

# The voice of Maria Dolens

MONTHLY NEWLETTER FROM THE PEACE BELL FOUNDATION OF ROVERETO

## The duty of optimism

**A**t the time of writing (late November), the international community as a whole had been facing an epic challenge for several months, that represented by the Covid-19 virus, comparable in geographical size and number of victims to a war conflict.

To date, the pandemic has affected around 60 million people worldwide, causing over a million deaths and the already tragic toll is unfortunately destined to worsen over the next few weeks. In fact, once the laboratory tests have been completed, only the generalized use of the vaccine can lead to the desired reversal of the trend, but this is a scenario that is not immediately feasible. We are well aware of the Italian situation due to the fact that we experience it every day in the workplace (for those who have the good fortune to have maintained their position), in social relations and in family areas. Such a situation appears to be "weighed down" further by the very long and trying period that the country is going through. Except for a brief, and unfortunate, interruption it has been spreading since last spring. If we assume that the emergence of some manifestation of impatience is understandable under these circumstances then the appeal cannot fail to reach out to the sense of responsibility of each of us and to the priority in agreeing on measures capable of protecting not only our own health but also that of family members and those around us. In a context historically different from ours, in the midst of World War II to be more precise, but not dissimilar in terms of the importance of the challenge to be faced, the British statesman Sir Winston

Churchill launched a vibrant appeal to "look beyond the horror and destruction of fighting" to imagine the Europe of tomorrow, made up of states free from all forms of oppression and peacefully living together. Projected for 2021 and beyond, our hope with the same conviction is aimed at a planet freed both from the murderous tyranny of Covid-19 and from other epidemics that may continue to afflict it.

To achieve this goal, we may certainly make use of the moral support of "Maria Dolens". Through her daily tolls, our Bell will continue to convey messages of peace, solidarity and hope to those who, regardless of religion, ethnicity, culture or language, are willing to accept them and make them their own. The approach of the end of year festivities enriches the authoritative voice from Colle di Miravalle with further significance, also providing me with the welcome opportunity to extend my most sincere wishes to all readers. Although different from those we are used to, since they are inevitably less rich in light, sound, color and flavor, the most authentic values will not fail to emerge from these upcoming holidays and of this I am convinced. In particular, those of an intimate and profound spirituality and a generous solidarity among family members. To these values, let us strive to add, on our part, an optimistic vision of tomorrow inspired by the image, complete with the inseparable cigar and bowler hat, of that courageous British statesman.

"Reggente" Marco Marsilli,  
Foundation President

### IN THIS EDITION

- 02** Vatican diplomacy acts to facilitate peace
- 04** From the United Nations. The alliance between science and politics
- 05** The virtual tour and the sound of Maria Dolens live online
- 06** From the Council of Europe. Cultural heritage and diversity
- 07** School for refugees
- 08** It took place on this date. Flag at half mast for Nelson Mandela

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THE APPEAL OF ARCHBISHOP PAUL RICHARD GALLAGHER

# Coming out of your shell

## VATICAN DIPLOMACY ACTS TO FACILITATE PEACE BETWEEN NATIONS



Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, Holy See Secretary for Relations with States, during a speech at the United Nations

To a flattering Latin American ambassador who described papal diplomacy as “the first in the world”, Cardinal Domenico Tardini, Secretary of State in the late 1950s, replied with a sarcastic “I hate to think what the second would be!” Serious people usually work at the Vatican, people who like to focus their attention on achievable goals, perhaps even long term. We know that the Church thinks according to very large temporal spans and what it historically tries to avoid is the risk of merely ob-

serving events, evaluating their extent, reporting what is wrong, raising “vibrated protest”, and ending up representing a sort of critical voice of conscience, often outside of the choir. Having clear objectives is reassuring, supporting them with strong arguments is stimulating, but it is not enough. You must also do something, possibly with continuity. More or less this is the approach. It is difficult for it is necessary to have perseverance and a precise project designed to “break down the mechanisms of indifference that are rampant today”.

