (August 19<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>)** will be dedicated to the possibility that the “other” might be a hope and necessity for us. We begin this journey with some people who have bet on this challenging hypothesis.



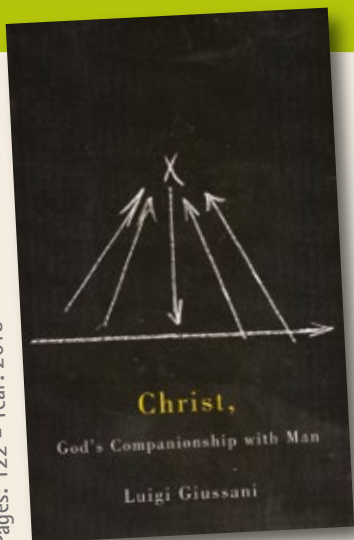
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**LUIGI GIUSSANI**

This volume is a selection of the most significant writings by Monsignor Luigi Giussani (1922-2005), founder of the Italian Catholic lay movement Communion and Liberation, which is practised in eighty countries around the world.

Presented by Julián Carrón, Giussani's successor as head of Communion and Liberation, *Christ, God's Companionship with Man* is the most succinct introduction to the breadth of Giussani's thought, including


memorable passages from works such as *At the Origin of the Christian Claim*, *The Journey to Truth is an Experience*, *Why the Church?*, *Generating Traces in the History of the World*, and *Is It Possible to Live This Way?* Many speak of Giussani as a friendly presence, a man who believed that it was possible to live in faith every day and in any circumstance. As a writer and religious scholar who was deeply devoted to his work, Giussani's teachings and reflections have come to generate worldwide recognition and support.



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**MCGILL-QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY PRESS**

## DINNER AT MY SISTER'S WITH NOSTALGIA FOR JESUS

 My sister, who is gay, was able to have a baby, with the implantation of a frozen embryo. I help her when I can since she has no one to help her because her partner did not share her choice to have a baby. Last month, after going to pick up the baby at her daycare, I stayed for dinner with them. As we began to eat, my sister asked me, "Could we do a little bit of catechism?" I answered, "What do you mean?" And she said, "I don't know anything. I want to be able to teach my daughter something that is good." "What do you want to know?" She replied, "Let's start with this: what difference is there among Father, Son and Holy Spirit?" "Oh, so we start with something simple!" After I explained a few things, I said, "Let's start with the Son." In my purse, I just happened to have the booklet from last year's Exercises. I read to her Fr. Giusani's lesson in which Andrew returns home to his wife... My sister was crying, and she cried so much, that I cried, too. I said to her, "It's nostalgia for Jesus." She asked, "When can we continue reading?" The following times, we read on ahead, also reading passages from the Gospel, because she has no idea about these things at all. Today she decided to go to confession, then we will participate in the Jubilee by entering through a Holy Door.

**Signed letter**

## A PROBLEM TO SOLVE OR SOMETHING MORE?

 Until recently, although I had been struck by the refugee situation, I had never really paid too much attention. The only thing that left me




uneasy was that some friends from Fr-ibourg did their charitable work with refugees. So when in February, there was an initiative at the university to do volunteer work teaching French to the many "asylum seekers" in the canton, I signed up to help. Before starting, the person responsible for the project wrote to me asking if I might be willing to give a French language test to the immigrants to determine their level of proficiency. On the day of the test, we were in a large amphitheater: there were so many refugees, of different ages and nationalities (especially Ethiopians, Eritreans, and Syrians). While the interpreters at the microphone translated into various languages the welcome message, the general instructions, and the specifics about the test, I began to look at them one by one and at a certain point, unexpected tears rolled down my cheeks. I was crying so much and I tried to contain myself. That evening at home, I told my husband about the day, a little ashamed of myself, but with the clear intent of understanding the nature of my emotions. I was disconcerted by the fact that, looking upon them, I did not perceive any distance between the refugees and me. It seemed evident to

me that the people I had before me were loved by Him who has also loved me. Since February, many marvelous things have happened with my immigrant students and friends. For example, on Saturday I went to the engagement party of an Afghani student of mine. This example and my French classes left me unsettled and each time I would read an article about them, I wanted to scream: "But all of these people cannot be reduced only to a problem to be solved by Europe! There is something more, there is an enormous provocation for everyone's heart!" This experience has been fundamental for helping me to live the problems of everyday life. Because if it is so evident that these people are for me, how can the rest of reality not be for me as well? This question keeps me company and is a point of truth from which to begin again.

**Letizia, Neuchâtel (Switzerland)**

## A ROTATION IN THE EMERGENCY ROOM

 Two weeks of rotation in the emergency room are done, and I will have my degree in medicine within this academic year. The emergency room is a special place, time spent waiting with nothing much to do and then, a few hours later, all hell breaks loose. There are always too many interns, and in the frenzy of the routine work, we are of little use to some of the doctors. On some days, I return home happy but on other days, not at all happy, and rather discouraged for having felt useless. Wednesday was one of those days. At the end of the day, the idea of having to return made me want to run away. I thought





## DOING CHARITABLE WORK

### A NEW "THERAPY" TO UNDERSTAND

**T**hrough the charitable work at the Food Bank, I met the daughter of a very troubled family, and she has lots of problems, too. For a year, when I would enter their home, she wouldn't come out of her room even to say hello. Then, in December, she accepted an invitation to a New Year's Eve dinner and from that point on, she became incredibly attached to me and to my friends I introduced her to. One morning, I received a call from the psychiatrist and the nurse who were caring for her. They wanted to understand what was happening to her. They saw how changed she was, above all that she seemed happy; she had begun to dress in a normal way. They wanted to know from me the reason why. I felt like smiling because I didn't know either. I tried to explain to them that from the start of the new year, the girl had decided to take risks with these new friends and that, in time, she has come to see that someone is interested in her, cares about her deeply. We don't go to discos or to parties, but to do catechism (School of Community). So, talking with them, I became aware of the miracle that was happening and of the fact that I myself don't realize the power of the novelty that the encounter with Christ has. They told me that she was so happy about the Exercises, that they would help pay the fee for the summer vacation because they see that it is good for her. So, their underlying question was so that they could see me to understand who we are, what's underneath it all. In the end, it's all very simple: there's nothing underneath, except for Christ present, who really and truly works.



