

Centro Mondo Amico hosts people in a situation of personal or family fragility and through the availability of a space and of welcoming people it offers the possibility for those who are received to recover the energy to start again in their life. We cannot and must not take over responsibility from people in any activity: we can and must support and accompany them. Any activity taking over responsibility does not allow them to fully express their need for help and their weaknesses, and at the same time to deploy all their own or institutional resources necessary for the positive evolution of each person. In providing poor people with a space for their lives, we accept and appreciate that these people can fully express their personality, and the friendly and familial relationships they maintain are one of the most important forms of expression. However, in order to make it easier for many people to live together in promiscuous spaces, the possibilities of relationship and exchange with other people outside the house have been properly regulated.

If you say Kingdom today, it is then necessary to specify the cultural and historical context where this word indicated the place of right and fair relationships and where there was the King's guarantee that justice would prevail; and where justice would not come, mercy would come.

With this premise, my actualisation of service for the kingdom is: to give a welcoming response to people in difficulty, so that each one, those who welcome and those who are welcomed, can understand and taste their own intimate demand for existential meaning that comes from their own spirituality. The ecclesial context in this case is very evident given the involvement of a parish and also the protagonism of the laity. We often encounter difficulties in expressing our ministry as lay people, especially in contexts permeated with clericalism, which we sometimes find in the mentality of the parish volunteers involved. It is a mentality in which ministry is seen as an exercise of power rather than service, so that an attitude of power management and hierarchical control corresponds to an attitude of servility in the subordinate sides, which inhibits the assumption of responsibility and the courage to act.

On the other hand, lay ministry has a reserve of energy and creativity to invent new responses to new social situations and problems. It expresses itself on a double track, i.e. on the one hand by providing services to the person, and on the other by promoting policies of access to human rights and satisfaction of basic needs. Taken together, these two dimensions are called to offer a "prophetic" perspective: evoking the Kingdom through social innovation, identifying regulatory and institutional, systemic, and spiritual gaps.

All this is possible thanks to specific professional skills in the socio-economic, legal-administrative field and generally linked to the sector of intervention. But above all with the involvement of the Christian community, facilitating its participation and assumption of responsibility and networking with all social actors and stakeholders, such as public authorities and institutions, associations and civil society movements and the private sector.

In all that, the Comboni charism has an important contribution to make: the capacity to make common cause with the excluded, to aim at a collective regeneration starting from the subjectivity and

protagonism of those in need, and the collaboration with all stakeholders, appreciating their specificities and characteristics, harmonizing their contributions in their complementarity. In a particular way, today the world needs the creativity and innovative capacity that characterized Comboni's work, his courage and total dedication, in order to dream and realize a more fraternal, more just and sustainable world, and to experience the joy of the Gospel.

Finally, going into greater depth should delve into the various themes present in this experience: reception; the third sector and public administration; poverty and the peripheries; the design of services to the person; voluntary work, formation for service and social role; pastoral work at the time of empty oratories; work in services to the person not codified by bureaucratic patterns, and many others could be identified. I just invite you to read Dove. La dimensione di luogo che ricompongono impresa e società, by Paolo Venturi and Flaviano Zandonai (EGEA, 2019), L'economia civile, by Luigi Bruni and Stefano Zamagni (Il Mulino, 2015), and Contro l'urbanistica. La cultura delle città, by Franco La Cecla (Einaudi, 2015).

Further readings:

John Paul II. (1987). *Christifideles laici*.

Francis. (2013). *Evangelii gaudium*, 238-283.

NOTE

¹ <https://www.difesapopolo.it/Media/OpenMagazine/Il-giornale-della-settimana/ARTICOLI-IN-ARRIVO/Nuovo-centro-Mondo-Amico-di-Padova-una-casa-tra-le-case-del-quartiere>