“What the experts tell us is that the work of the Chancelleries is not enough, we also need ours

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The idea is always the same. Today, putting this into practice within a reasonable time is an absolute necessity. It is being proposed again in these days by an experienced negotiator, Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, who dedicated a long official speech pertaining to the strategies of the diplomatic service of the Holy See. On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the signing of the Agreement with Peru, the Secretary for Relations with States stressed that “the Holy See is called to act to facilitate coexistence between the various nations and to

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Moving on the international scene not to guarantee general security, but to support an idea of peace as a result of respect for international standards

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promote fraternity among peoples, where the term fraternity is synonymous with effective collaboration and cooperation that is true, harmonious and orderly, with a structured solidarity for the benefit of the common good and that of individuals”. In short, not a generic appeal to love one another, but the idea of a concrete activity where everyone has their own prerogatives and available resources, towards a specific goal: a serene and effective coexistence. Such phrases have been heard several times in the moments of reflection that the Foundation organizes periodically. It was Pope Francis who paved the way by asking the Holy See “to move on the international

scene not to guarantee general security, made more difficult than ever in this period of persistent instability and marked conflict, but to support an idea of peace as the fruit of just relations, that is, of respect for international norms and for the protection of fundamental human rights starting with those of a low standing, the most vulnerable».

Clearly, the diplomatic service of the Church moves for religious purposes and represents “the remarkable way through which the Pope may palpably reach the spiritual and material” peripheries “of humanity”, as Gallagher specified. But its diplomatic action strengthens and supports those of large multinational institutions, such as the United Nations or the Council of Europe which aim for the same goal despite having different starting points and different methods. “The idea of peace represented by the Holy See does not stop at that expressed by the UN in contemporary international law. Working for peace does not only mean establishing an international security system and, perhaps, respecting its obligations. It is also necessary to prevent the causes that can trigger a war conflict as well as remove those cultural, social, ethnic and religious situations that can reopen bloody wars that have just ended». In this sense, the archbishop added, international law “must continue to equip itself with legal institutions and regulatory instruments capable of managing conflicts that

have ended or situations in which the efforts of diplomacy have forced arms to remain silent”.

One of the most interesting passages seems to be just this. We are all concerned about how to create the conditions to stop conflict whereas less attention is perhaps paid to the measures to be put in place immediately after this goal has been achieved, to ensure that an often fragile truce turns into lasting peace. And on this point, the Secretary for Relations with States is very clear: “The post-conflict task is not limited to reorganizing the territories, recognizing new or changed sovereignties, or even guaranteeing the new equilibrium achieved with armed force. Rather, it must specify the human dimension of peace, eliminating any possible reason that could once again compromise the condition of those who have experienced the horrors of a war and now wait and hope for a different future based on justice”. It is written “human dimension of peace” but it reads as “giving priority to the force of law over the imposition of weapons, guaranteeing justice before legality”.

Of course it is a long, difficult journey, we know that. But what the experts tell us is that the work of the international Chancelleries is not enough, ours is also needed. It may sound rhetorical, but if the appeal is launched by a leading representative of one of the longest-running diplomacies in history, according to some “the first”, it

is better to take it seriously. One of the factors that slow down the efforts towards dialogue is indeed “rampant indifference” and the archbishop reminds us that we are all “like it or not, bombarded in everyday life by a continuous wave of news and information which connect us virtually to the rest of the world and that show us multitudes of suffering, homelessness and countless victims of wars forced to emigrate. In short, we cannot pretend not to know, and even if it is not our fault, the time has come to “break the protective shell of our selfishness, thus passing from theorems on possible peace to concrete experiences of lived peace, even if suffered”.

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We need to prevent the cause of conflicts and remove those cultural and social situations that can reopen wars that have just ended

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FROM THE UNITED NATIONS

# The alliance between science and politics

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT

Some people would like to have power to the imagination and so it came to be that scientists took their places in the control room. In times of pandemic, and not only, political decisions cannot ignore the analysis of curves and indices. The newspapers overwhelm us with graphics, making it increasingly clear that our health and the way we live is directly related not only to the environment, but also to conflicts. The International Day of Science for Peace and Development, established in 2001 by UNESCO, comes to our aid in order to settle the matter. The anniversary which has recently been celebrated focuses on the need to emphasize three funda-

mental aspects: the significant role of knowledge in society, the need to involve an ever wider audience in the debate on emerging issues and the importance and relevance of science in daily life. From this perspective, the role of "experts" also takes on a different social and cultural value. It is no coincidence that popular science books have been climbing the sales charts for quite some time. Just think of the "commercial" success that the counter-intuitive physics quantum theory is having, which until a few years ago was relegated to an ultra-specialized subject almost impossible to explain to those who were not in the field. The technicians, therefore, who have already explai-

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Unesco calls for the strengthening of international collaboration in view of a common strategy

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ned why we cannot leave the house after 10 pm, are now called to help us better comprehend the mechanisms of the extraordinary but fragile planet that we call "home", in order to make our societies more sustainable, freer and safer as well as limit the disparity in the consumption of resources that often leads to international crises.

