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Carlo Maria Martini, the man who was able to talk

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Milan emeritus archbishop **Carlo Maria Martini**, who died on 31st August 2012, **was a Jesuit**: he joined the “Society of Jesus” in 1944, he studied in Istituto Sociale in Turin and in Istituto Aloisianum in Gallarate (at that time it was isolated on the hill in Ronchi, outside of the small town). On 13th July 1952 he was ordained priest, in Chieri cathedral. He has been for many years the rector of Rome Pontifical Gregorian University and **Milan archbishop from 1979 to 2001**.

Under his guidance, **the Diocese went through transformation and strained years**: Martini was able not only to govern during that turbulent period, but also to stand up as moral and social reference, during the final years of political terrorism violence, during the years of drugs that deleted a generation and the years of uninvolved “Milano da bere.” **He cleared the way for the interfaith dialog and with nonbelievers** (also with “Cattedra dei non credenti” initiative, creating a dialog with Paolo Debenedetti, Massimo Cacciari, Giulio Giorello, Carlo Sini, Gustavo Zagrebelsky) and he focused Diocese action on the Gospel and the Word of God, according to Second Vatican Council ideas, particularly with “Scuola della Parola” experience. During the 90s **he was faced with a new city: Milan passed from being the Italian moral capital to the city symbol of Tangentopoli, of corruption, then of civil society and Bossi’s and Berlusconi’s counter-change**.

Passing Saint Ambrose’s pastoral to Dionigi **Tettamanzi**, **Martini spent a long period in the Holy Land**, “praying for peace intercession” between Israel and Palestine. He wrote “Nocturnal conversations in Jerusalem.” **In 2008 he came back to Italy in order to be treated for Parkinson’s disease**. He has suffered from it for a long time. Since then, he has lived in **Aloisianum in Gallarate**, where other “Society of Jesus” old brothers also live. Up to last year he celebrated Mass on Sunday in the church inside the complex (in the picture above: Martini at the opening ceremony of “I giusti dell’Islam” exhibition, in Aloisianum in 2010, promoted by Acli, Gallarate Decanato and city Muslim community). In recent years he has become the reference point in the dialog between the Church and Italian society, also through public interventions in “**Corriere della Sera**” (Particularly a long dialog that has lasted for ages in the pages of the newspaper and online) and his last volumes.

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