



Sotto il Monte Giovanni XXIII, 11 aprile 2013

**50TH ANNIVERSARY OF *PACEM IN TERRIS***

Mr. Eduardo Eurnekian – Chairman of the IRWF

Mr. Baruch Tenenbaum – Founder of the IRWF.

LORIS FRANCESCO CAPOVILLA

ARCIVESCOVO DI MESEMBRIA

Dear and noble Mr. Tenenbaum, Founder of the Raoul Wallenberg Foundation, and dear colleagues, friends and participants in the meeting of Monday, April 29 at Konrad-Adenauer-Conference Center / Mishkenot Shaananim in JERUSALEM.

I greet you with respect and esteem, with ineffable emotion because of the drama you evoke; drama which humanity must take on to reach the frontiers of the civilization of love.

Thank you for the honor you have conferred on me, motivated, as you state, for my having contributed over half a century to keep the memory of John XXIII alive. I did not deserve so much. Your kindness has far exceeded the merit of the contribution I wanted to make to truth, justice and solidarity.

I had the honor of living next to John XXIII wise, virtuous man who was docile to the inspirations of the Almighty. François Mauriac wrote of him:

"This Pope was humble. The Spirit did not find obstacles in him and that's why his papacy had but a few years: because it would open a crack in grace that will last for centuries. Through this crack, the Spirit will pass with nothing being able to stop it. He was Pope of hope, and what hope! Sure, we had always believed that one day there would be on earth one flock under one shepherd, but only at the end of time. We know now that this reality is on the way, and that this journey will last thousands of years. But it has already begun." (*Testimonianze*, VI-VII. 1963). Also thanks to him the whole human family, under the gaze of God, and will be a united, just and generous.

I am very pleased that, for years, you have welcomed me among the honorary members of the Angelo Roncalli International Committee and with happy surprise I read between the famous names also the name of Jorge Mario Bergoglio, from 13 March successor of the Apostle Peter, and who has chosen the name of Francis. The similarities between him and his predecessor John are numerous enough to push me to say, on several occasions: Pope John has returned.

Dear friends. With the name of Pope Roncalli you have set up a foundation in memory of his actions during the crucial years of Nazi persecution, in his capacity as papal representative in Turkey (1935-1944). There, he made a commitment to service and placing Jews to hospitable lands, an episode for which the Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem went to Istanbul to pay tribute to “Mgr. Delegate.” Indeed, according to the chronicles of the time, a ship carrying many Jewish children and adults was directed to a safe port, thanks to the direct intervention of the Apostolic Delegate, thereby avoiding almost certain death in one of the extermination camps organized by the Nazis.

On October 17, 1962 Pope John XXIII received in audience at the Vatican 130 people from the United Jewish Appeal: Jewish Study Mission (USA). Rabbi Herbert Friedman, after thanking the Holy See for what he did in favor of the Jews, explicitly stated: "... In a Europe that was almost completely silent, you protested against the inhumanity of anti-Semitism, lavishing it with actions to save human lives "(*Israele, la terra del latte e del miele. Vincere la Pace*. Litografia Orobica. Bergamo 1994).

I thank you again. I will not be there in person but my heart beats with yours in the memory of the incomparable hero Raoul Wallenberg. I embrace and bless you all.

Most affectionately,



*Loris Francesco Capovilla*

+ Loris Francesco Capovilla

ARCHBISHOP OF MESEMBRIA

TITLE OF ANGELO GIUSEPPE RONCALLI (1934-1953)