



**Olgiate Olona Mayor Giorgio Volpi's letter of
thanks after the Commemoration of June 26, 2010
(translation)**

Olgiate Olona, July 20, 2010

to: Mr. Alberto Colombo

Dear Alberto,

The solemn and intentionally sober commemoration of 51th anniversary of the plane crash of June 26, 1959 to which you gave - as and even more than a year ago - a human and professional contribution truly invaluable, pushes me to express to you my sincere thanks, on behalf of the entire community.

Taking cue by the general appreciation, I take this opportunity to make some considerations which arise from a sincere path that we are sharing since more than two years: together we are meeting the families of the victims, other institutions, many people who have lived the event and many others interested or simply curious, even many young people.

I like starting from the restoration of the monument, located in "Via 26 Giugno", that you strongly requested, which not only remembers the place of the accident but which is mostly the 'physical' memory of the event. It 's the result of the will and the work of our predecessors, it reminds a lot of suffering but it is also a symbol of the search for Liberty and Eternal that has always accompanied human life.

Thanks to your work of high cultural level that is the result of an unceasing commitment and dedication really admirable - allowed also by a particular time of Your life - all the dead are still living in the memory of their loved ones and those who were present in that very special day. Likewise in a context of references and recurring symbolism, a moment of reflection on the meaning and value of life has been proposed to our young generations: we humans are not owners of our lives, despite today we try more and more to say the opposite obstinately.

And from the restoration of the monument our memory dates back to the construction of the memorial and its symbolism: it is supported by a base anchored to the ground, with a strong metaphorical reference to the roots that penetrate the Earth Mother, in search of that origin which is the beginning and end of life at the same time. And if it's physically present in space and time in which we are living, the memorial ideally projects its structures upwards, towards the sky, the light, the Eternal. Into a mysterious and indissoluble synthesis, between past, present and future, the memorial also represents the necessary and continuous toil of work and the invisible power of time. Although it has been restored several times, already today it carries the first signs of its caducity in spite of the last

recent restoration of one year ago, which took place on the occasion of the memorable ceremony of the 50th anniversary of the disaster. It is not insignificant signs, that we must look with eyes aware and fair. It comes to not irrelevant signs, that we must look at with aware and fair eyes.

In the last years we have worked properly and with respect, each one with his own skills and resources, aided by others, to keep alive not only the memory of the event but also the memory of the lives broken by the disaster and their stories, one by one, with your publications (“Il disastro aereo del 26 giugno 1959 a Olgiate Olona” e “Settanta vite immortali”) and by creating and searching for new and true relationships with the relatives of the victims spread in different parts of the world.

Thanks to Your intuition and will, the beautiful project addressed to students in eighth grade came to life this year; it has led to produce texts of poetry and prose, some of which have been rewarded and read during the commemoration of the event. And above all, with this work, the young students of our schools have been made aware of the event, they were put to the test and encouraged to deal with a remarkable subject that - to quote St. Augustine - is represented by the thin thread of life in precarious balance between the brevity of human life and the caducity of his works, in the face of a continuous search for the infinite and eternal.

The value of the works of some students made me think back to the teachings of the noble Seneca, especially when he says that young people have an extraordinary ability and potential but they require great challenges and great teachers for their education.

You didn't leave them alone to face this difficult task. You asked them to do a hard test and the result gave great satisfaction to all of us. It was therefore an occasion that has become culture in which an added value to the events (already full of extreme significance) was given through a subtle connection between past and present life, starting from the detail to catch the Universal.

In conclusion I'm going to make some considerations: the worst immorality for a community is not the compromise of values or degeneration of conduct or more, but it is the forgetfulness intended as a loss of contact with reality and the core values - those of our fathers - from which insecurity, fear, ideology, and violence arise in progression, all at the service of false idols and for the benefit of a few.

We must teach to our young generations - as future ruling class - especially the love for absolute importance of risk of freedom and the absolute value for the defense and protection of life; because freedom and eternal being free make the value of life great, as great were the broken lives which we met while remembering.

I conclude these brief meditations and I thank you from the bottom of my heart by renewing my personal estimation for your valuable work.

Sincerely,

THE MAYOR
Giorgio Volpi