

Letter to our friends - Advent 2018

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Dear friends, guests, and those of you who follow us from a distance,

On Sunday, 11 December, fifty years from the beginning of community life by brothers and sisters in Bose, there was a gathering here in Bose with the affectionate participation of very many friends and guests who for many years have accompanied the community.

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It was a meeting of memories and thanksgiving, not of celebration or self-celebration, a confession of God's mercy and a look towards the future, the memory of a history that is greater than us, of the grace of so many encounters, "a history made of faces, of names, of meetings, of relationships that have created and have intertwined", as the prior, br Luciano, recalled in his opening greetings. "The remembrance that the Magnificat makes of the past at a certain point opens towards the future: 'from now on'. For us to recall the fifty years of the community's history is also to become aware of an inheritance, of a legacy, hence of a responsibility, responsibility at many levels, but especially responsibility for life, for the life of the community, the life of the persons who make it up, the life of the young, of those who, when they now enter

the community, enter a reality that has a history of half a century.”

Br Enzo then read a letter that Pope Francis sent for the occasion (which we give further on in full), which greatly moved us and gave us joy, and then listed the reasons for thanksgiving, while confessing his “hesitation to propose such a day because we have never wanted celebrations of our reality nor have we wanted to give testimony about ourselves; it is in our style to impede that people look at our persons or our ‘works’. We are only sinners called to conversion, attracted by grace, by the Lord’s Spirit. We are a small community, a community that is not exempt from the difficulties and the sufferings that today the church lives in the world and that men and women know in the lives. Because we are convinced of this, this day spent with faithful guests and friends has the eucharist as its center: the rendering of thanks to the Lord. If it were not so, this our meeting would be not only vain, but would risk being worldly.”

The eucharistic celebration presided by cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi and concelebrated by the retired bishop of Ivrea Luigi Bettazzi (95 years old), the last living conciliar father in Europe, followed at noon. It was followed by a festive dinner. At 3:00 P.M. the gathering was greeted by the bishop of Biella Roberto Farinella (“The Bose community is not a guest, but an integral part of our local Church”), then the brothers and sisters of the beginnings and others gave brief testimonies: the first brothers, Domenico and Daniel, the prioress of Grandchamp, Sr Anne-Emmanuelle, who read a message from Sr Christianne, who was sent to Bose in 1968 to sustain the beginnings of community life, sister Lisa, Clara Gennaro, Mother Maria Pia Matis, abbess of the Santa Scolastica Monastery in Civitella, the sister responsible for the Cumiana community, Mother Maria Luisa Brunetti. The rendering of thanks was concluded with the reminiscences of Bishop Luigi Bettazzi.

Everything passed in a great simplicity and in a sober, but warm climate—in spite of the inclement weather!—sincere, where everyone felt involved. With deep gratitude towards all those who have given us tokens of their closeness and participation, we ask prayers to the Lord that in our monastic life we may seek to persevere in living the Gospel in a spirit of thanksgiving, in communion with other Christians, in the company of men.

Bose, 2 December 2018, 1st Sunday of Advent

The brothers and sisters of Bose