**Signed letter**

that I could take a day off, but the next morning I decided to go in anyway. On my moped, I asked the Lord that He show Himself and that I might be of help to those I would meet. I asked, "If I can't cure them, at least that I might be able to take care of them in some way." That shift was wonderful. I was useful on numerous occasions; I sutured someone for the first time—a very lucid 96-year-old gentleman who had fallen at home. He was accompanied by his equally elderly wife. It gave me such a feeling of immense tenderness and I took it to heart. Between one check on him and another, I went into the waiting room to reassure her. At her husband's discharge, this lady said

to me, "Thank you, because you have done so much for us! I am moved by the way you treated us." A gentleman arrived with serious breathing difficulties. We stabilized him and kept him under observation. Toward the end of my shift, I went to take his vital signs, and taking advantage of a quiet moment, I asked him how he was feeling. He began to talk in a calm, very proper manner, about himself, his work, of a life of retirement divided by the pain of the recent loss of his wife and the joys of watching his grandchildren grow and being with his children. I don't know how, but we found ourselves talking about faith, about Pope Francis. "You see, doctor, as a

good Emiliano, I've been a rascal, but I've always been a man of faith and a Catholic. But this pope, this pope is special, we must follow him." A little later his son arrived. I finished writing in his chart, I shook his hand and said goodbye and was about to leave. My patient turned to his son and said, "This doctor has a special kindness." He replied, "You can see that, Dad, you can tell by her eyes." While I walked down the corridor toward the exit, I thought about what these people could possibly have seen, but also how true it is that to be able to sustain the gaze of the other, I need, above all, that my life be sustained by Christ.

**Veronica, Genoa (Italy)**

# **J** CLOSE UP





**"YOU ARE A GOOD FOR ME"** August 19<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>



**"The other" is what is "outside" of us. And today, anything "other" is perceived as a threat. This year's Meeting will be dedicated to a possibility that upends all of that: that the "other" might be a hope and necessity for me and for everyone.**

**We begin this journey with Fr. Brian Kolodiejchiuk, the postulator of Mother Teresa's cause for canonization, to whom a large exhibit will be dedicated, and with two people who have bet on this challenging hypothesis, through their significant contributions to the week in Rimini.**

BY PAOLA BERGAMINI

# **ANOTHER GOOD**



The 2016 Meeting of Friendship Among Peoples will open its doors in Rimini on August 19<sup>th</sup> with an address from the **Italian President Sergio Mattarella** and will close on the 25<sup>th</sup> with an event celebrating Mother Teresa (her canonization is scheduled to take place in Rome on September 4<sup>th</sup>). In between, there will be over one hundred presentations, eight performances, seven main exhibits, and much else that will be brought to life under the theme of this 37<sup>th</sup> edition of the Meeting: “You are a good for me.”

This year’s theme seeks to highlight how human nature points to the unavoidable necessity of relationships, of ongoing encounters as the first thing we need in order to discover the truth about ourselves and about the world. Men and women need others to share their desires, plans, difficulties, sacrifices, fears, and pain—to share the reason for their existence, their motivation for forming communities. Through its various presentations and exhibits, the Meeting will attempt to offer responses to the challenges posed by this theme. Below, we offer a brief preview of the events in Rimini.

Among the many international panel presentations that will focus on today’s urgent issues are one with the **Apostolic Vicar of Northern Arabia, Bishop Camillo Ballin**, entitled “Living as Christians”; one with Fr. Federico Trincherro, a Carmelite missionary who works in Bangui, Central African Republic; another with Daniele Mancini, the Italian Ambassador to the Holy See; and then others titled: “The Challenge of Islam in Europe,” with **Wael Farouq** and Aziz Hasanovic, Croatia’s Grand Mufti; “A Society Building Peace. The Example of Tunisia,” with **Mohamed Fadhel Mahfoudh**, winner of the **Nobel Peace Prize 2015**, President of the Tunisian Order of Lawyers and with **Fadhel Moussa**, University Professor, Former Dean of the Faculty of Juridical Sciences and Member of the National

Constituent Assembly; and “Quo Vadis Europa?”, a presentation by **Professor Joseph Weiler**, President of the European University Institution.

There will be many presentations that feature stories of integration and forgiveness, for example one by oncologist Renzo Canetta and another by the CEO of the Los Angeles Habilitation House, **Guido Piccarollo**. **Mary O’Callaghan and Orlando Carter Snead** from Notre Dame University, and Jean Vanier, Founder of L’Arche, will present “Disability as a Resource.” The Argentinian priest **José Maria “Pepe” di Paola**, one of the “slum priests” and coordinator of the bishops’ commission to fight substance abuse, will bring his witness to the Meeting. Guests from Brazil include Valdeci Antônio Ferreira, general manager of the FBAC (Brazilian Fellowship of Assistance for Prisoners), Luiz Carlos Resende e Santos, Chief Judge of Criminal Enforcement from Minas Gerais, Brazil, and former inmate Daniel Luiz da Silva, whose presentation is entitled, “You Don’t Run Away from Love.”

The performances scheduled to take place include a reading of “The Night of the Unnamed,” by actor Franco Branciaroli and, for the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of William Shakespeare, the debut of “**Thomas More**,” a show dedicated to the only work of the Bard with a surviving manuscript. Of the main exhibits, there is one about **Mother Teresa**, organized by those who postulated her cause for canonization; one on American saints entitled “**American Dream**”; and one about ancient Georgia, put together by **Marilyn Kelly-Buccellati**. All of this with the hope of facilitating an explosion of a beauty capable of attracting people and making them desire something good for themselves and for the world. We’ll join you at the Meeting—even from afar, via podcasts of events. For the whole program see [www.meetingrimini.org/eng/](http://www.meetingrimini.org/eng/)







**O**n September 10, 1946, Sister Teresa was on a train struggling up the mountain toward Darjeeling, at the foot of the Himalayas, on her way to the annual retreat of the sisters of Loreto. She was 36 years old and happy. Her life was full. Everyone loved her, from the students at the girls school where she taught in Calcutta, to the other sisters in her convent. Then, suddenly, she heard a voice that was at once inside her heart and outside of herself, telling her, “I thirst for you, for your love.”

