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My personal memory of Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini

On the August 31st 2012 at 3.45 pm, after some troubled years because of Parkinson's disease, Cardinal Martini died next to Milan (Italy) the town where he was catholic archbishop from 1979 to 2002.

As I was born in Milan, Martini was "my" Cardinal. During Eighties he promoted many initiatives in order to invite young people to re-discover Holy Bible and, inspired by Holy Scriptures, to find their spiritual way of life.

I was among those people, everybody was fascinated by his authority and his humbleness. He worked with Jewish scholars on many biblical projects and Jewish-Christian dialogue. He was the first archbishop who sent his greetings to Muslim community for the end of Ramadan.

In 1984 a group of Italian terrorists (the Brigade Rosse) handed over all the weapons to him. I meet him personally during my studies at the seminar. Every time I was impressed by his attention and his attitude, he was never formal or distant, but really interested in my life. He ordained me as a priest in June 2000.

In 2002 he left Milan to Jerusalem. He wanted to spend the last years in the Holy Land, studying biblical texts and praying for peace.

I meet him there twice. He welcomed me to his small apartment (just one room) in Jesuit's convent, not far from Jerusalem Old City. One more time I was impressed by his simplicity and humbleness. This man, esteemed by believers and not believers, Christians and not Christians, always kept an evangelical way of life, an open mind and sensitive attitude. He talked to me about his studies, about Jerusalem...and I felt like to be with one of my family.

Therefore his departure is a sad news for me. In the same time, his example is still encouraging me and many people to continue on the way of dialogue.

Doctor Costantino Fiore
Pave the Way Foundation for France
Lyon,

253 West 35th Street- 15th Floor
New York, NY 10001-1907
Tel +212.629.0046 +516.432.7560 Fax+516.432.7561
office@ptwf.org www.ptwf.org

Mailing address
47 Farrell Street Long Beach, NY 11561-2603
Direct Dial Italy +39 06 97625261
Direct Dial Israel + 972 39 786419

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25 Elùl 5773
31 agosto 2012

OFFICE of Rabbi PROF. GIUSEPPE LARAS

The death of His Eminence Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini causes me great pain and sadness.

His death, though long foreshadowed, it brings back the memory his presence so precious, discreet, and active is important for culture and for the spiritual life.

In particular, he is linked and will be remembered for his fundamental and indispensable to him boldly and unreservedly always made to the Jewish-Christian dialogue.

If this dialogue in the world is able to exist, develop and engage people, despite many difficulties, it is mainly due to him, his determination, his moral strength and faith.

His passing will be felt painfully long and by all those who found in him an attentive and father and a reference to the human and moral.

For those, like me, he well knew and with whom he has long worked in the dialogue between Jews and Christians, sharing friendship, passion, effort, meetings, events, and hope today is a difficult day.

Both remembered his name in blessing

Rabbi Prof. Giuseppe LARAS

COMUNICATO STAMPA

UFFICIO RABBINICO DEL RAV PROF. GIUSEPPE LARAS

La morte di S.E. il Cardinale Carlo Maria Martini mi provoca grande dolore e tristezza.

La sua scomparsa, anche se da tempo preannunciata, mi fa riemergere nella memoria la sua presenza così preziosa, discreta, importante e attiva sia per la cultura che per la vita spirituale.

In particolare la sua figura è legata e sarà ricordata per il contributo fondamentale e imprescindibile da lui coraggiosamente e senza riserve sempre profuso per il dialogo ebraico-cristiano.

Se tale dialogo nel mondo è potuto esistere, svilupparsi e coinvolgere persone, nonostante le molte difficoltà, lo si deve soprattutto a lui, alla sua determinazione, alla sua forza morale e alla sua fede.

La sua scomparsa sarà avvertita dolorosamente e a lungo da tutti coloro che in lui hanno trovato un interlocutore attento e paterno e un riferimento umano e morale.

Per chi, come me, lo ha bene conosciuto e con cui ha lungamente collaborato nell'ambito del dialogo tra ebrei e cristiani, condividendo amicizia, passioni, sforzi, incontri, momenti e speranze è oggi un giorno difficile.

Sia ricordato il suo nome in benedizione

Rav Prof. Giuseppe LARAS

New York- 253 West 35th Street- 15th Floor New York, NY 10001-1907
+212.629.0046

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