

Holy Mass to Mark the Occasion of the 8th Anniversary of the Death of Fr. Giussani
and the 31st Anniversary of the Pontifical Recognition of the Fraternity of CL
Duomo of Milan, February 12, 2013

Concluding Address to Cardinal Angelo Scola
by Fr. Julián Carrón,
President of the Fraternity of CL

Your Most Reverend Eminence,

At the conclusion of this celebration, we are even more amazed by the Holy Father's imposing and unexpected gesture, which we immediately received as a witness of such a fullness of relationship with Christ that it enabled Benedict XVI to carry out an incredible act of freedom for the good of the Church. It is this identification with the Risen Lord and this freedom that we dare to ask for all of us tonight.

Thus, in a historical moment that is so decisive for the life of the Catholic people, and in the name of all of those present, I would like to express even more intensely my joy and my gratitude to you for having received us in the Duomo in order to give thanks to the Lord together for the life of the Servant of God Fr. Giussani and for the anniversary of the pontifical recognition of the Fraternity of Communion and Liberation. We add to this our gratitude for the gift of Benedict XVI.

I wish to convey and to share with everyone how profoundly I was moved by the meaningful words that I heard from the Holy Father during the Audience conceded to the participants in the General Assembly of the Priestly Fraternity of the Missionaries of St. Charles Borromeo on February 6th. Benedict XVI remembered his "real friendship" with Fr. Giussani like this: "I was familiar with his faith, his joy, his strength, and the richness of his ideas, the creativity of faith" (Little Hall close to Paul VI Audience Hall, February 6, 2013).

These words help each of us to look at the person of Fr. Giussani and at his teaching with truth, renewing in our daily existence, particularly in this Year of Faith, the awareness of having received a great gift. In fact, as Your Eminence reminded us in the Pastoral Letter *Alla scoperta del Dio vicino* [*Discovering God Who is Near*], "The Christian faith is generated and nourished by the encounter with Jesus, who is living and personal truth. It is a response to the persuasive beauty of the mystery more than the outcome of an anxious search; it is trust fed by the encounter with the Lord more than a choice provoked by distrust in human resources and a confusion that finds no other way out" (2).

"The event of the encounter with Christ has marked us so powerfully that it enables us to always begin again, after any error, more humble and more aware of our weakness. Like the people of Israel, we can be stripped of everything, even go into exile, but Christ, who has fascinated us, remains forever" (J. Carrón, *La Repubblica*, May 1, 2012).

In a year of many trials and difficulties—which always make the urgency of a true conversion very clear to us—thousands of us, in meeting you during your pastoral visits to the parishes of the Archdiocese, your catecheses in the Duomo, and the various occasions of your teaching addressed to culture, the world of work, and young people, have relived the experience of that "God who is near," who is our companion on the journey to Destiny, and of the reasonableness and human expediency of faith in Him.

Therefore, we cannot but renew the awareness that the grace that we received in the form of Fr. Giussani's charism is, through our daily willingness, totally at the service of the edification of the Church, the Body of Christ, by making it present in every setting and circumstance in which the drama of human existence is played out. Thus we follow Your Eminence's reminder to all the Ambrosian faithful: "Illuminated by an adult faith, Christians do not evade their duty to propose their experience and their vision regarding the big questions that our era is called to face" (*Alla scoperta del Dio vicino*, 12.4).

In this need for witness, in the awareness of our limits, and in the joy of the new life that we always receive from Christ by belonging to His Church, we ask you, grateful for your paternity, to bless us, to guide us always, and to accompany us on the arduous and fascinating journey of Christian existence, in communion with our Christian brothers and sisters and at the service of the good of all of our fellow men.

Thank you, Your Eminence!