It was Jesus’s voice. She had no doubt. On that train, Christ asked her to leave everything, even her order, to serve the poorest of the poor, to bring Him to them, in the darkest “holes” of the most degraded human existence. That day marked the birth of the Missionaries of Charity, the order founded by Mother Teresa of Calcutta, who on September 4<sup>th</sup> will be proclaimed a saint.

**CERTAIN OF HER CALL.** During that mystical encounter, Jesus, for whom she had left her family in Skopje, Macedonia at the age of 18 to enter the Congregation of the Sisters of Loreto (going first to Ireland and then to India), became a living presence for her. “It was a calling within the calling. Mother called it ‘the day of Inspiration,’” explained Fr. Brian Kolodiejchuk, the postulator of her cause for canonization and a priest of the Missionaries of Charity Fathers, one of the branches of the order for men, founded in 1984 by Mother Teresa. Fr. Brian, who will be one of the speakers at the event on Mother Teresa at the upcoming Meeting of Rimini, spoke with us about her life, but above all about the profound spirituality of this saint of our day. In the six months following the initial call, the di- >>



» dialogues between “the Spouse” and Teresa continued, also through a series of interior visions. Jesus revealed to her that she could quench His thirst by giving life to an order to bring Him and announce His love to the sick, the street children, and the dying among the poorest of the poor. Only for this. He added that all this would mean sacrifices, toil, and suffering for her. Teresa was sure that it was Jesus speaking to her. Years later she would say, “I am more certain of this call than of the fact that I am alive,” but she was afraid she would fail, that she would not be up to it. And the Voice, as she later called it, asked her, “Wilt thou refuse?” Fr. Brian explained, “In 1942, with the permission of her confessor, she had made a private vow to give God anything He might ask of her, to refuse Him nothing.” And now, He, loving her, was asking her for everything.

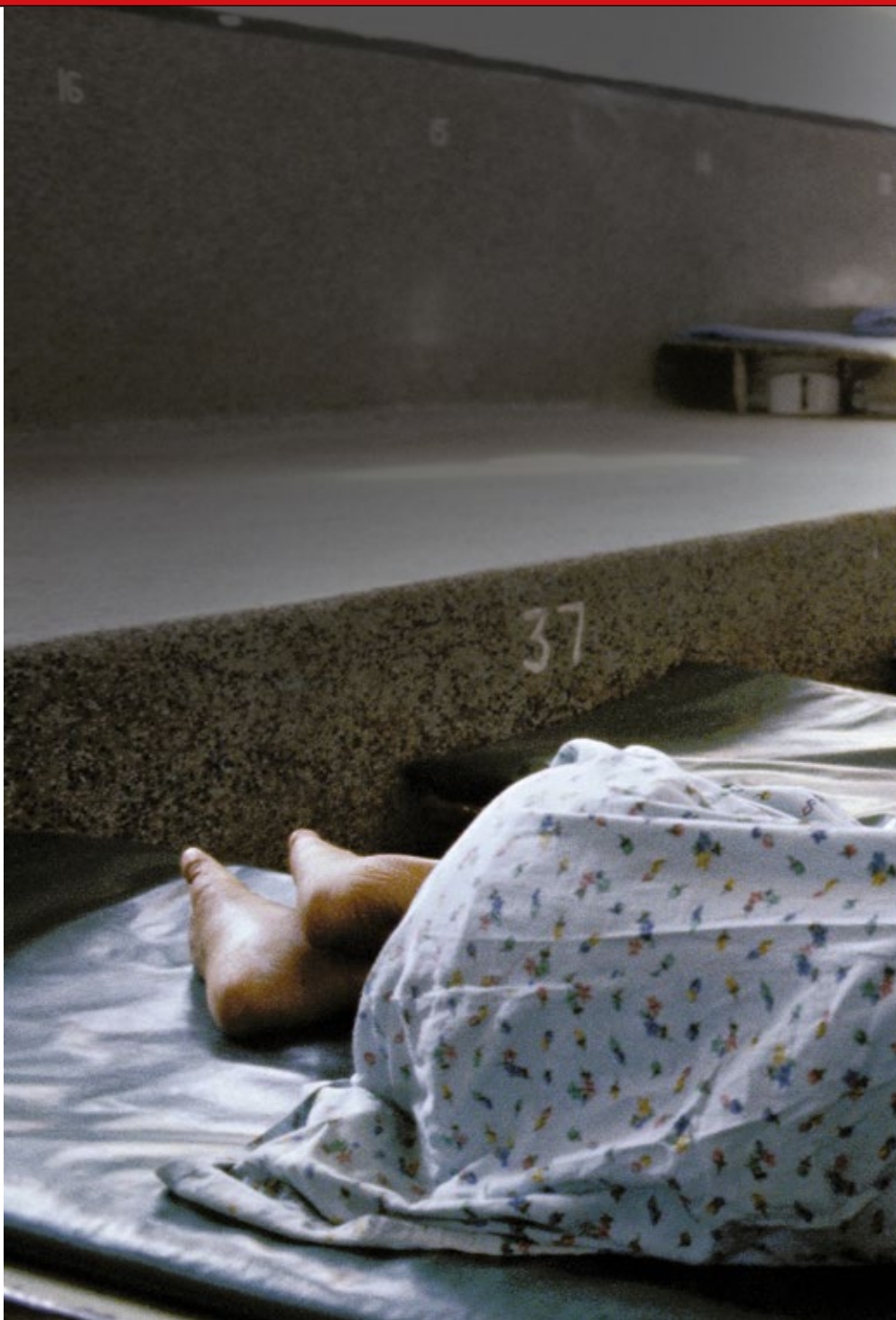
Mother Teresa only spoke of these experiences with her spiritual director, the Jesuit Fr. Celeste Van Exem, and then with the archbishop of Calcutta, Ferdinand Périer. “After her death, in gathering documents for her cause for beatification, the conversations with Jesus came to light. This was because she wanted Christ to be at the center: it was His work, and she was ‘a pencil in His hands.’”

**FIVE FINGERS.** Sister Teresa asked the two prelates for authorization to begin her mission, to leave the order of Loreto. Firm in her decision, she was also ready for total obedience. She prayed and continued to ask with tenacity, through letters and conversations. In 1948, she received authorization from the Holy See. The archbishop of Calcutta wrote, “I am deeply convinced that by withholding consent I would hamper the realization, through her, of

the will of God.” In December of that same year, wearing a white sari with a blue border, with five rupees and a rosary in her pocket, she began her work in the worst parts of Calcutta. After a short time some young women began following her, among them former students. God’s plan began to take shape. On October 7, 1950, the Congregation of the Missionaries of Charity was founded. As women joined, she would tell them that in order to be

with the poor they had to remember Jesus’s five words, “*You did it to Me.*” Showing her hand, she would say, “A word for each finger.” Only this.