The establishment of the Day was one of the outcomes of the World Conference on Science, held in Budapest in 1999. And the revival of the theme on an annual basis intends to continuously reaffirm the commitment to achieve the goals proclaimed in the *Declaration on Science and the Use of Scientific Knowledge*. It is not about abstract speeches. A number of conclusive projects and measures

to implement financial support have been promoted throughout the world through this means since 2001. The annual event also contributed to fostering cooperation between scientists living in conflict-affected regions. In this sense, the launch of the Israeli-Palestinian Organization of Science (Ipso) is emblematic. The theme chosen for this year's edition was a must: "Science for and with society to face the global pandemic". While the world is grappling with Covid-19, UNESCO, as agency of reference for the United Nations on these issues, is trying to bring science and society closer together and strengthen international collaboration in a historical moment in which it is even more evident how territorial borders act as artificial divisions that must be rethought in the face of global issues.

From a strictly scientific point of view, the response of the UN agency to the pandemic rests on three pillars. The first is linked to the strengthening of international and national cooperation through free access to knowledge and technical skills, as well as to the dialogue between experts, politicians, industries and health professionals with the fundamental contribution of civil society. The second aspect concerns access to clean and safe water and sanitation. Finally, it is important to note how putting pressure on biodiversity and natural habitats favors the occurrence of zoonosis, that is, diseases that can be naturally transmitted from vertebrate animals to humans and vice versa as in the case of Covid-19. In this regard, UNESCO considers it necessary to rethink the relationship between people and nature through the promotion of global geoparks and biosphere reserves, powerful tools capable of testing and implementing integrated approaches concerning the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable development.

# To renew is to continue

## VIRTUAL TOUR AND THE SOUND OF MARIA DOLENS LIVE ONLINE

**W**e are closed in again, but this time we are ready. The emergency confronted us with the need to rethink the entire activity of the Foundation, but the crisis, as always happens, once the initial moment of disorientation has passed, has offered us several opportunities. In particular, it gave us time to reflect on new ways to enjoy the places connected the Bell and to communicate the values it represents.

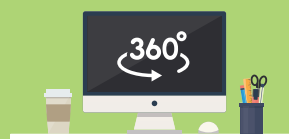
The need is to not close the gates, at least not completely, even in extreme situations such as the one we are experiencing. During the first emergency we "kept open" the Bell by making it "talk" every day in the newspaper "L'Adige". A thank you goes to the generosity of the newspaper. The idea of staying in direct contact in some way has now generated other initiatives that use the internet, social networks and websites. Many people from Trentino who are lucky enough to live in their own territory have asked for this, but also the "Trentini nel mondo" (Trentino People in the World), those tens of thousands of children and grandchildren of emigrants who are able to keep a relationship alive with their land of origin also through the internet.

For them and for all those who will not be able to go up to the Colle for reasons of geographical distance, health, or even just for an understandable distrust in going to public places in times of social distancing, we have developed a series of tools that will allow them to follow the activity of Maria Dolens. A virtual tour of the monumental area and the entire site will be inaugurated on the Foundation's website ([www.fondazioneopera-campana.it](http://www.fondazioneopera-campana.it)) by the end of December. 360-degree navigable photographs and related information as well as the reproduction of speeches given in particular events will be available and will be constantly updated. But the trademark remains the Bell.

The people of Rovereto already hear it every evening. Even when the Foundation centre is closed, the tolls ring throughout the valley. Now everyone can see Maria Dolens and hear her sound, live. Thanks to a webcam and an audio recording system, the hundred strokes of peace will be broadcast on the Foundation's website and social channels every evening. The winter timetable set for 20.30 will be in force until 27 March and will return thereafter to 21.30. Stay tuned.

