



November interview - Alessandro Gisotti



Professional journalist, he is vice editor-in-chief of the International Radionews on Radio Vaticana. He follows the activities of the Pope and of the Holy See daily. Moreover he is expert in American politics. He published the volumes 'Dio e Obama. Fede e politica alla Casa Bianca' and '11 settembre. Una storia che continua', both by Effatà Editrice. From 2008 to 2011 he taught journalism at the 'Istituto Massimo dei Gesuiti' in Rome. He is fellow of the Study Centre Tocqueville-Acton.

You follow the Pope and advertise His voice and the Holy See's one all over the world. How do you live your job, according to the big responsibility that it requires?

First of all with a great sense of gratefulness. I have the opportunity to do an enchanting job, everyday different, in a difficult period. A period this one when a lot of smart people, young but not only, live the dramatic situation of unemployment and precariousness. As a Catholic I feel like a privileged. I serve the Pope, 14 years now, an extraordinary experience that gives me a lot, personally even more than professionally. Of course I'm really conscious of the responsibility due to my job, because every day I have to talk about Pope's speeches and actions. But during these years I've learnt that you're never alone. Our job is constantly a job of a team that works thanks to professionalism and will of a lot of people. Especially on Radio the idea of team work is really strong.

The President of USA, Barak Obama, has defined himself as 'hugely impressed' by Pope Francis' and from His declarations pronounced starting from His first appearance as Head of the Catholic Church six months ago. What can you say about the binomial Usa/Vatican?



A few years ago, the essayist Massimo Franco published a book about the relation Usa/Vatican entitled 'Imperi paralleli'. I think that this title is emblematic and represents the real situation, even if in an emphatic way: Catholic Church and United States are the only two entities which have a planetary projection. Of course Usa has a great political and economic power, while the Catholic Church represents the great 'spiritual power', but surely their global horizon makes their relation sometimes convergent, sometimes divergent. And it isn't by chance that the two most famous alive personalities all over the world are Pope Francis and Barak Obama.

Karol Wojtyla, Joseph Ratzinger and Jorge Bergoglio are three big figures. Which has been and is the relation of each of them with mass media?



John Paul II has been a giant of communication, in addition to His huge Faith. He knew how to use TV and radio potential and He had the great merit to start the relation between Vatican and Internet. Benedict XVI has had a less 'explosive' style about communication but despite this He has been able to develop, maybe as never before, the dialogue between Faith and Reason. Moreover we don't have to forget that He has been the first Pope with a Twitter account. Pope Francis has an enchanting communicative approach. Even in front of three millions of people, I think about the JMJ in Rio, He seems to speak to each one of the presents. As the director of 'Civiltà Cattolica' padre Antonio Spadaro said, He is Himself a 'social network', able to create 'communicative events' where everyone feels part of it. Pope Francis is really a master of 'circular communication'.



Is Pope Francis' 'Revolution' changing the Vatican? Does the clerical power accept without any complaints His continuous calls to sobriety and humility?



During the Mass which started His Pontificate (March 19th, 2013), Pope Francis underlined with energy that the 'real power is the service'. I think that we should start from here if we want to understand the Church Government Reformation that Bergoglio is acting thanks to the help of a Council made up of Cardinals chosen by Himself, representatives of each continent. Anyway, even if I know that the questions of the Roman Curia and of IOR are object of mass media and public opinion, I think that Pope Francis has been acting with a wider reformation, deeper and long-lasting. He is putting at the centre of His minster as Bishop of Rome the evangelic message with a strong accent on the dimension of mercy that involves the 'nearest' as the 'further'. The biggest novelty till now is also the simplest: the morning mass in 'Casa Santa Marta'. A daily mastery that puts again

the Word of God at the centre of the day of a Christian.

In the end, which are the most touching news and the most distressing one that you had to communicate during your career?



The most touching event that I had to describe is Pope John Paul II's funeral, April 8th, 2005. It seemed that the whole world had been gathered in Saint Peter's Square to say thanks to this extraordinary man: a man who has never stopped testifying the Trust in God and in the human genre. I still shiver when my mind goes to that 'Saint right now' shouted by the pilgrims. People weren't wrong: on next April 27th, Karol Wojtyla will be proclaimed saint, after only 9 years from His death. Indeed the most distressing event for me is the attack to Usa, September 11th, 2001, the real rupture of our generation and we pay for its consequences still now. This event hit me, maybe because the day after I had a flight to Usa, and for the 10th anniversary of this terrorist attack to the Twin Towers I published a book with several testimonies of heros and survivors of that day, evidences that I gained in New York and Washington.

Thank you very much for your participation to our monthly interview.

Edmondo Papanice

Interview Alessandro Gisotti online: www.halp.eu ; thanks for translation Dr. **Luana Convertino**