

MASSIMO GATTAMELATA, OUR FRIEND

Domingo Sugranyes Bickel, past President
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Massimo Gattamelata was a friend for all of us, his passing is a great loss for the Centesimus Annus Foundation he served for 20 years.

Unlike his remote ancestor, the *condottiere* immortalized by Donatello in Padua, Massimo was a peace-loving man. He was born in Rome in 1938, although his family roots were in the industrious Northern city of Brescia. He graduated in Economics at the Università La Sapienza in Rome. His career developed mainly at Confindustria, the Italian confederation of employers, where he reached high level positions in the General manager's and President's office. In 1995, he was appointed Secretary General of Centesimus Annus pro Pontifice (CAPP), the Vatican-based foundation created in 1993 by Saint John Paul II at the proposal of Cardinal Rosalio Castillo Lara. Massimo continued at the service of CAPP until 2015. He was the craftsman who constructed this unique, lay-led institution, which for a long time was the only Holy See presence in business and financial circles.

Massimo knew his ways at the Vatican. When I started my mandate as President in 2009, he was my teacher. He had a sixth sense: avoid being cornered in any sectorial group. He was committed to the universal Church, without adjective, and this left all doors open.

He was the right man in the right spot: a mature Christian, he also had a direct experience of our tribe - executives in business and finance - with all our shortcomings and few virtues. He was truly interested in the debate on how to apply Catholic Social Teaching in the economic world, which is CAPP's first vocation. In the Italian context, he perfectly knew where to find voices and examples to convince and show the way.

With his small team at his beloved office on Cortile San Damaso, he reigned like a generous and demanding father. He was a man of the analogic world, which he managed with great ability. He perfectly understood the need for transparency and fully supported the publication of the Foundation's annual accounts, long before it became common practice at the Vatican.

As president I used to visit Rome once a month, and I remember with nostalgia our serene conversations, trying to find the best speaker or an attractive formulation of a conference theme, along the lines indicated by our illustrious Scientific Committee leader, Professor Alberto Quadrio-Curzio. Massimo complained jokingly of my acting as a president-secretary general, and I would say he was a secretary general-president; in any case, a productive teamwork. My predecessors, especially Lorenzo Rossi di Montelera, and our dear international assistant, Archbishop Claudio M. Celli, would surely confirm Massimo's excellence at work.

Above all, Massimo had the gift to create new friendships; with the help of local Bishops, he recruited hundreds of members and selected leaders of local chapters around Italy. When Mons. Celli and Lorenzo started international contacts to establish the US, Spanish and German groups, Massimo was an efficient support. He continued to support internationalization later on, when new chapters were started in Malta, Paris, London, Brussels, in Holland and in Canada...

Massimo worked under Saint John Paul II and under Pope Benedict XVI. I remember the early morning phone call we had on the day of Pope Benedict's resignation, which compelled us to change our plans and improvise the 2013 annual conference "sede vacante", at the Catholic University in Milan, where Archbishop Cardinal Scola challenged the foundation to look for an understanding of the financial crisis, and this led us later to start a series of expert consultations (the "Dublin Process"). I also remember when Massimo and I attended for the first time the early morning mass at Santa Marta with the recently elected Pope Francis.

Massimo Gattamelata was a true defender of Catholic Social Teaching and a devout disciple of Jesus Christ. His merits were recognized by the Holy See in 2015, when he was awarded the honors of Knight of the Pontifical Equestrian Order of Saint Gregory the Great. Let us join his family, Mariella, Stefano and Marta and his grandchildren in their hopeful prayer, and ask Massimo to look with confidence and support upon the CAPP Foundation, today and in the future.