

marco mazzi - MATERIALS 00 - Internet War.

materials 00/01

[Iraq, with a territory that is wedged between the Middle East and Asia, winds through a region linked to ancient pages of history. Mesopotamia, the cradle of ancient civilizations, has been inhabited by peoples, such as Sumerians, Babylonians and Assyrians, who have left indelible traces. Here the Code of Hammurabi was drawn up, one of the oldest collections of written laws. In this land the faith of Abraham was born and the first prophets preached. Here Islam experienced the first dramatic division between Sunnis and Shiites. The recent history of Iraq, where Pope Francis' apostolic journey is scheduled from 5 to 8 March next, is also shaken by events and dramatic conflicts. Since the twentieth century, oil wealth has been the main economic vector of the Gulf country. But precisely these riches were also the origin, and at times the cause, of wars and suffering. The first Gulf War is one of these painful pages in Iraqi history. It is the summer of 1990. Two years have passed since the end of the bloody conflict between Iraq and Iran, which cost the lives of at least one million people, according to some sources. The war, which lasted eight years, caused enormous damage to the economies of both countries. The Iraqi population is exhausted and unemployment reaches unsustainable levels. In 1990 Iraq, which contracted over 70 billion dollars in debt to other Gulf countries to finance the war against Iran, was on the verge of bankruptcy. Among the creditor countries that demand the repayment of the sums disbursed, there is also a small state, Kuwait. For the then Iraqi president, Saddam Hussein, that debt must instead be canceled. He claims that Iraq fought against Iran in defense of the entire Arab nation and the Gulf countries. Saddam Hussein not only refuses to pay off the debt, but accuses Kuwait of illegally extracting Iraqi oil from some wells on the border during the period of the conflict between Iran and Iraq. The accusations are formalized in a letter sent to the Arab League on July 15, 1990. A few days later, we pass from words to military action. On August 2, 1990, Iraqi tanks invade Kuwait City. Thus began the first Gulf War. On August 2, 1990, Iraqi troops cross the border and quickly occupy Kuwait, a small country with rich oil reserves. After the invasion, the Emir of Kuwait asks for the intervention of the United States. The Iraqi president at the time, Saddam Hussein, proclaimed the annexation of Kuwait, which he also declared the 19th province of the country. The annexation is not recognized by the international community. On 6 August the United Nations Security Council votes a first resolution for the embargo against Iraq. On November 29, the UN Security Council approved resolution 678, authorizing, starting from January 15, 1991, the use of all means necessary to force Iraq to withdraw its troops from Kuwait. Ultimatum expired, a coalition led by the United States starts military operations. It is the night between 16 and 17 January 1991. The largest international military operation since the Second World War opens. The air campaign, which began that night, renders crucial Iraqi infrastructure unusable. On February 23, the ground operation for the liberation of Kuwait begins. A few days later the

last stages of the conflict are experienced. On February 27, Iraqi troops begin to leave Kuwait. And on February 28, 1991, the then American president, George Bush, proclaimed a ceasefire.

the day military operations end.

It's February 28, 1991. It's

Iraq accepts UN resolu-

tions. The then US president, George HW Bush, addresses the nation. He declares that Kuwait has been liberated and that the objectives of the allied forces have been achieved. The war, adds the American head of state, is "behind us". But the toll is heavy. The first Gulf War is estimated to have cost the lives of over 5,000 civilians, at least 30,000 Iraqi soldiers and about 500 US-led coalition soldiers. The Iraqi government does not collapse and Saddam Hussein's regime survives for another 12 years. The conflict, which ended on February 28, 1991, also leaves open the wounds that will lead to other tragic pages, such as those related to the second Gulf War, which began on March 20, 2003.

There are several films and novels that have inspired by the first Gulf War. As Silvia Giovanrosa recalls in her profile, among the most significant we can remember the film "Bravo Two Zero", based on the autobiographical essay of the same name by Andy McNab. The author is a former Marine of the British Special Air Service and commander of the Bravo Two Zero patrol. The mission entrusted to him is to sabotage Iraqi telephone lines and discover the location of the missile launchers. The mission will be a failure: some soldiers will die, others will be missing and McNab will be captured and tortured.

