

REMINDER OF A UNIQUE EVENT IN MY LIFE

Today, February 24, 2023, I received at the Patriarchate from the Embassy of the Holy See (Nunciature) in Cairo my personal photographs from the meeting with His Holiness Pope Francis, on January 21, 2023, in the Vatican, during the official visit of His Beatitude Theodoros II Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria to Rome (20-23.1.23).

The meeting with the Bishop of Elder Rome, the Primate of the Roman Catholic Church, the spiritual leader and commander of the greater part of the Christian world, was deeply imprinted on my soul, while the conversations we had both during the morning meeting at the Papal Palace and during the private lunch at the Guest House of St Martha, challenged me creatively, definitely leaving only positive impressions.

I had the honor of talking with a bright, smiling, intelligent, "down to earth" man, with intense experiences from his entire life and ministry in the favelas and slums of Argentina, in which, as he said verbatim, "I lived there all my life , there I served as a shepherd to the poor man... How can a Papal election in the waning of my life, change the thinking and mentality of an entire life?"

I noticed the Cross he wears on his chest. It is the same Cross he has worn since his years of Episcopal ministry in Argentina, heavily worn at the bottom by the touch of hands.

Pope Francis noticed my look, so as he left the meal, he embraced my hierarchical medalion and, joking cleverly, showed me his Episcopal Cross saying: "We never forget our first love, but also our first... mother-in-law !"

May our world always have bright people in leadership positions, who can recognize the mistakes of the past, but also transmit the power of approach!

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