

LETTER FROM THE FAITHFUL

Appeal of hundreds: «Thank you father Gabriel, now let's ring the bells for Alfie»

ECCLESIA

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In the story of Alfie Evans, we are struck by the presence of an Italian priest, Fr Gabriele Brusco. In line with his priestly vocation, Fr Brusco, freely and on his own initiative went to the hospital and witnessed to the family the love of God and the Christian message.

In the second letter to Timothy, St Paul speaks of the salvation brought by "Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher." (2 Timothy 1, 10-11). Don Gabriele knew how to be present in the family's drama and in their anguish for a son condemned to death by doctors and judges, against the wishes of his parents. He brought Christ; he insisted "on every favorable and unfavorable occasion" (2 Timothy 4, 1-2), and he tried to convince the doctors and nurses to not perform the inhuman act of removing hydration and oxygen from a seriously ill child who was not dying. He followed St. Paul: "But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry" (2 Timothy 4,5).

A priest brought the Gospel of life and immortality to the Evans' family, emphasizing the sacredness of life and of the family; he supported the fundamental and irreplaceable role of parents in defending their children's good. It is painful to still hear some experts, even Catholic ones talking of "therapeutic obstinacy" when it is clear to any man who really has the intelligence and the heart to participate in this drama, putting himself at stake and perhaps empathising with Thomas and Kate, that nourishing, hydrating and loving a child as long as he lives and asks for it, is the essence of true and gratuitous love.

Don Gabriele was able to support him and be a father; despite the State's cruelty and not only that of the State, he demonstrated a profoundly human fatherhood and at the same time a sign of God's fatherhood. He embraced Alfie, watched him, blessed him and we will always be grateful to him. Every authentic relationship is a promise of eternity and Alfie received this promise through Father Gabriele as well.

In a world where more and more often alliances or collusions are sought with those who proclaim and promote principles contrary to the good of man, the figure of a simple priest who is not ashamed to proclaim Christ, even if it means breaking with Power and paying the price for this is a great testimony to all of us. We are sure that the fruits of what he has sown will be more numerous than those that we are now seeing, although some are already visible.

We need priests who fight the good fight of life with calm courage. We would like priests who, conscious of their fatherhood and their vocation, do not abandon us before power and evil, or before the drama of life and the hour of death. We need priests who are the incarnation of what the Church still has at heart: Life and the proclamation of the Gospel that tells of the stone rejected by the builders that become a corner head. We need Priests who do not flee from the scandal and the apparent failure of the Cross, but who have the strength to be under the Cross. May priests be able to make us feel, through their presence, the love of God and the profound goodness that every human life offers to the world.

*"May the angels accompany you into Heaven,
may the martyrs welcome you when you arrive,
and lead you to Holy Jerusalem".*

Little Alfie, our son, we would love to recite this prayer all together during your funeral and make it rise up to Heaven. We would love this to be accompanied by the sound of the bells rang by priests in every parish, as the voice of the Church that announces death but above all the Resurrection and reminds us to look up under the Cross at the Face of God. We are asking this, we are asking that church bells be rung as a sign of faith as we are sure that there are still many priests capable of proclaiming to the world the scandal of God's Love (you can sign the appeal by writing to: eventi@lanuovabq.it).

FIRME

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