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MEETING FOR FRIENDSHIP AMONG THE PEOPLES
THE HUMAN PERSON: A STATE OF EMERGENCY
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Armenia cradle of Christianity

Rimini, xx agosto 2013 - The Meeting reflects on the human person' state of emergency dedicating a special space to Armenia, a land of ancient culture and first nation to embrace Christianity. The meeting "Armenia, cradle of Christianity", connected to the homonymous exhibition curated by Graziella Vigo, was held at 17 in Room D3. Five speakers, in addition to moderator Robi Ronza. The journalist and photographer Graziella Vigo read at the opening, a letter from Father Elias, abbot of San Lazzaro degli Armeni, in the homonymous island in the lagoon of Venice. The abbot lingered on "loving stubbornness of God, who never abandons the man," and, after pointing out "a willingness to meet his fellow man" that characterizes the Meeting, said he hoped the event "that this meeting of men of good will can rise from year to year. "

In the words of Antonia Arslan, the Italian-Armenian writer who has devoted years to a passionate work of spreading the history and culture of Armenia (remember among his best-selling novels, *The Lark* and the more recent *The Book of Mush*, presented in the last edition of the Meeting) echoed the theme of identity, memory and the poignant attachment to a homeland tragically lost. All through the evocation of a vivid and painful image: the many small crosses carved into the rock of the monastery of Xor Virap prison of St. Gregory the Illuminator. They are the crosses of remembrance, traced by the survivors of the genocide of 1915 in the hope that some loved one could recognize them. The Arslan gave voice Armenian identity, forged by a Christian faith that is renewed by the ancestral link with the land, even reading a few verses of Daniel Varujan, a young poet who was killed in 1915 ('Cross ears', 'Night in the yard '), translated by herself (in the collection *The song of the bread*).

Even Caroline Cox of Queensbury, founder of Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust and Vice President of the House of Lords, which was 79 times in Armenia on behalf of his humanitarian organization, recalled the incident giving rise to the conversion of that ancient land of Caucasus. The protagonists are Gregory, the king of Armenia and the sister of the king. After thirteen long years of captivity in an underground cavity, Gregory was pulled out to rescue the sovereign and his miraculous intercession for the healing of the king determined its conversion: "Thus, in 301, Armenia became the first Christian

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nation in history ".

Oughourlian Joseph, CEO of Amber Capital Investment Management, spoke on another founding moment for Armenian identity, that of the diaspora. After the genocide of 1915 (one and a half million victims over three million people), the survivors are scattered in various countries around the world. Today, about twelve million Armenians, nine live in the diaspora (Russia, USA, France, Italy). The diaspora is a true martyrdom, since it was chosen as an alternative to the forced abandonment of the Christian faith. Membership in the church is the main aspect of identity. After the birth of the Republic of Armenia (1992), the diaspora is facing the challenge of recreating a link with the homeland.

After noting that "the Republic of Armenia was a utopia for at least 800 years," Sarkis Ghazaryan, Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia in Italy, focused on the "resurgence" Armenian "independence sought and conquered by the Soviet Union. "Our, said the rapporteur, is "the story of a ' man in state of emergency ' continues" and also "a perpetual resistance." "Democracy, civil rights and freedom of expression, which represent a clear choice of our state - said the Ambassador - are the exception and not the rule in the region in which we find ourselves."

In his second speech, Caroline Cox told the life of faith in Karabakh territory for years of bloody conflict. She focused on the testimony of the Archbishop of Karabakh "was saved by his prayer"; precisely to pray, in fact, she had left at seven in a winter morning drive her home, just before it was destroyed by bombs. In his message to the world after the bombing, the archbishop recalled the words of the Gospel 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.'

"I am a journalist who is a photographer too since thirty years. And who still has the ability to wonder, "he said Graziella Vigo. The rapporteur then spoke of his discovery of Armenia," where nature is still intact, where nature and man are in a special contact ". Vigo has pointed out, the Armenian people, "faith and culture: two values that, in our world, you will encounter more and more often." He then concluded: "It is a special people who now lives his right to hope."

(C.C.)

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