But Calcutta is not the only place with “black holes.” In a short time, the work of Mother Teresa moved beyond the borders of India and embraced the world, among AIDS sufferers in New York, the homeless in Rome, the poor of Africa and Latin America, the orphans of the







wars in the Middle East. She even opened houses in countries still under communist dictatorship. The powerful of the earth bowed before this little wrinkle-faced sister to the point that, in 1970, she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. When she died on September 5, 1997, she had opened 594 houses in 120 nations. "Every foundation is another September 10<sup>th</sup>, because it is His work," she said. But the Voice had spoken to her of sacrifices, suffering, >>



**THE ENCOUNTER.**  
In 1987, Mother Teresa was a guest at the Meeting of Rimini.



# THE SURPRISE OF A "YOU"

Since 2012 he has been taking part in the Meeting, where he has discovered a place in which dialogue is "free from any rhetoric" and ideas become a "living reality."

by Luca Fiore

"If I ask myself what it is about the Meeting that strikes me, and why I continue to go back, I have to be honest: my answer is first and foremost related to what I've seen in Communion and Liberation." Giorgio Buccellati, a world-renowned archeologist and expert in Mesopotamian civilizations, who has spent his life with his wife Marilyn doing on-site excavations in Syria and Iraq, is a dear friend of the Rimini event. He appeared for the first time in 2012, for a presentation with Fr. Ignacio Carbajosa comparing Mesopotamian religiosity with that of the Biblical world. The following year, the comparison was between the conception of the State in Mesopotamia versus that of the people of Israel. In 2014 he helped organize the exhibit "From the Depths of Time: the Origins of Communication and Community in Ancient Syria," and this year, it will be his wife Marilyn who will introduce an exhibit on ancient Georgia.

"The first time, I came with a kind of diffidence toward the Movement. I'd been living in the United States for a long time, I had no direct experience [with CL] and was unfamiliar with Italian polemics. I was affected by the idea, shared by a good number of Catholics, that the Meeting was an ideological place," Buccellati told us. "Then I discovered that it's not like that, not at all. My experience in Rimini caused me to reflect. I asked myself: why isn't there ideology at the Meeting? What does it mean that faith can't be an ideological position? In Rimini, it became clear to me: ideology

is presenting ideas without any reference back to values. The opposite of ideology, then, is experience: presenting a value as a living reality, capable of giving form to certain ideas, but that exists above and beyond any idea."

**An impact in life.** This value, the professor explains, is something you can compare with experience at a personal level. "At the Meeting everyone, from the last volunteer to the 'directors,' share the same spirit of openness and desire to let themselves be led by true values. Values that, in any case, were those I also already shared. Because, in the end, the greatest 'value' is God Himself. But it helped me a lot to see them lived in such a concrete, animated, and beautiful way."

For Buccellati, it was also important to recognize in Rimini a characteristic that he sees as proper to the Church: the great variety of people. Not an anonymous crowd, but one in which you always see a personal reality. "At the Meeting everyone, at an individual level, is aware of those central values, those that have an impact in life. I could see it clearly working with the group of college students who were guides for the exhibit on Syria. They responded to our prompts in a personal way, but in a way that was still consistent with those living values I was talking about. I saw the same thing in the adults: the same sense of making something one's own, free of any rhetoric."

And what about the title for 2016? What comes to mind when he hears,



Giorgio Buccellati, Archeologist.



"You are a good for me"? "It connects to the problem of modernity. Our society is seeking to reach a kind of virtual reality, one set by algorithm. Hence we don't interact as one would with a *you*, but as one would with a computer, or with a domesticated animal that does what we expect it to do. We don't look for difference in another person, but rather are always seeking to 'domesticate' them, making them as much like us as possible."

Here, Buccellati speaks about a kind of anonymous homogenization that, in his mind, is becoming more and more the ultimate aim in life. "Instead, a *you* is a surprise—you all use this word a lot: something that I don't expect that can even disturb me, but precisely because of this it can be enriching. Saying, 'You are a good for me,' means that 'You are different than I am.' Just as in marriage: you have to be open to a kind of integration, to welcoming, embracing, and appreciating difference which leads you in the direction of communion. Right: 'Communion and Liberation' sounds like a funny phrase, but it describes this dynamic well. Because



‘communion’ means there is a reciprocal insertion into the life of the other, but ‘liberation’ means that within this relationship you’re free from the egotism that tends to reduce communion to one person being absorbed by the other.’

When this happens, Buccellati explains, a free relationship is born; one that leads to mutual dialogue, which in turn generates reciprocal enrichment. “Which is the contribution that, in my eyes, the universal Church can offer to the secular world, to society. The Church proposes the most personal reality possible, that of the relationship with Christ, within the ‘communion of saints’ that unites everyone: that immense number that extends across time and space, from ancient Mesopotamia up until the time of those who will see what we call ‘the end of the world.’ An unimaginable number within which, however, each person retains his or her uniqueness. This is the beautiful message that Christianity proposes to everyone, and is what attracts even the very secular.”

» and toil. These were not only material, and anyway Providence always provided for those. The suffering was something deeper, in her relationship with Christ. It was the darkness, revealed after her death with the publication of her writings, in which she described the spiritual desert she experienced. Fr. Brian explained, “For six months after the day of the inspiration, she experienced a period of very strong union with Jesus. Then, the desert. For fifty years, except for a brief interval in 1958, He, her first and only Love, no longer spoke to her. Mother Teresa no longer felt loved. She

felt rejected, abandoned by God, and was even tempted to doubt. But at the same time she felt a very strong desire for God. She did not

**↳**  
**Mother Teresa quenched this thirst of Jesus by loving and serving Him in the disfigured forms of the poorest. In loving them, she loved Him.**  
**↳**

understand the reason for this suffering. She did not understand right away that God was asking her for more.” More than what she was already doing? “Yes. She was struck by Jesus’ invocation, ‘I thirst,’ which for her meant ‘I thirst for love and for souls.’ It is the paradox of the Christian God who needs the love of women and men, who becomes flesh

to encounter them and save them and who in exchange receives the cross. Mother Teresa quenched »





