



#meeting14

**Press Release n. 3**  
35<sup>th</sup> Edition  
Meeting for Friendship amongst People  
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**Holy Mass**

Following Simon Peter.

**Rimini, August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014** – A long and heartfelt applause followed the reading of the message the Holy Father sent to the Bishop of Rimini, H.E. Msgn. Francesco Lambiasi, at the beginning of the Mass celebrated today, as the opening event of the 35<sup>th</sup> edition of the Rimini Meeting. Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Franciscan Custodian of the Holy Land and Francesco Braschi, Doctor of the Ambrosian Library of Milan - both speaking at two conferences today - were celebrating the Eucharist with Msgn. Lambiasi. The most significant pieces of the Pope's message were read by Emilia Guarnieri, President of the Meeting for Friendship Amongst Peoples Foundation.

The choir of Communion&Liberation of Rimini, directed by Anastasia Gemmani, sang traditional church pieces by Tomas Luis de Victoria and Haendel, as well as the ones by contemporary composers, such as Claudio Chieffo and Adriana Mascagni. The image of the crucifixion by Giovanni da Rimini (the original is stored in the city museum) is projected on several large screens in the main auditorium.

“We, as Christians, cannot be without Christ, but Christ doesn't want to be without us”: these are the beginning words pronounced by the Bishop and echoed in his homily: “To encounter Christ is the adventure many people experience; the dream several people have and the need of everybody”. A brief commentary to the Gospel of St. Matthew (16, 13-20), centered around the ever new and never automatic encounter between Christ and Simon Peter, introduces the provocation for each Christian nowadays: “Who do you say that I am?”. This is the same question posed to Simon Peter. The Bishop goes on by saying: “On that day, Simon Peter found on his lips words that were bigger than him: in fact, he had grasped the mystery of Jesus, thus Jesus entrusted him with his task: I will build my church upon you, as on a rock”.

Msgn. Lambiasi adds that Peter, by having heard himself named “rock”, perceived all his fragility. He then goes on by deepening the message to deliver to the people filling up also room D3: “We too are placed by Christ in front of his mystery. We feel like little pebbles, but no pebble in the world is useless”, echoing the famous quotation from the movie “La strada” by Fellini. “Christ picks up a pebble and places it where He needs it. What's important is to be in His hands and be available to be put in the place He has prepared for each one of us. By doing this, we become like living stones and can cry out our happiness to God.” Thus the Bishop closes his homily.

An expression of the Meeting title is the moment of the petitions of faith, read by five youth from different countries and cultures. A young Arab man reads a prayer dedicated to the Christians persecuted and killed because of their faith.

Mass was followed by the live broadcast of the Angelus of Pope Francis, directly from St. Peter's Square. Also the Pope's words go back to the theme touched upon by the Bishop: “If the Lord finds a sincere and true faith in us, then He sees us as living stones upon which to build His community”. During his closing remarks, the Pope extended a special thought and prayer for the Ukrainian people, pointing out that today is their national feast day.

(M.G.D'A., G.L. )



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