

“ The will of one man,  
the future of many ”



Fondazione  
ValterBaldaccini

# FROM THE ROOTS 07

JULY 2021

VALTER BALDACCINI FOUNDATION MAGAZINE

## Our Mother Earth



>> THANKS TO YOUR GENEROSITY, A NEW PROJECT IS STARTING IN KENYA

## A MESSAGE FOR YOU



Dear friends, taking the time to write these few lines that accompany the Foundation's periodical is something I always do with joy. It is always a moment of reflection and inspiration for me. This time I'm doing it from the Carceri Hermitage in Assisi where I returned after the conservation walk organized to remember my father and celebrate the anniversary of the Valter Baldaccini Foundation.

From that meeting with the friars I began to reflect on the message and thoughts of St. Francis. I reread the Canticle of the Creatures and one verse in particular caught my attention: "Praise be to you, oh my Lord, for our Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us".

How important is our Mother Earth? How much do we need her and how often do we neglect her, assuming that she will continue to give us, endlessly, everything we need? This is why we dedicated our last anniversary to waste collection, a small gesture to take care of the common good, a moment shared with the friends of the Foundation.

Our Mother Earth generates life, as the very young mothers of the new project we are carrying out in Kenya have chosen to do. They are 15 women, little more than girls who, due to the economic consequences of the pandemic, were forced into prostitution. They had no other alternative to acquire food. Despite the difficulties the project welcomed their 16 children. The first thing they asked us for was help with the weekly shopping. Thanks to our donors, they will have guaranteed groceries for a year, together with a training course, work and psychological support.

Everything is connected and it seems as if the Earth is giving us back the harm we are doing to it. Taking care of the little things in our daily life and taking care of those who are most in difficulty and experiencing social injustices is the way to support the common good.

Beatrice Baldaccini  
President of the Valter Baldaccini Foundation

## A JOB FOR THE YOUNG MOMS OF MATHARE

Mathare is one of the largest slums in Kenya. It was 2006 when Valter Baldaccini visited this place on the outskirts of Nairobi and was deeply moved and overwhelmed. It was in those slums that he met Joab Omoto, who today is our contact person for long-distance adoptions, and the extraordinary Mathare nuns, a group of women who lovingly take care of minors living on the streets, families in living in extreme poverty, people with mental illness and addictions.

**Every day they put themselves at the service of others, knowing that they can't solve all these problems, but they remain enthusiastic seeing many small seeds of concrete help sprout for these people.**



>> JOAB OMOTO, THE SISTERS OF MATHARE AND THE MOTHERS INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT

The collaboration between Joab Omoto and the sisters of Mathare has resulted in a **new project** designed to give an opportunity for liberation to 15 very young mothers and their 16 children who live in the slum.

One of the most dramatic aspects of the African female condition is the denial of the right to freely have control of one's life. There are many causes which include cultural factors, lack of adequate information, lack of access to education and family and social pressures that push girls and preteens to early marriages. But there are also economic causes that



>> AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE MOTHERS OF MATHARE

influence women's choices: poverty often pushes very young women into prostitution, in exchange for food.

One of the worrying consequences of the pandemic is the increase in pregnancies among minors and young women.

Between January and May 2020 in Nairobi County alone, nearly 12,000 girls between the ages of 10 and 19 turned to maternity health services. In this time of global emergency, hunger and the struggle to meet basic needs have become even greater problems for many families and, unfortunately, many girls and young women have paid the price. The only way to fight hunger and counter the rising crisis is to invest in these 15 young mothers, placing them at the center of an aid and capacity skill-building program.

Some of them have given birth a few months ago or

have babies who are starting to crawl and others are pregnant again.



>> THE MOTHERS OF MATHARE ARE LEARNING A JOB THANKS TO YOU

For one year, for two days a week, the young mothers will acquire new skills and create small local handicrafts, they will receive compensation and spending for the week. They will also begin a path of psychological support, which helps

them to have confidence in themselves and which is also supportive for their children's health, hygiene, and the prevention of the spread of diseases.

**This is concrete help to try and make them capable, autonomous and independent.**



### Mathare - Mom stories

**Shantel** is 17 years old and has 2 children. The one she holds in her arms is little Dezari. Shantel has two sisters and three brothers and they all live with their mom, who works occasionally. Shantel was forced to drop out of school between the seventh and eighth grade when she became pregnant with her first child. Every day she helps her mother and takes care of her little ones. Her dream is to give her children a better life than she had, providing them with food and education.



**Irene** is 19 years old, has a brother and a sister and lives with her mother. For more than 6 years she has been living in a small shack in Mathare together with her little Nelius. Before becoming pregnant, Irene attended the school that she has now been forced to abandon. Today she can no longer afford to pay the fees because she is unemployed, but she hopes to find, through this project, a job that can give her autonomy and dignity, for her and her child.



You too can support the mothers of Mathare. Write to us or call us and we will be happy to tell you how.  
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*The Valter Baldaccini Foundation was born in 2015, a year after Valter Baldaccini passed away.*

*The Foundation was established to preserve his life testimony, his values and his actions as a Christian man and enlightened entrepreneur.*

*The Foundation supports those who need help most, in our territory and in the world, by creating projects designed for families in difficulty, initiatives that create job opportunities and educational paths that are opportunities for redemption.*

*To realize that we need your support!  
Please*

**DONATE NOW**

- With credit card:

<https://www.fondazionevb.org/en/how-to-donate/donate-online-now>

- With a bank transfer:

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## ON THE ROAD OF SAINT FRANCIS: AN ECOLOGICAL WALK IN MEMORY OF VALTER BALDACCINI

It has been seven years since the passing of Valter Baldaccini to eternal life and six since the launching of the Foundation named after him. On May 8th we celebrated this important day with **an ecological walk in the evocative setting of Assisi's Carceri Hermitage.**

Fifty Foundation volunteers, managers and UMBRAGROUP's RSU shared both a spiritual moment and a community service experience with great joy and emotion.



Our President Beatrice Baldaccini and Antonio Baldaccini, the CEO of UMBRAGROUP, who shared many life experiences with him, along with Stefania Proietti, Mayor of the City of Assisi who sponsored the initiative, all recalled Valter with great affection. From their words, a portrait of Valter emerged as a person of great values: father and friend always human as well as entrepreneur eager to introduce new paradigms into the economy and work.

The remembrance of Valter concluded with a prayer led by Father Mirko Mazzocato and the Minor Friars with a thought on eternity: the bonds of love for family, friends, work and land are never lost, but live on for a very long time. A bit like the centuries-old holm oaks present at the Carceri Hermitage, a place so dear to Saint Francis.

The group then collected the waste in the parking lot of the Hermitage and sorted it.

This concrete gesture shows how care and attention are the core values of the Foundation, with an awareness that **no fight against social injustice is possible if one does not respond to the call to care for the Earth and the common good.**

A morning of community service, with a great desire to be together and enjoy the beauty of Creation. A joyful experience that we want to repeat as soon as possible.