

GIULIANO ROTA MARTIR – A REFLECTION

When our dearly beloved great benefactor and friend of LITTLE EDEN Society attended the opening of the Holy Family Chapel at the LITTLE EDEN Elvira Rota Village in Johannesburg friend, he subsequently wrote:

"In 2005 I visited South Africa and I had the privilege of retracing Domitilla's journey from its first tentative beginnings through its numerous milestones, as I listened to Daniele recounting the story. I spent the following seven years considering how best to contribute to such a commendable cause and I found it a difficult challenge. Domitilla's return to the Father has convinced me of the necessity to abandon fears or hesitation and to begin sowing new seed following her example..."

And how that seed has blossomed and borne new fruits!

On 21 January 2012, the *Associazione Domitilla Rota Hyams ONLUS* was formally constituted as a direct result of the many hours, days and weeks spent by Giuliano to ensure the success of a support base for LITTLE EDEN which over the years has provided both incredible financial support as well as facilitating the work of Italian volunteers at LITTLE EDEN. Giuliano was greatly instrumental in promoting the work of LITTLE EDEN within the Bergamo region, liaising with organisations and personalities, attending to innumerable functions both civic and ecclesiastic regarding the Society. From managing the annual Domitilla and Danny Hyams Memorial Lectures both in Italy and South Africa to arranging visits from Cardinal Napier and Archbishop Thagale and establishing dialogue with the Bergamo and Vatican curia, nothing was ever too much or too onerous for him when LITTLE EDEN called out in need.

LITTLE EDEN salutes and inscribes the name of Giuliano Rota Martir in its Roll of Honour.

But Giuliano was much more than a successful businessman and great benefactor to the most marginalised members of society. He was our special and close family relation with whom we shared many delightful and joyful days together both in Italy, in South Africa and elsewhere. Giuly was a man of the highest integrity, of incredible kindness and great generosity. It was always our very great comfort to be able to arrive in Albenza, knowing that we had a secure open home in his Ca di Precc. But he was also a very deep thinker and spiritual person. Little did we realise of his strong faith until we came to hear of his overnight Good Fridays trips to the Vatican to attend the Pope's Via Crucis and his devotion to the Madonna of Cornabusa when he presented to LITTLE EDEN a copy of this statue together with his son Mattia. We, here in a far-flung corner of the earth will dearly miss an exceptional family member, a trustworthy and honourable companion, a person who faithfully followed the steps of Christ.

To dear, Monica, children Anna and Mattia, your husband and father was the role model we all wish to strive for. The love for his family was tangible and inspirational to observe. In the quiet moments of discussions, he would often mention with great joy the achievements of his children and their progress in life. The love for his family was unconditional. The words from *1 Corinthians 13* could have been written to summarise Giuliano, the husband and father:

"Love is patient, Love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast. It is not proud, It does not dishonour others. It is not self-seeking. It is not easily angered; it keeps no records of wrong. Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always perseveres. Love never fails"

Monica, Anna and Mattia, we share in your anguish, your pain for a loss gone much, much too soon. May Our Lord and his Mother and all the Angels protect you all, comfort you and look after you in this very traumatic and difficult time. Anna and Mattia, your father has left you an incredible legacy to honour.

From *Timothy 4:7*, we read:

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."

That was Giuliano Rota Martir, husband, father, family friend, counsellor, companion and benefactor - our Giuly.

Luigi and Lucy Slaviero
Johannesburg