# A JOY THAT TAKES ON FLESH

**He has spoken at the Meeting five times, and he will be in Rimini once again. "It's a relationship that becomes integrated with the work we do every day at Notre Dame."**

by Luca Fiore

**"**I don't know of, in the entire world, an event comparable to the Meeting." Professor O. Carter Snead's reaction to the gathering at Rimini is a mix of wonder and incredulousness. A legal expert in bioethics and Director of the Center for Ethics and Culture at Notre Dame University, he has spoken at the Meeting five times, beginning in 2008, and will be in the Fiera once again this year. Even with a Calabrian mother from San Giovanni in Fiore (Cosenza), Carter Snead is 100% American, used to the wide open spaces on that side of the



**Orlando Carter Snead**  
Professor, Notre Dame University

ocean. And yet, first arriving in the vast pavilions in Rimini, he felt very small. "The first thing that impresses you about the Meeting is how big it is, the out-of-scale proportions. So many places, so many people closed within the cavernous Fiera for an entire week..." And yet, the scholar admits, "you understand quickly that the crowds and immensity of the place are not the most interesting aspect. Over time, what makes the biggest impression is the profound joy that animates the gathering. A joy that takes on flesh in the thousands of volunteers—young stu-

dents, but accomplished professionals as well—who work to make the Meeting a reality." Snead speaks of "a spirit of friendship, openness, service and enthusiasm for encounter," that permeates the entire event. "On the cultural level, the performances and conferences are very stimulating. But it's the memory of the people and the friendship that, when you leave, stays with you."

**Exchanging Invitations.** Snead continues, "The Meeting, over the years, has become very important for me, not only from a personal point of view, but professional as well. It's allowed me to meet extraordinary personalities from all over the world." This richness of relationships convinced Prof. Snead to contribute to the Rimini festival (last year his Center sponsored an exhibit), and to bring a piece of the Meeting home with him to Notre Dame. "For the last few years, we've invited speakers I've met at the Meeting to our Fall Conference. Last year, for example, Fr. Julián Carrón came to speak about freedom. We're happy to be able to collaborate, and we look forward to seeing this relationship grow and become integrated with the work we do every day at Notre Dame."



» this thirst of Jesus by loving and serving Him in the disfigured forms of the poorest. In loving them, she loved Him.” And wasn’t that enough? “No, we are accustomed to thinking about Jesus’s physical sufferings, not His spiritual ones, His feeling abandoned, rejected, the fear of what He had to face. He sweated blood and cried, ‘My God, My God, why have you abandoned Me?’ Thanks also to the help of her confessor, Mother Teresa understood that Jesus was asking her to share His spiritual suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross.” Was this the meaning of the darkness? “Just as many saints have received the signs of the Passion in their flesh, so Mother Teresa received in her soul the spiritual suffering of Jesus. When she came to this understanding, she wrote, ‘I have come to love the darkness. For I believe now that it is a part, a very, very small part of Jesus’ darkness & pain on earth. [...] today really I felt a deep joy—that Jesus can’t go anymore through the agony—but that He wants to go through it in me.—More than ever I surrender myself to Him.—Yes—more than ever I will be at His disposal.’”

**GOD GIVES HIS SAINTS.** For as long as she was physically able, she was the first to enter the chapel at four in the morning. Prayer that at times was almost “mechanical” and Eucharistic adoration were her anchors, the things that kept her bound to God and enabled her to live joyously notwithstanding the interior torment. And then there was the suffering of the poor. “I thirst for you and for souls,” the Voice had told her. “For her this meant ‘being consumed for the salvation and sanctification of the poorest of the poor.’ In this she experienced a darkness that I would call ‘apostolic.’ Pover-



*At the Meeting di Rimini there will be an exhibit, “Mother Teresa of Calcutta,” curated by the Postulation for the cause of canonization. We publish here a passage from notes on Mother Teresa’s conversations with Jesus.*

**Jesus:** “I want Indian nuns, victims of My love, [...] who would be so very united to Me as to radiate My love on souls. I want free nuns covered with my poverty of the Cross – I want obedient nuns covered with my obedience of the Cross. I want full of love nuns covered with the Charity of the Cross.”

**Mother Teresa:** “My own Jesus, what you ask it is beyond me. [...] I am unworthy. I am sinful. I am weak. Go, Jesus, and find a more worthy soul, a more generous one.”

**Jesus:** “The thirst you had for souls brought you so far. Are you afraid now to take one more step for Your Spouse, for Me, for souls? Is your generosity grown cold?”

**Mother Teresa:** “Give me light. Send me Thy own Spirit, which will teach me Thy own Will, which will give me strength to do the things that are pleasing to Thee. Jesus, My Jesus, don’t let me be deceived. [...] I am so afraid, Jesus. I am so terribly afraid.”

**Jesus:** “Do not fear. I shall be with you always.”

**Words by Mother Teresa**  
© Missionaries of Charity c/o Mother Teresa Center

ty is not only material. The saint of Calcutta sensed in the Western world a spiritual poverty, that is, the feeling of being unloved, unwanted, undesired. It is an existential darkness. This is the new ‘black hole.’ In the darkness, Mother Teresa experienced this void. She could

share this profound suffering with Jesus.” It is said that in every epoch, God gives us His saints. “Maybe it is more apt to say that the saints experience the pain of God in the epoch in which they live. They bear it for us. It is the experience of mystics.”



**J EUROPE**

# BREXIT, LACK OF SELF-CONFIDENCE

**Political theorist Adrian Pabst looks at the crisis of the European Union, which is not just a question of economics, but also of a society that can discover something radically new.**

BY LUCA FIORE

**W**as it the mother of all battles for “Europeanists”? It didn’t go the way the Europeanists wanted. The results of the Brexit vote on June 23<sup>rd</sup> were 51.9% to 48.1%, and London and Brussels will now have to negotiate Britain’s departure from the European Union. Was it a surprise? Adrian Pabst, a political theorist from the University of Kent, says

no, “but it was still shocking.” Over the last few months, he explains, it became clear that the majority of the public had not digested the terms of David Cameron’s renegotiation of their presence in the EU. “And the principal reason is that the people didn’t think that their worries and concerns were taken seriously by the conservative party controlling the government, or by the other principal parties.”





