



#meeting14

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Meeting for Friendship amongst People
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Stories from the Edges: Man's Value doesn't Hinge on his Health

Rimini, August 25, 2014 – “Destiny didn't leave man alone, from Abraham through Mary, up to each one of us, to fulfil His covenant. The common theme of all testimonies is found in Pope Francis' words indicating the direction towards the existential edges.” These were the opening words with which Letizia Bardazzi, President of the Italian Cultural Centres Association, began the session (held today at 3 pm in Room D5), the first of four, dedicated to the witnesses from the outskirts, which will be held throughout the week.

Theme of this first session is illness: a condition that can be lived with intensity, but which often sidelines people. However, one has the need to not turn away from reality, when one is moved by the desire to see how God answers one's heart. Dr. Marta Scorsetti, Head of Radiotherapy at Humanitas Cancer Center in Milan, moved the audience by recounting several episodes in her professional career, which have been defined by her relationship with Christ. “I'm the first 'lost cause' encountered by God” says Dr. Scorsetti, while identifying three crucial foundations in her relationship with the other and the divine. The first one is “let yourself be loved by Christ,” because “you can't give what you don't have.” “There is always someone...” is the second one. Someone “who remains with you, waits for you and never leaves you alone, because when someone is waiting for you, life becomes something different.” Human beings are by nature characterized by desire; therefore, illness cannot impede one's desire to be happy. To the contrary: “If illness cannot prevent one from desiring, it cannot prevent one from living [...] Life is a journey” – Dr. Scorsetti concludes by describing her third foundation – “as a clear awareness of one's destiny, which is not fulfilled only if one is healthy or sick, but only in one's journey towards God. Each day is a step towards one's destiny and we can do nothing but accept it: God comes and everything is fulfilled. Death is not the end of everything, but one's call to a new life. One's value doesn't hinge on one's health.”

The other panelist is Gerald Mahon (a.k.a. Fr. Gerry), the Pastor of the Church of St. John the Evangelist in Rochester, USA. He begins his talk by saying: “I want to live on the outskirts, where Christ makes himself present [...] A shy faith and fear often prevented me from living several experiences, but when I met Fr. Giussani, my humanity awoke. The gift of his charism changed my life and my faith and my journey has been marked by new beginnings, beyond my own imagination [...] Destiny didn't leave man alone” – Fr. Gerry continues, quoting the title of the Meeting. “I was looking for something and Fr. Giussani's embrace arrived precisely during that period.” Fr. Gerry concludes his contribution by quoting the founder of Communion & Liberation once again: “Nothing, in the world, can justify our interruption of the memory of Christ.” Letizia Bardazzi, closed the session by thanking the panelists and greeting the public, and reminding us of the meaning of the expression ‘memory of Christ’: “Life doesn't consist of what we do, but rather in looking at what God does in our lives.”

(C.R., L.T.)

Stefano Pichi Sermolli

Meeting Spokesperson, Head of the Press&Communication Office

Press Office: Erika Elleri

Tel: 3480138786

E-mail: erika.elleri@meetingrimini.org