

Servas Italy General Assembly and the Peace March

In these challenging months, the Italian Board and the Servas Youth Group friends are working together to create links and spaces for dialogue, to share many small ideas and actions.

Despite the difficulties, and respecting the current restrictions, on October 9-10-11 Servas Italy held its annual Assembly in Assisi (Perugia), participating as well in the Peace March. The Peace March is held each two years in Assisi, the historical town of Francesco, patron saint of Italy and symbol of Peace.



The March is promoted by a Committee ("Tavola della Pace") of many associations and groups active on Peace topic. Servas Italy joined this Committee last year and prepared with others the event.

Usually the Peace March is a walk from Perugia to Assisi but this year due to Covid-restriction it was a "Human-chain" 25 km long, where people were standing, holding a rope and flags, connecting the two towns.

Over 40 people from Servas Italy contributed to the construction of the Human Chain that reached Perugia from Assisi. It was an important step. It wasn't easy to observe restrictions and distances.



Servas needs small gestures to build a culture of Peace and joining the March was a small gesture, in front of the enormity of the problems we have to face: increase of poverty due to the pandemic, military expenses, wars and violence that never stop, hunger and disease, immigrant people that continue to die in the

Mediterranean sea, the climate change that must push us to new lifestyles, exploitation of the Earth and over-consumption, unemployment and increasing social disparities.

We are aware of this.





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But we also know how precious the choices, gestures and daily behaviors of all of us are. By putting ourselves together, we have been able to increase the awareness that we all have a responsibility, that we are all called "to make peace" concrete, every day, developing our ability to take care of each other and, together, of the community, the earth.

The reflection proposed during our Assembly in Assisi was based on a text written by Aldo Capitini, during the first Peace March in 1961. He was an Italian philosopher, political activist, anti-Fascist and educator. He was one of the first Italians to take up and develop Mahatma Gandhi's theories of nonviolence and was known as "the Italian Gandhi": We quote:

"In order to prepare for peace during peace, it is necessary to spread in education and relations with all, at all levels, a capacity for dialogue, a sincere openness to coexistence and peaceful competition between ideologies and various political and social systems, in common civil development...."

Servas Italy takes up these values to continue to be an active network, under the present difficult times, building processes of sharing between different cultures and developing relationships of solidarity and peace.

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**Raffaella Rota

Servas International Youth & Family Committee