But what's behind this unrest among British voters? "For many people, economic stability has disappeared over the last 15 years. Low wages and job insecurity have resulted in economic uncertainty." But not everything can be explained by the economy. "People have the impression that a certain lifestyle is being threatened by globalization, immigration, and the collapse of social cohesion. We've

started to lose the sense of belonging that made it possible, putting it simply, to trust your neighbors. This situation also reduces your faith in yourself. Major institutions like the political parties, unions, and other intermediary bodies like the Church are not strong enough to foster faith in oneself or in others and



Adrian Pabst.

this, in the final analysis, creates a lack of meaning. So life is taken hostage by "capital" and the central government. This is what people rebelled against."

On June 24<sup>th</sup>, the citizens of the UK woke up and, looking at a map of their country, saw a land divided in two. And not only by the line that separates >>



# AND NOW? BEYOND THE OPTION TO “LEAVE” OR “REMAIN”

Some days after the vote, the CL community in the UK wrote a document that challenges everyone: “Is the other a good or not?”

Today we have woken up to a different United Kingdom, a different Europe; indeed, a different world. For the supporters of Brexit, there is nervous hope for an independent future; for ‘Remain’ voters all is doom and destined to crumble. Common to all, both in the United Kingdom and on the continent, is a growing sense of disorientation and of a divided society.

What lies at the root of this historic event? Underlying both the UK referendum campaign and recent socio-political developments in the West is the desire for security, stability, and independence inherent to man’s nature. But these desires might seem to clash with the presence of other people appearing to challenge our ideas, plans, and autonomy—ultimately our whole being.

Looking at this apparent clash, what is the solution?

The Leave campaign argued that these desires could best be pursued by cutting the link with the “other,” the “different,” the “uncontrollable”—with those who do not understand who “I really am.” On the other hand, the Remain campaign perceived “the other” as one who should be tolerated primarily for economic reasons. Neither campaign perceived this “otherness,” that quality which is different from me, as an

inherent good; as a value; indeed, as a key to our desire. It is in fact not by chance that the migration crisis played a pivotal role in turning public opinion towards an exit from the EU.

Yet the challenge of “otherness” remains, even after the Brexit vote. Indeed, as Rowan Williams recently said at the London Encounter, the idea that one can be independent or autonomous is a myth—reality is interconnected and we all depend on others. How can we live, in this historical moment, our relationship with fellow men and women in the world, with those different from us, whether they are inside or outside of the EU? How can we, those who voted Leave and those who voted Remain, stay together in this divided country?

The only possibility is to restore our conviction that the other is a good and not an enemy, as everyone knows and wants in the depths of his heart. This is the only possible hope for a divided world. Indeed, the European

Union was founded on this conviction. This conviction does not automatically last forever, but rather it needs to be rediscovered by each generation.

That “the other is a good” is not a doctrine to be relearned, but can only be *rediscovered* through an ongoing experience of its truth. It is therefore vital to create spaces for dialogue, where the reality of otherness can be verified

**Creating spaces for dialogue in order to help recover the certainty of the good of the other is more urgent than complaining about the past or worrying about the future.**



in experience as—unexpectedly and almost scandalously—a key to my desire and to understanding who I am.

As Pope Francis recently remarked, “If there is one word that we should never tire of repeating, it is this: dialogue. We are called to promote a culture of dialogue by every possible means and thus to rebuild the fabric of society. The culture of dialogue entails a true apprenticeship and a discipline that enables us to view others as valid dialogue partners, to respect the foreigner, the immigrant and people from different cultures as worthy of being listened to.”

Creating spaces for dialogue in order to help recover the certainty of the good of the other is more urgent than complaining about the past or worrying about the future. As Christians, we would like to offer this to our country and our world.



**LONDON** A protest after the vote for the United Kingdom's departure from EU.

» England from Scotland. The chasms dividing the country are many: between the young and the old, the cities and rural areas, etc. How can these wounds be closed? “People have to see real leadership. But at the moment there’s a vacuum. And with a vacuum, if you’re not careful, it’s easy for it to be filled by extremist forces. What’s needed is a virtuous leadership capable of healing the divisions, that knows how to give the common good a recognizable face, that has the power to communicate a sense of reconciliation.” And what will happen now in London and in Brussels? “For the United Kingdom, it’s the greatest institutional crisis since the 1940s. It’s a situa-

tion without precedent, and no one knows what to do. For the European Union as well, it’s the most serious situation since the signing of the Treaty of Rome in 1957, because a member has never left the Union. There’s no procedure in place. Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty discusses negotiations in a generic way. No one knows how to avoid a domino effect.” The Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, Austria? Who might be the next to leave? “This is the dilemma: on the one hand Brussels will seek to keep ties with the United Kingdom as close as possible and will have to make some concessions; and on the other the Union has to be tough, or at least appear to be so, so as not to encourage oth-

er countries [to leave].” Here as well, Pabst explains, there’s a need for true leadership. “Angela Merkel? Even she contradicts herself about what do. From the headquarters in Brussels, you get a different signal coming out every two hours. In the meantime, the economic crises, the threat of terrorism, and the immigration emergency are ongoing. I can’t imagine a more difficult situation.”

**NEW CREATIVITY.** There are few proactive voices. One came from Pope Francis, first in his speech upon receiving the Charlemagne Prize, and then on his return flight from Armenia. He said that we need new creativity and a “healthy dis-union.” “What the Pope is saying is very important, and I would hope that it could be possible today to find radically new ways to stay together. But today’s EU seems truly very fragile and I don’t know if it’s capable of a rebirth.” Pabst uses a strong but effective metaphor: “It will be a chaotic separation and, like most divorces, one that’s irreversible and will leave deep material and spiritual wounds on both sides.”

