

Faith and Light international

# A getaway to Rome

30 september 2023

***But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.*** 2 Cor, 4, 7

Arriving in Rome, the eternal city, is always a stimulus and a joy, especially if you're going to meet other people from Faith and Light. That's what happened on Friday evening, when we had time to share a few pizzas with several Faith and Light families in Rome, with their sons and daughters with intellectual disabilities. It was a time to strengthen ties around the table and in friendship, with a knowing smile and a shared rest. Something so simple, yet so profound, because no one who shares a table remains indifferent, and complicity and fraternity are born, as Jesus of Nazareth showed us.

The following morning, in the Franciscan Basilica of the Twelve Apostles, a meeting was organized by Faith and Light Italy on the theme: "Diversity, the richness of fragility", with the participation of large delegations from Faith and Light Croatia, Slovenia, the new community in Albania, and of course Faith and Light Italy, from various towns. People unfamiliar with Faith and Light came to see and listen. Come and see!

After the opening ecumenical prayer by Father Laureano from Albania, we listened to testimonies from Elmira Gani, several young Italians and myself on the international dimension. Elmira Gani belongs to the Albanian community and is the mother of Adea, a young girl with a recently confirmed intellectual disability. Her testimony focused on this experience, in a multi-religious context such as that of Albania. Indeed, Elmira was a Muslim before she came to know Faith and Light (see "Up Sails!" N°52). The young Italians: Marta, Guiseppa, Mariangela, Serena and Simona talked about how they live their commitment to their Faith and Light community, what it brings them and what it means to them, witnessing Faith and Light as a wonderful place to share their ideals and to care for one another in the midst of diversity.

And in conclusion, a final gesture: we wrote on the drawing of a hand our frailties and then pasted them on a large fresco covered with fragile hands, forming the word "Diversity". All of us with our frailties, united and reunited, and God caressing our little hands, loving our poverty and transforming it into richness and gifts, in the midst of diversity. All this, accompanied by much singing, emotion and joy.





We then shared a meal at the invitation of the Taizé Community.

In the evening, the ecumenical prayer vigil entitled "Together", in St Peter's Square, Vatican City. Organized by Taizé as a gateway to the Synod of Bishops from October 4 to 29. St. Peter's Square filled up on this peaceful Roman afternoon, where, if you looked carefully, you could see the swarms of birds flying over this ecumenical and universal space. The presence of Faith and Light was perceptible both on the podium in the square and in the area where most of the faithful were present: in the entrance

procession: Mathej and Damijan from Slovenia, Dragen and Lovro from Croatia carrying the icon of Jesus and the Gospels. Ministers from different Christian families were present at the prayer: Protestants, Lutherans, Baptists, Evangelicals, Anglicans, Orthodox, Copts and Catholics. True ecumenical prayer, with readings, testimonies and Taizé songs. All united with Jesus at the center. The prayer had several parts, including action for the gift of the Synod and for creation, prayer for others and for peace.

The reading of the Gospel of the Good Samaritan was mimed by several Italian Faith and Light brothers and sisters dressed in Hebrew costumes. A magnificent and moving performance that deepened our understanding of this Gospel with emotion, tears and much hope. Bravo to Fede e Luce!



Thank you to Stefano and Angela for welcoming me into their home, where I felt right at home. Thanks to Angela Grassi and Don Marco Bove, to the whole Italian team for their hard work and enthusiasm. And thanks to you, dear Matteo Colombo, Edo Pirola and so many other friends who always remind us of the essentials of our Faith and Light family. Then I remember again how lucky I am, and I thank God with all my heart for being part of such a special and unique Christian community.

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