The film, like a documentary, describes, in great detail, the horror of war. Another autobiographical novel, of which the film version has been produced, is "Jarhead". It is the story of a young soldier who left for Kuwait, who finds himself living the war without fighting it. He and his companions are often employed in heavy training in the desert. They will go home without ever having fired a shot. But they were able to reflect on what they left behind and which, due to the war, has been definitively lost.]

materials 00/02

[The gravity of the situation cannot be minimized in any way, but it remains to be asked whether "the most adequate response in the face of such a provocation is to encourage people to take their own life". Hence the relief that the Pontifical Academy for Life, in a Note, moves to the news of these hours concerning the first patient to have obtained the green light to medically assisted suicide in Italy, a man paralyzed from shoulders to feet for 11 years due to a traffic accident in the car. At the end of a long process, it was the opinion of the Ethics Committee, following verification of his conditions through a group of medical specialists appointed by the Marche health authority, to confirm that all the requirements for legal access were met. to assisted suicide.

The matter is delicate and controversial, the PAV premise and the suffering caused by a pathology such as quadriplegia is certainly understandable. But one wonders: "the legitimization" of principle "of assisted suicide, or even of consenting homicide, does not pose any questions and contradictions to a civil community that considers the failure to assist as a serious crime, and is ready to fight against the death penalty? Painfully confessing one's exceptional inability to heal and recognizing the normal power to suppress, don't they deserve more worthy languages to indicate the seriousness of our oath to take care of our suffering humanity? Is all we manage to express the request to make the gesture of our mutual suppression normal?"

According to the PAV, there should be other ways for a community to take responsibility for the life of its members, favoring the consideration that life itself has value. First of all, "accompaniment - as happens with palliative care - that takes on the set of multiple personal needs in these very difficult circumstances", also in-

cluding the possibility of "suspending treatments considered disproportionate by the patient".

From the information we have it would seem that with this positive opinion the assisted suicide procedure must be concluded. Here, we probably do not have the certainty that this really happens in the absence of specific legislation, especially as regards the medical treatment that should accompany the sick person to death. I would therefore believe that it would be necessary to wait even before evaluating whether this possibility of assisted suicide can occur in the short term without specific legislation. Undoubtedly, the Constitutional Court, in the sentence two years ago (no. 242 del 22 November 2019, ed), had admitted the possibility of assisted suicide with a whole series of conditions that ad today we are unable to verify. I therefore allow myself only to express the drama of the situation and that death was considered only the possibility of solving a problem.

In these moments it is always difficult to comment. Surely, ours is not a judgment on the person, no one can in fact allow himself to judge a sick person who arrives, because he is desperate, to want his death. I can imagine that one of the causes that leads a person to decide to die is loneliness. Not being part of a network of people, of families can be a contributing cause of despair. The defeat is first of all for our society which is unable to be close to people and to convey meaning even in a difficult situation such as that of a sick person who cannot move. Every life has a meaning. Sure, people can figure it out for themselves but it's not easy. We need people who reaffirm day after day that that life has a great meaning for those who live with the sick. If this intimate relationship, of compassion, of friendship is missing, life is inevitably difficult to understand and people can come to want to die.

It is also up to the community to find meaning in one's life or to be able to recognize and rediscover meaning. Leaving people alone in their decision also seems a bit cruel to me. Loneliness creates coldness, despair. Being close and not feeling judged but accepted certainly gives great hope and in hope there is also a meaning. This does not only concern those who are in a precarious state of health, but in general all of us for whom in desperation any way out becomes a solution, even death. It is necessary to increase as much as possible networks of families who also have the task of intercepting situations of desperation in order to freeze such extreme solutions. Everything must be done with a view to welcoming, as Pope Francis teaches us, respecting the freedom of everyone, but that it is an effective, conscious freedom, that you arrive at making decisions after an intimate dialogue that allows you to understand that life has many aspects and many of these can be lived intensely although in a situation of great difficulty. We have to go back to talking to people, to meeting them.

We live in an age where it is difficult to restore the 'village', but we must strive to recreate the quality of those relationships knowing full well that they also had problems, yes, but that allowed them not to be alone. Finding new forms of interpersonal relationships that could be lived centuries ago.

