



#meeting14

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Testimonies from the edges: education, an introduction to reality

Rimini, August 26th, 2014 – “The problem of life is not success, but love,” said Emilia Guarnieri, President of the Foundation Meeting For Friendship amongst People, mentioning Juliàn Carròn speaking at the pilgrimage in Czestochowa this year, during the conference “Testimonies from the edges: education, an introduction to reality”, that took place in room D5 at 11:15 a.m.

“Man’s heart must be conquered again,” continued Guarnieri, “therefore the duty of the educator is to help youth in finding themselves. The educational challenge is urgent: only the heart has the power to change and make history.” In answer, the speaker Alberto Bonfanti, teacher of History and Philosophy and President of Portofranco, underlined the importance of having educators which care about youth seriously. The modern world seems to be worried only about increasing fun, “forgetting that their heart wants more than that: it has thirst after justice, truth and beauty.” However, how can we teach students to not fear truth? How can we educate them towards freedom? “There is only a way: to introduce them to reality,” concluded Bonfanti.

Starting from this evidence, José Medina, professor in the USA, said: “The inability of facing the circumstances comes from the lack of hope; when people don’t look at something “more”, problems of life seem like heavy difficulties. Education means to help the student to enter reality.”

From here comes the need of adults that look at youth with a new gaze, a gaze full of love and of tenderness, a gaze which comes from seeing others like people with our same needs. For that reason, the human intellectual development can’t be divided from the emotional experience,” Bonfanti said, “only the attraction of a close person can suggest that reality is positive, that knowledge is an event. Man becomes himself by knowing and discovering reality.” The adult has to testify with his or her own life that there is always hope and purpose to a simple lifestyle, which is more suitable and corresponding to human spirit, which is not satisfied by small pleasures.

“Educating is always done together,” emphasized the President, “and Portofranco’s volunteers try to give youth the passion for what they are studying. It is passion, in fact, that connects studying and reality. An educator who is open to the world, infects students with his or her enthusiasm.” The youth appreciate the gratuitousness of volunteers, who make themselves available to donate their time simply out of love. “Loving without limits,” concluded Medina, “means loving the mystery which surrounds the other. This is possible only by recognizing the tenderness, the affection, the mercy that God has for us. Seeing the other as a gift leaves us full of freedom and gratitude in front of each circumstance. In fact, educators grow together with their youth.”

(C.S.)

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