

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



Fondazione
ValterBaldaccini

FROM THE ROOTS 10

DECEMBER 2022

VALTER BALDACCINI FOUNDATION MAGAZINE

FOR WOMEN



>> MOTHER SILVIA AND HER CHILDREN LUCA AND LUCREZIA

A MESSAGE FOR YOU



Dear friend,
For the tenth edition of "From the roots" we are focusing on women.

Their condition in our society is a topic that has always been close to our hearts. We were gravely concerned when the situation of Afghani women deteriorated two summers ago. We dedicated a conference to them for our last anniversary, and women are the protagonists of most of the Foundation's projects.

Being born a woman is not easy. It's not easy in the West. It's not easy in Italy, where each of us experiences many difficulties in our daily lives; however, being born a woman is far more complicated if you are born in areas where the path towards emancipation is imperious. Thanks to your generosity, the women who receive your help and support through the Foundation's projects prove it to us. They are women who fight every day for their dignity, to go to school, to train and have a job that provides them autonomy and independence, to have freedom of choice, to better manage their family without forgetting about themselves. They are women like Mary, whose story we will tell you, who benefited from one of the job grants that we created together with Caritas Foligno.

And speaking of women, our director Fabio Luccioli interviewed two of them who are particularly important to the Foundation: the pediatrician Mariolina Frigeri and the psychologist and psychotherapist Marta Franci. They are the doctors who are part of our Scientific Committee, creators, and promoters of the project "With families". They are extraordinary women, who take care of many other women through their work.

I wish you pleasant reading and I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Beatrice Baldaccini
Presidente Fondazione Valter Baldaccini

ADVOCATING FOR WOMEN

Fabio Luccioli's interview

Women supporting women. It is the extraordinary life of doctors Mariolina Frigeri and Marta Franci. Women, mothers, and professionals who, in their respective fields, have traveled alongside the female universe and families for years. Dr. Frigeri is a pediatrician and Dr. Franci is a psychologist. Their professions have many points in common, starting from a special perspective that concerns women. Together they have conceived and are carrying on the project "With the families" through the Valter Baldaccini Foundation.

Just as common seems to be the way they see things, starting with their profession. "I feel privileged to do a job that has always brought me into contact with women. **It is as if there**

were an alliance between women –

says Dr. Mariolina Frigeri. I consider this an extra element because it allows me to find synergy with them. Every day that I enter the clinic and meet the mothers, I feel that with them it is possible to create a strong alliance, which has always characterized my life.

Furthermore, I was lucky enough to have a man next to me who never asked me for explanations whenever I came home late".

"I don't think my life is so exceptional, but I can still share it with other women – says Dr. Marta Franci. I believe that being able to 'wear more clothes' through which I can tell my story is a gift, the result of emancipation. I am a mother, a woman and a professional who has been able to access levels of study and work without barriers. Therefore I can say that **emancipation exists. But it is equally true that we must look a little farther from ourselves to understand that there is still so much to do.** Without going that far - she continues - I am thinking of the North-South Italy gap in terms of access to work".

And our doctors dwell on that idea of "much to do." That's right, because for Mariolina Frigeri "equality and countering the stereotype of woman as the 'angel of the hearth' starts from within each family" she explains. "Children must grow up



>> DRS. FRANCI AND FRIGERI AT THE CENTER, ALONG WITH THE "WITH THE FAMILIES" PROJECT TEAM

understanding the importance that the roles between dad and mom, man and woman, are interchangeable: it's about two people helping each other and respecting each other, without anyone having a predominant role". And on this front Marta Franci agrees with her: "Much is being done to change things. In my daily life I see more and more dads present at visits and in school settings".

But all this is often not enough. "There always remains a great female 'activation'" Dr. Franci observes. "Sometimes because men delegate, sometimes because we women want to 'put our mouth' on everything. The fact remains that **even today the 'governance' of the family is purely in the hands of women, which leads to considerable mental stress.**"

And if women still have a very important role in the family today, much needs to be done in terms of gender equality, starting with work. To achieve this, it is essential to "play in advance", i.e. from when you are little. And it is projects like "With the families" that can eradicate a certain type of culture.