Definitely, one thing we need to avoid today, even we who are called to express considerations is groped to force our communities to take a position. If we now begin to emphasize the question, without a true critical spirit and reiterating that each case is different from the other and that situations can never be compared, we induce a simplification of the problem. Attempting to create - as perhaps the Coscioni association wants to do - a public question on such a personal matter, in my opinion, is a huge mistake both for the patient in question and for the community, but above all for the common good. Because assisted suicide cannot represent a common good but is on the contrary a defeat for the community. It is up to us to talk about this issue responsibly, trying to highlight as much as possible that each case is unique and that it is therefore dangerous to proceduralize death.

Bringing the category of procedure to death is truly something dramatic and cruel.

Now, we

should expect a parliamentary debate on this issue. This worries me not a little because, if it is done without the precautions I mentioned earlier, our community will be divided in an evident way, because everyone is afraid of dying and suffering. The lack of delicacy on this issue will create a spirit, close to the Christmas, gloomy. We hope to be able, even in our narrative, to highlight the beauty of life, but not of an abstract life but of a concrete one. A society that pushes people to die is a society that loses in hope.]

materials 00/03

[" Let me go now." David had almost made it . He had convinced the Swiss doctors to start assisted suicide : " I am tired of this pain, it never leaves me, they could put out a cigarette on my legs that I would not notice ... Enough! When I saw that DJ Fabo had made it I envied him. At least he was free , " he told the man in the white coat who listened to him. She smiled at him. She passed a hand on his shoulder in a kind of caress. But in the end Davide had to wait one more time night: " We can't do it in the evening, because then we have to call the police... and the agents ask us not to call them even at night ".

It will be today, Thursday, therefore, unless Davide changes his mind at the last minute: he will get ready in his room, the doctor will fix the cannula, then Davide sucker à il Pentobarbital. After a few tens of seconds he will slip into sleep which in about ten minutes will lead him to death (this article was written in the night between 13 and 14 April. Then, in the morning, the confirmation of David's death, read here).

He doesn't call it that, he says " vacation ". " It took me a long time to make up my mind ", said Davide who until 1993 was a bartender near Massa. He left his story written in a last letter: " My name is Davide T., I am 53 years old, I am ill with multiple sclerosis. For the first few years in a more tolerable form, then, the " bitch " was transformed into the "more bitchy " form : the secondary progressive. Over the years, I've really tried them all, from interferon, first the weekly one, then the one I self-injected (then my hands worked!) Every two days, then the horrible chemo period began! I have tried them all. I was one meter and ninety-two tall and now I have become a scrawl with long legs, hunchbacked almost to the ground, but above all excruciating and truly unbearable pains 24 hours a day.

Now I spend every day, absolutely everyone, either in the bathroom on the toilet, or on the bed in some way, with the opium-based pill to try to calm the pain ".

It sounds like the hopeless message from a man who can hardly move anymore, who has to struggle to say every word. But is not so. Davide continued to joke until this morning. Like when he asked for his last supper last night: " You don't want to starve me to death. " Or when he got out of the car and noticed that he had punctured the rubber of his wheelchair: " Damn, I forgot the pump at home! ". And Mina Welby: " If you want to go back for it, we'll take you home again ". Davide had no doubts: "No, no, no". Already, by now he has decided.

It's like it's already gone. " It took a long time, but now I'm sure ", the physical pain in the end was stronger than the fear of death. And of the thought of leaving his mother Anna alone who has assisted him over the years: " I know it's hard now - he said last night - but if you really love me, you too hope that I stop suffering like this".

There aren't many left with Davide, he tells you without rancor.

The girlfriend who followed him for the first few years is gone, many of the friends have drifted apart. It is difficult to live with suffering for too long. Davide thought about it for a long time in the Massa apartment, with the window overlooking other buildings. Then a few months ago he asked his mother to contact the Swiss clinic of Dignitas. He had

been waiting since December. He followed the last hours of DJ Fabo knowing that soon it would be his turn too . " I just can't take it anymore, without any prospects, every day I'm definitely worse than the day before, and after a very long reflection I decided to go to Switzerland for assisted suicide. I have to enormously thank the Luca Coscioni Association, which raised funds to help me with my shopping ". Davide wanted to reach his destination and never go back: " I very much hope that Italy will become a more civilized country, finally making a law that will allow us to put an end to enormous suffering, without end, without remedy, at home , near to loved ones, without having to go abroad , without excessive expenses . I also hope that legalization, or at least the therapeutic use of marijuana, will soon arrive in Italy. I am, living in Tuscany, among the few in Italy to promptly receive my marijuana maps through the ASL , with a doctor's prescription, and I know its benefits very well, fortunately I have been very familiar with the great for almost 20 years. " Dowries " of Mary. Soon I will leave for my long-dreamed " vacation " ! Hurray. Health for all and above all a lot but a lot of serenity for everyone ". Who knows what Davide's holiday will be. He sees nothing: " Because I do n't believe in God, I'm an atheist. But it will still be a liberation " .]