### VIRTUAL TOUR

IMMERSE YOURSELF WITH  
THE VR VIEWER



### WEB CAM

LIVE STREAMING EVERY DAY





**W**hy should I care about posterity? What has posterity ever done for me? ». Groucho Marx, like all great humorists, opens up new horizons in lateral thinking. Indeed, preserving the cultural heritage for those who will follow us would seem to be of no immediate use. We don't even know to whom we will leave the things we care about most. If it were a set of well-made objects there would be no reason to try so hard. Everyone builds their churches and amphitheaters as they want. But if we're talking about "resources inherited from the past with which populations identify, regardless of who owns them, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions", as the Faro Convention argues, then we may conclude that these artifacts from the past explain who we are. Perhaps we ourselves are "posterity".

Certainly cultural heritage is the fruit of the complex social processes through which people distinguish those things that have a value to be passed on to future generations. And we are not just talking about frescoes, symphonies or domes that have defied gravity for centuries, but about a network of values that reinforce the idea of belonging and community. In years of activity, the Council of Europe, also thanks to the Framework Convention on the value of cultural heritage for society which took its name from the Portuguese city in which it was signed, has amply demonstrated that cultural and social activities provide opportunities for interaction between people with different backgrounds that not only improve the pluralistic identity of the community but also strengthen the relationship with the territory. Festivals, events or simple daily recreational experiences and practices promote trust, dialogue and mutual understanding between different societies.

FROM THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

# Cultural heritage and diversity

FROM THE FARO CONVENTION TO THE STEPS PROJECT



Maurits Cornelis Escher, "Convex and concave" (1955)

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Deciding together,  
in each community,  
the things that  
identify us

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For this reason, the European Commission and the Council of Europe have just launched a joint pilot project that has taken the name of STEPS and which aims to encourage and promote a participatory mapping of cultural heritage. It is a process in which community members are assigned the role of identifying those tangible and intangible assets that are a reflection and expression of their ever-changing values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions.

Deciding together which things to load onto Noah's Ark so that they are not swept away by the storm of time is the challenge. By negotiating the inventory of assets that have the right to survive between us, we can build a cultural map that constitutes the pluralist identity of the community in which we live. There is no exclusion. In the cardboard boxes of the temporary move you can put intangible objects or values, spades together with traditions, poems or ice skating,

organized sounds and improvised recipes, any expression of human creativity: basically what is believed to be significant by those living and working in any given territory.

Following this, if we compare our results with those of others, we might realize that our maternal grandmother's recipes could also be of interest to someone who lives far away, perhaps by adjusting a little salt. Too theoretical? There are concrete examples. The cities of Rijeka,

Croatia, and Lisbon, Portugal, were chosen in 2017 in order to experiment this methodology.

They mapped the shared cultural heritage and demonstrated how an intercultural approach centered on the idea of place can allow a city to open its urban identity to all communities, thus increasing trust, mutual recognition, interaction and ultimately, social cohesion. It seems to work, and there is also the funding to do it.

## THE ACTIVITY OF THE "STILL I RISE" ASSOCIATION

# School for refugees

**I**n a camp designed for 650 people, over 5,000 guests are now welcomed in Samos and in some periods they reach a peak of 7,600. The space has been exhausted for years: people live camped in tents or overcrowded containers. There is never enough to eat and people wait in line for hours for food distribution. With a shower for every 200 guests and only one doctor for the entire population of the hotspot, health protection is almost non-existent, just as legal and psychological assistance is insufficient. The areas adjacent to the tents are open-air landfills, with the accumulation of waste also due to poor sewerage. The length of a stay can last as much as two years and throughout this period minors do not go to school.

"Still I Rise" was born in order to fill this serious gap in 2018. It is a voluntary association that aims to provide informal education to thousands of vulnerable adolescents, also supporting them through various forms of psycho-social and legal assistance. It is an original model, which the organization is taking to different corners of the world, from Turkey to South America. Guaranteeing a warm reception in the classroom is essential in order to restore value and beauty to the various stages of growth. After a 6-year course of study, students have the opportunity to enter universities around the world. Gender balance and the inclusion of girls in the various training fields are crucial: the selection method guarantees a female presence of 50 percent. Despite the scarcity of resources, absolute priority is given to the selection of quality programs. The proposed education-

nal model focuses on the creation of a participatory and shared space, aimed at making young people responsible for themselves. It is no coincidence that preventative measures have been implemented to combat bullying. The idea comes from Sarah, Giulia and Nicolò. Between the three of them they don't even make a hundred years. They founded the association 36 months ago and the results are now emerging. Some have thought of nominating them for the Nobel Peace Prize.



