

*Corriere della Sera* – September 4, 2012

President of the Fraternity of CL “In his heart, there was always room for us”

**Carrón: I am saddened, we could have collaborated more**

Dear Editor,

The death of Cardinal Martini gives me occasion to reflect on some key words of his life, and on his relationship with Fr. Giussani and the movement of Communion and Liberation. I wish only to give a simple witness.

**Ecumenism.** His ability to enter into a relationship with everyone testifies to the Cardinal’s tension toward intercepting every bit of truth to be found in whoever we meet. One who has encountered Christ cannot but have this ecumenical passion. I was struck by how the Cardinal responded to those who asked him what he considered to be the climax of Jesus’s life (the Sermon on the Mount, the Last Supper, or the prayer on the Mount of Olives): “No. The climax is the Resurrection, when He opens His tomb and appears to Mary Magdalene and the other Mary.” It is the certainty introduced by the resurrection of Christ that opens wide the gaze of the Christian.

The ancient term *oikumene* emphasizes that the Christian gaze vibrates with an impetus that renders it capable of exalting all the good that exists in all that one encounters, as Fr. Giussani reminded us: “Ecumenism is therefore not a generic tolerance, but a love for the truth that is present in anyone, even if only a fragment of it. Nothing is excluded from this positive embrace. If there is the tiniest bit of truth in something, I affirm it.” Only a tension like this can generate a true peace among men, and this, too, was a constant preoccupation of Cardinal Martini’s.

**Charity** as sharing of needs. We must treasure this desire to intercept man’s need, which the Archbishop found throughout the journey of his life. The Church can never be indifferent to the questions and needs of human beings. These questions, which are also ours, are a challenge for us as believers, because only thus do we become aware that we have something in our experience to communicate to one who asks us the reason for our hope. This is the advantage of the present time for we believers: formal repetition of the truths of faith is not enough, as Benedict XVI continually reminds us. Others await the communication of our experience, not an abstract discourse, though it be neat and proper. As Paul VI told us: our age needs witnesses more than teachers. Only a witness can be a teacher. I am sure that Cardinal Martini, from Heaven, will accompany us in sharing the needs of men and in finding ways to respond that are equal to their questions.

**Regarding the relationship with CL**, Fr. Giussani always spoke of the paternity of Cardinal Martini, who had embraced and accepted a reality like CL in the diocese of Milan. In his heart as a pastor, there was always room for us. I remember Fr. Giussani's gratitude when the Archbishop allowed him to open a chapel in one of the rooms of the movement headquarters in Milan, so that the Lord would always be present there.

And like Archbishop Montini, who initially confessed that he did not understand Fr. Giussani's method, though he did see its fruits, Cardinal Martini also encouraged us to go forward. I am still moved by the words that he addressed to Fr. Giussani in 1995, during a meeting of priests, when he thanked "the Lord, who gave Msgr. Giussani this gift for continually re-expressing the core of Christianity. 'Every time that you talk, you always return to this core, which is the Incarnation, and – in a thousand different ways – you propose it again.'"

And so it pains and saddens us if we did not always find the most adequate way to collaborate with his arduous mission, and if we have given a pretext for equivocal interpretations of our relationship with him, starting with myself. A relationship that never failed in obedience to the Bishop at all costs, as Fr. Giussani always witnessed to us.

I am sure that, together with Fr. Giussani, he will accompany us from Heaven in continually becoming that for which the Spirit generated, precisely in the Ambrosian Church, a charism like that of CL. The deaths of Cardinal Martini and Fr. Giussani constitute a reminder for all of us that, with a variety of sensibilities, we all have the Ambrosian Church at heart. It is my hope that we never tire of searching for that collaboration which is indispensable – especially today – to the mission of the Church, as the Cardinal said in 1991: "The 'novelty' of the so-called 'new evangelization' should not be sought in new techniques of announcement, but first of all in the rediscovered enthusiasm of feeling ourselves believers and in trust in the action of the Holy Spirit," so as to "evangelize contagiously...from person to person."

**Julián Carrón**

President of the Fraternity of CL