materials 00/04

[Protecting the human rights of all those who live in contact with the sea is the joint commitment for which the Holy See and FAO work in support of seafarers engaged in the fishing sector and their families. Despite the efforts made to implement conventions and agreements concerning working conditions, safety at sea and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, fishermen and workers in the sector are still victims of exploitation, forced labor, slavery and trafficking.. A condition that mortifies the dignity of man and with it every possibility of authentic social and economic development. Pope Francis observes in his Encyclical " All Brothers " that only " when the dignity of man is respected and his rights are recognized and guaranteed, does creativity and enterprise flourish and the human personality can deploy its many initiatives to favor of the common good ". It is to call attention to the condition of sea workers that Stella Maris, at the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, the FAO and the Permanent Observation Mission of the Holy See to the FAO, the Ifad and the Pam, promote the Conference on November 22 on the theme: " Stemming the tide: together we can stop human rights violations at sea ", or " Stemming the tide: together we can stop the violations of human rights at sea". A necessary reminder also to in the face of the worsening of working conditions at the time of the pandemic, which directly affects the fishing and aquaculture sector, affecting the health of workers and hindering socio-economic development. Prevention and control measures have influenced trade of fish, created changes in consumer demand, generated logistical problems around distribution channels and access to markets and fishing areas. limited year the availability of migrant workers. Factors that reduce the income of workers in the sector and of communities that depend on fishing, and that can favor the reduction of the budget for food - with an impact on food insecurity and malnutrition - the increase in child labor and the level of nutrition of women for loss or reduction of income.]

materials 00/05

[The fight against the abuse of minors and vulnerable people also involves a twofold action: to stimulate the Bishops' Conferences to study the problem in

depth in collaboration with the academic world and to strengthen the relationship between Church and lay institutions, starting from by governments. In the aftermath of the European Day for the Protection of Abused and Sexually Exploited Children - at the same time as the Italian Church has instituted a Day of Prayer for Victims and Survivors - is Professor Ernesto Caffo, founder of Telefono Azzurro and member of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, to reiterate that "this understanding is necessary and that there is an increasing need for great training, especially of educators and families."

It is a step that must be taken, says Caffo, "knowing that, on the one hand, there are many victims who ask for listening and help and, on the other, the social and ecclesial communities are suffering from tragic events that they often remain hidden. "

One of the main themes is that of being able to carry out independent research. Every Bishops' Conference must be able to have a picture of what has happened. I must say that, in this sense, the experiences of the Conferences have been greatly appreciated. French, Portuguese, Polish and Austrian bishops: they have begun a path of sharing between the laity, the academic world and the various expressions of the religious world in order to be able to address the critical issues. Transparency: this is what is important. Transparency in data collection and in the resolution paths that must be shared more and more.

First of all, it should be noted that the pandemic has made the phenomenon worse. lie and communities need to be helped to keep their children in the educational circuit.

Education is very important and even Unesco places emphasis on this aspect. In addition, economic and health care must be provided to those who are really poor. If this is not done, families will continue to allow their children to carry the burden of unsustainable work on their shoulders.

"Statistics leave you speechless. But we cannot allow our reaction to them to obscure their purpose: to evaluate the measures taken by the Church to deal with this scourge and to make all the recommendations needed to transform a system that has failed quantitatively and qualitative ". Thus in a message the Cardinal Seá n Patrick O ' Malley, president of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, he addresses those who are taking part in the European Day for the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, on the theme "Making the circle of trust truly safe for children". In Rome, in particular, the international conference organized by Telefono Azzurro on the theme "The right to trust" with the participation of experts from all over the world, to develop concrete actions, guidelines and protocols, for the protection of children.