Nicolò Govoni, one of the three founders of Still I Rise, embraces two of his students



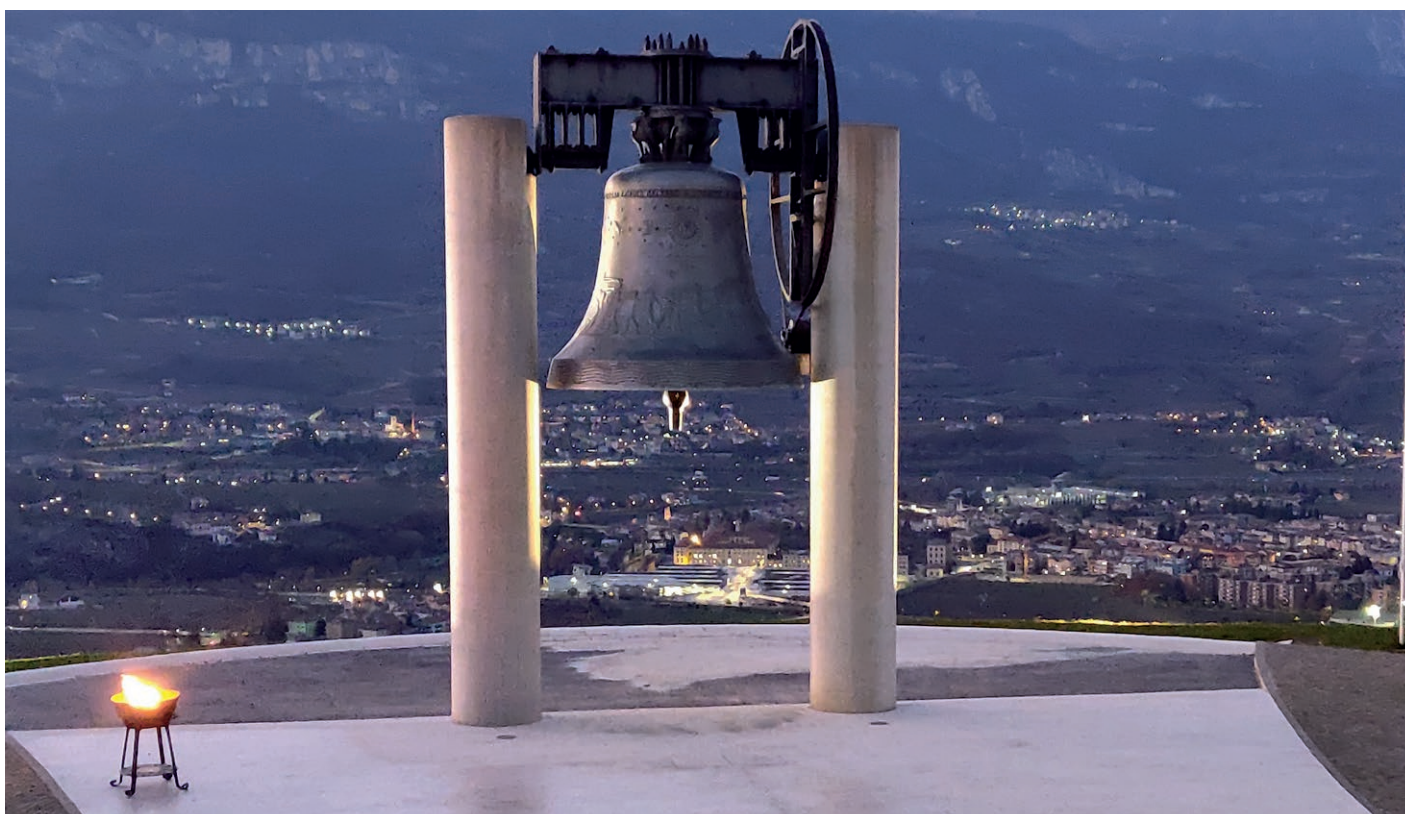
IT TOOK PLACE ON THIS DATE

# Flag at half mast

NELSON MANDELA DIED 5 DECEMBER, 2013



5 December, 2013: The South African flag at half mast throughout this day to commemorate the death of Nelson Mandela, a man of peace. A unique event in the history of the Bell.



On 31 December 1994 a new brazier made for Maria Dolens was lit for the first time. Since that day, Air, Earth, Water and Fire have accompanied each toll even with the new disposition of the Bell.