In a flyer on the results of the vote (see page 18), the CL community in the UK opened up the debate again by asking, “is ‘the other’ a good or not?” “That text is very interesting. They are right to underline the importance of dialogue, of encounter and respect for others, especially in Europe. We aren’t the U.S. or China; we don’t have a single culture or date of foundation. The development of Europe is that ‘perpetual unfolding’ of Christianity’s fusion bringing together Greek/Roman philosophy, Biblical revelation, and pagan tradition.” A culture that is itself of mixed blood. But also inclusive: “This is the one gift that Europe can offer the world.” **T**





**I FEEL  
AT HOME**



**O**n Saturday morning, those gathered for Morning Prayer limped through the psalms, some struggling to follow the words, their eyes fixed on the booklets, others totally unfamiliar with the *recto tono* or even the psalms. It was the first day of the Spiritual Exercises of the Fraternity in China, with about 50 people of different nationalities and ages, who had arrived the previous evening from all over the country. They had encountered an unexpected newness of life at work, at the university, through a friend or a fiancé, and had been moved to communicate this newness to friends and relatives, and to invite them to the Spiritual Exercises. Each person had a different story. Some of them were not Christian. Some instead had been living the experience of the Movement for years, and found themselves because of their jobs catapulted into the country of the dragon.

**FUTURE BRIDE.** After Morning Prayer, the first lesson was held in Chinese, about the story of the *yes* of Peter, which made the title of the Spiritual Exercises concrete: “I have loved you with an everlasting love. I have had pity on your nothingness.” The silence was profound. There was only a gentle murmur in the corners of the room from the simultaneous translations into Italian, Spanish, and English, the latter added for some friends who had arrived at the last minute.

Lunch was a Babel of languages, in which everyone nonetheless tried to communicate, to get to know each other, resorting to gestures when the words were lacking. There was no sense of being an outsider, because something had happened, prompting one of the participants to say, “I feel at home, as if I were with my family, and yet most of these people I have never seen in my life.”

**There was a Babel of languages and few people knew each other. Christians and non-Christians, they had arrived in the most varied ways, but shared an unthinkable unity at the Spiritual Exercises of the Fraternity in China. “An accent of joy never seen before.”**

BY PAOLA BERGAMINI

In the afternoon, after the time of silence, everyone worked together on learning the songs and the *recto tono*. There was a striving for that extra step that animated and united everyone. Afterwards, in the testimony of the prisoner that Fr. Julián Carrón had read in Rimini, Mercy became an embrace, the motor that moves life. This was felt that evening, when Piero and Maddalena, Italians who are in China for work, talked about what it means concretely to support each other in the friendship with Christ in their families, and how that friendship impacts others in their lives, such as neighbors or their children’s teachers. Maddalena talked about a Buddhist mother who had lived with her partner for years but decided to get married because, as she said, “I want to have the same seriousness you have in your relationship between husband and wife.” For the wedding, she asked Maddalena to choose a text to read during the civil ceremony. Maddalena thought about it and chose a passage by Pope Francis on love, but a few days before the cere-

mony began to doubt her decision, thinking maybe it was too “Catholic,” so she had the future bride read it. The woman burst into tears and exclaimed, “There is nothing more beautiful that I would like to hear on the day of my wedding. You must help me in the search for my spirituality. I need someone to accompany me because I am looking for God and I see in you a companion for my search.”

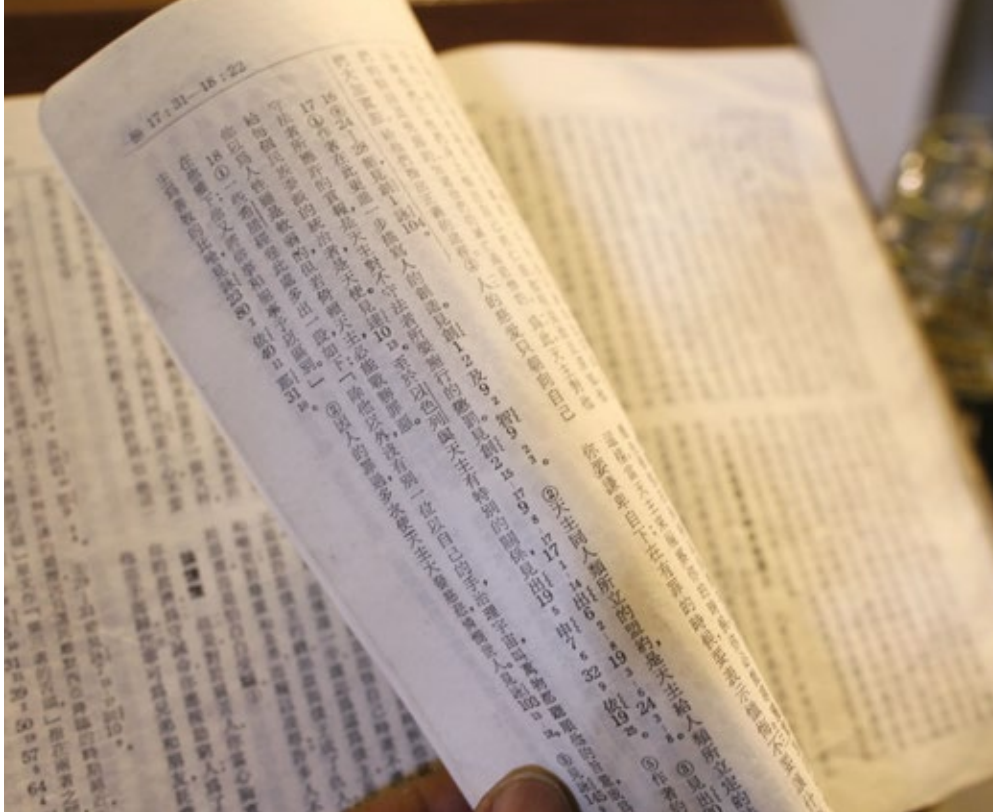
**THERE WAS NOT ENOUGH TIME.** On Sunday, the Morning Prayer and Mass were something entirely different from those the day before. Something had happened. The afternoon assembly was a clearer testimony to this.

Xiao Mei spoke about her colleague, Wang Min, with whom she felt an immediate compatibility, and not just regarding work. After some time, Wang Min told her that she was Catholic, and added, “After my Baptism I felt a bit abandoned, but I have found a place where I can live my faith and be accompanied in it. Come and see.” Wang Min invited Xiao Mei to the School of Community. Right away, the first time she went, Xiao Mei experienced a new beginning that she could not keep to herself; she invited a friend and her mother to the Spiritual Exercises. Her mother accepted the invitation because she saw her daughter returning from the meetings of School of Community very happy, and wanted to understand why. When the mother arrived at the Spiritual Exercises, seeing such diversity among the participants in terms of nationality, age, and culture, she was afraid she would be out of place, having come from a farming life in northern China. Instead, “Ever since I was baptized, soon after my daughter, I have realized that my >>

» life is richer, and I have more experience of this richness now than in the 60 years before. In these days, I have become aware that actually we have a language that is superior to spoken words: the language of the gaze. I feel that I am exactly where I am supposed to be. Now.”