So take a cue from a tragic global reality that the figures describe, to "transform a failed system". The cardinal starts from here, citing WHO data. About 120 million girls and young women under the age of 20 have experienced some form of forced sexual contact; 1 in 5 women and 1 in 13 men report having been sexually abused before their 18th birthday, while in some parts of the world 1 in 2 children have been sexually abused and due to the associated shame, stigma and fear at the experience, at least 60% of victims and survivors never disclose their abuse.

Equally "gloomy" the data that the cardinal summarizes on the extent of this problem in the Catholic Church.

Cited France with the estimate of 216 thousand abused children from 1950 to 2020, as reported by the investigation Independent Commission (CIASE). Also in Australia it appears that - notes the cardinal - 40% of the sexual abuse of minors in the period examined by the Royal Commission of Inquiry occurred in an area linked to the Catholic Church.

The president of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors underlines in this regard the importance as a Church of "learning from the progress of civil society and the academic world in terms of scientific research models", in order to implement a "more informed approach to our prevention strategies and protection policies, on field and online ". Thus, by exchanging and learning

from each other, it will be possible - he remarks - to obtain global protection, understood as a priority, and this requires "an investment in the creation of relationships of trust and inter-institutional support". Unclear memories make room in my mind, many uncertainties and many unbridgeable gaps.]

materials 00/06

[in the community, but unfortunately my condition was so bad that at that time I hardly remembered my name. If I look back into the past I can only see a girl of just sixteen trapped in the body of a little girl, with a sunken face and bulging eyes, pale and frozen skin, protruding and aching bones, so fragile that it seemed they could break at any moment. And finally the memory of a weak heart, with too slow and irregular beats, a heart begging for mercy and seemed to be near the end of its rhythmic process.

I see a girl of just sixteen who didn't stand still for a billionth of a second, too scared of being able to stop and perhaps too scared by the idea that, if she stopped, her greatest phobias would end by reaching it, thus bringing his mind into a state of despair such as to see death as the only solution.

I'm Luna, I'm 19 and I suffered from a serious eating disorder: anorexia nervosa. My story begins in the summer of 2016, one of the most critical periods of my life.

I was losing all the people I loved most and every day a part of me dissolved with them.

Everything seemed to be wrong, every piece of my life seemed not to be compatible with that of the others, I no longer had a fixed point to hold onto and everything I did, feelings of guilt began to emerge until my life it didn't quite turn into a huge sense of guilt. We already had a lot of problems in the family and I felt I was just a major burden on everyone. I was in pain, but I didn't want to prove it, because the very thought of making others feel bad because of me made me feel selfish and only increased my inner state of discomfort. So I made a choice: I decided it was time to suffer in silence.

I fell into an abyss that seemed endless and totally lost control of the situation, thus finding myself in a new period of my life: the period of self-destruction.

I had no escape, I was finally reaching my goal, I was finally reaching the people who had left me and above all I was losing the will to fight. I was abandoning myself to nothing.

What was the point of fighting a war where I was the protagonist on both sides? What was the point of fighting a war where I would have lost so much in any case?

I did not know and I did not want to know until however, when my strength left me completely, someone else had to decide for me and in doing so he finally gave me a second chance.

I had to heal or at least try. I had to do it for myself.

The problem was that the place I was staying was not the right place to cure my ailment. So after long searches on June 5th I went to visit the community directed by Dr. Mendolicchio and on the same day I was hospitalized urgently.

It's been almost three years since that day, but I think it will always remain one of the most important dates of my life. The day the path to regaining my life began, the day my true healing process began. The day I started loving again.

Up until that moment everything around me was blurry, inaccurate and unstable, but once I got into the community, things started to change. That day, I realized it wasn't over.

A new door opened in the community, that of hope and within it I found the hands of salvation, those of Doctor Mendolicchio and all the other members of the team.

I was not a simple patient, I'm aware of that, but maybe that's what struck me most about that place. We were able to bring out the best in people, even when everything seemed useless. In community I was reborn, I regained my life piece by piece, I finally

let someone throw the reality in my face, that if I didn't agree to collaborate things would have ended badly. I was able to listen to the words of the Doctor. Mendolicchio, I treasured it several times and I understood that every flower could be reborn if cared for carefully. And I was that flower. I decided it was time to say enough. So, slowly and with ups and downs I began to take back my body and especially myself. In the community I have not only treated a broken body, but a sick life. I started loving and smiling again.]