"As the project itself says, the goal is to give everyone the 'best possible start'. And this is possible by working with children in their very first days of life - observes Marta Franci . We often work with mothers, but when there is man's involvement, we see that the

'viral load' is higher; better levels of efficacy can be achieved". "The project - says Mariolina Frigeri - was born to address weaknesses, perhaps even temporary ones, that arise in an era in which it is easy to get lost. Having good opportunities and relationships for a child is crucial, but not all families have the same tools.

Therefore 'With the families' wants to allow everyone to 'leave' in the same way. There's been a lot of talk lately about merit, but first we have to put everyone in the same starting conditions. Only then will we be able to talk about merit".

Returning the world of women, neither lacks a reference to current politics. Beyond the colors, in Italy the first female Prime Minister will remain a historical fact that, perhaps, can also provide a turning point to the role of women in certain sectors.

"Giorgia Meloni is a leader capable of forcefully affirming her ideas - explains Dr. Frigeri. A young woman who hasn't given up on being a mother and who, I imagine, has an equal partner. She went on her way, affirming her ideas. I hope that there are women like this in other parties too".

"I hope that, in twenty years' time - concludes Dr. Franci - we will be able to look at the present day by remembering an 'iron' Margaret Thatcher-style woman. Surely what happened in this last period is a revolutionary sign, a real novelty".



Projects dedicated to women in 2022

► MICHIGAN (UNITED STATES)

- Support for women housed at Emmaus House. These are **women with a difficult past**, marked by prison, addiction, and violence. At this House they can start again on their path to autonomy.

► KOSOVO

- University scholarships for **two young girls**, Dardana and Ariana, who otherwise would not have had access to education.

► BURKINA FASO

- Access to school for **13 girls**.

► KENYA

- "Mutanu the pink garden," a small farm where **20 women** work: they grow vegetables, raise baby goats, and run a chicken coop.

- "A job for Mathare mothers" training and psychological support for **15 underage mothers** living in the Nairobi slum.

- School access for **18 adolescent girls**.

► ITALIA

- Job grants together with Caritas Foligno for **two women in need**.

- **6 fragile families**, in the area, with a small child, accompanied and supported by the educators of "With the families" project



Fondazione
Valter Baldaccini



Since 2015, the Valter Baldaccini Foundation has been committed to preserving the life testimony, values and actions of Valter Baldaccini, a Christian man and enlightened entrepreneur. Every day it supports those who are most in difficulty by carrying out projects in three areas: family, education and work, in the area and around the world.

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JOB GRANTS AND REBIRTH, MARY'S STORY

By Francesca Brufani

Nigerians are said to be among the best dancers in all of Africa because they can dance beautifully on one leg while advancing energetically in circular figures. Mary is a fifty-year-old Nigerian, although she has lived in Italy for more than twenty. A victim of trafficking and Islamic terrorism, **she is now able to "dance with one leg" thanks to the "Family and Work" project conceived and carried out together with Caritas Diocesana of Foligno and the Cooperativa "Territorio e Solidarietà," its operational arm in the area of inclusion and job placement.**

"I came to Italy in '98," Mary says, "because there was so much suffering in Africa. I lost my father when I was little because he, a Christian, was killed by a group of Islamic extremists.

My mother was a housewife, I had a large family with three other brothers and three sisters, and I had to drop out of school. There were no job opportunities in Nigeria, and I came to Italy the same way so many other women come here. The madame who made me come started to exploit me with violence and blackmail and I had to do things I didn't want to do and that's why I ended up in jail. When I got out I said, "Enough! No more threats!" and with those words inside I asked for help at Caritas, to start a different life. Here I found a family, I had the opportunity to make myself known and the chance to do something I liked by dedicating myself to cleaning because by nature I am very precise."



>> CREDIT: FRANCESCA BOCCABELLA

"No one cleans like she does, everybody says," Mary explains with a hint of pride. "I clean in my assigned spaces as if I were at home because I feel at home here and I feel valued for who I am. I am grateful, and I hope to continue to collaborate again" adds Mary, is starting to cultivate many dreams of rebirth in her heart. Participating in this project is slowly germinating these dreams.

"In life, I would love to travel. I'm used to cleaning, it's part of me now, but other dreams are also being born. One day, for example, I would love to work as a receptionist in a big hotel. I would like to be able to be completely independent and have my own house. Then there is drawing, which has been my great passion since I was in school in Nigeria. The future? I am happy now, especially with the people I have met here. The rest remains to be discovered".