**TRULY HAPPY.** Pedro and Rosa arrived in China from Central America to be with their daughter. They were no longer young. Chinese was an unknown language and they could only string together a few words in English. They felt alone and disoriented, especially when their daughter unexpectedly had to return to their country for a long period. Then at Mass they met a priest and began a friendship with him. “He invited us to the School of Community and always made sure there was a translator for us. We have been living an experience of faith and companionship that we never had before.”

In contrast, there were those who went to the School of Community to please their fiancé. “I was reluctant to go,” recounted Yue Liang. “I have never liked meetings, but there I met Piero and Maddalena and their families. They were truly happy. They were different from my colleagues, with whom I got along just fine. But these two had an accent of joy I had never seen before, and didn’t want to do without.” She did not give up, and returned even without her fiancé. “I felt all the intensity and seriousness of the choice I was about to make, to get married and share my life with him. In the



dialogue with these friends I saw what my heart desired, even if in a confused way: to build a place of peace and joy. Otherwise, what’s the use of getting married?”

The testimonies continued one after another. But there was not enough time for all of them. After

an hour and 40 minutes it was necessary to close, so that there would be time to watch the video from the presentation of Pope Francis’ book, *The Name of God is Mercy*, and to hear the testimony of Agostino Jiang, a Chinese man who had converted to Christianity when he was in prison. Those who did not get the chance to share their

testimonies during the session did so in writing. This was the case of Li Wen, a friend who was not a believer. She had gone to the School of Community for the first time at the insistence of a dear friend, but her initial impression was negative: it seemed like a group psychoanal-

ysis session, and she certainly had no need of that, since she had no problems.

**LI WEN’S STEPS.** However, she returned because, as she wrote, “I was curious to understand his insistence. Over time I felt increasingly comfortable and at ease. The people shared their daily struggles and it no longer seemed like something embarrassing; rather, it seemed stupendous to have this concern and care for oneself. I understood that religiosity is something mysterious, not easy to explain. I liked it yesterday in the lesson when it was said that Mercy is Mystery. These are concepts that I have found only here, and I am so interested to learn them. The more I explore this religiosity, the more I understand my humanity. I see that through a new joy God is helping me to take steps, and makes me feel the affront of daily life as more bearable. I have learned that God is good, a companion for my soul.”

The final greetings at the end seemed like those of people who had known each other all their lives, not just two days. Or, more simply, of people who had seen something great to share forever. **I**

**I liked when it was said that Mercy is Mystery. These are concepts that I have found only here. The more I explore this religiosity, the more I understand my humanity.**



# Francis and the Language of the Church

BY LUCA DONINELLI

To explain what *The Name of God is Mercy* is about would be an insult to readers and an even greater one to Pope Francis. It would be using more complex words to repeat what the Holy Church tells us with words that are simple and gentle. In this book, in fact, Francis doesn't speak in the same manner that he does on other occasions. This does not mean that the major themes of his pontificate do not emerge, nor does it mean that the theme of Mercy itself is not the first letter, the *aleph*, of all his statements in the book.

In this interview which makes up the book, there is something different, something more. Here, the Holy Father speaks the language of the Church, as a way of humbling himself (from *humus*, earth) and identifying himself with the entire *patrimonium fidei*. It is impressive, for example, that although this thin book references the tragedies that consume our present world, from poverty to immigration, from the insensitivity of wealthy countries to the martyrdom of Christians, it addresses these topics in a language that has belonged to the Church since its foundations; it is the language of St. Augustine, of St. Ambrose, and in fact of all the Fathers of the Church.

**The words are simple**, quiet, and persuasive because of a force that does not belong solely to Jorge Mario Bergoglio. The Pope knows that what's fundamentally *his* are not so much his ideas, his intelligence, and his goodness, but, more than anything, something that he has received, an event that was foretold and that then happened, that must be proclaimed again for it to re-occur. God is Mercy, and Christ is the face of it. I can only call things truly "mine" which are given to me.

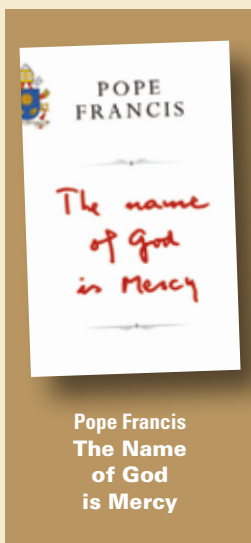
All the book's examples are beautiful and comforting. They are occasionally drawn from the lives of the saints, but perhaps more frequently from his own ordained life, as a priest, as the Bishop of Buenos Aires, and then as Pope. It is only possible to speak of Mercy by having a lived experience of it. The book consistently emphasizes experience, a fact I would dare call a challenge, a challenge which is restated on each page. Mercy is gratuitous: God gives Mercy and always forgives because this is what He is, without secret projects, without obscure schemes. To accept the pure gratuity of the gift of Mercy is the task assigned to the freedom of every person.

There is, in fact, an evil that is different from sin, which Pope Francis comments upon specifically in chapter VII, and is also woven throughout the entire book: its name is corruption—a term that the Pope uses in a broader sense than usual. The corrupt person is not so much the person who accepts bribes, not "other people," but each man or woman who no longer feels the need to be forgiven. It could be a Christian who is very faithful to the Mass; it could be anyone.

If we are strong, we feel superhuman, as if we are God's chosen ones. If we are not, we close in on ourselves and we lick our wounds, as the Pope says. God asks something of us: a disposition of humility and attentiveness, which does not involve meditating on our belly button, but rather staying alert, focused, and vigilant.

Lastly, how beautiful are the Pope's words on the relationship between Mercy and justice (chapter VII)! We should read it and reread it over and over again for its clarity, which renounces any trace of legalism. The origin of justice is not justice itself; rather, it begins from a gratuitous act of Mercy. And this is valid for the judiciary, for priests, but also for each one of us, with our wives, our children, at work, always.

The destiny of the world (including politics, the economy, and finance) depends completely on this.



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