

Death of David Sassoli, President of the European Parliament

13 January 2022



The death of the Hon. David Sassoli, President of the European Parliament, has deeply impressed us. Raised in Catholic Scouting, he bore the name of the great priest David Maria Turoldo and was the son of an anti-fascist Catholic partisan. His life of Faith had always been clearly evident in all his activities: in his family, in his work as a journalist on the Italian TG1, from 2009 as a European parliamentarian, and finally from 3 July 2019 as President of the European Parliament. His election was almost unanimous, his initiatives widely shared and always marked by the spirit of Catholic values. His youth formation is part of the tradition of democratic Catholicism. Under the impulse of Paolo Giuntella, Sassoli became involved in the White Rose, an association of political culture that brought together groups of young people from Catholic associations (Catholic Action, the Italian Catholic University Federation and the Italian Catholic Workers Association). In the 1980s he participated in the experience of the Democratic League, a political reflection group led by Pietro Scoppola, Achille Ardigò, Paolo Prodi and Roberto Ruffilli. David Sassoli leaves a great emptiness in our hearts, because he represented the highest expression of the commitment of Catholics in politics in Europe. We wish to remember him with the words of his last speech for Christmas greetings:

"In this year we have listened to the silence of the planet and we have been afraid but we have reacted and built a new solidarity, because no one is safe alone. We have seen new walls and our borders in some cases have become the borders between moral and immoral, between humanity and inhumanity. Walls erected against people who ask for shelter from the cold, from hunger, from war, from poverty. We have fought alongside those who ask for more democracy, more freedom, alongside women who ask for rights and protections. To those who ask to protect their thoughts. Alongside those who continue to ask for free and independent information. We have finally realized, after years of cruel rigor, that inequality is neither tolerable nor acceptable, that living in precariousness is not human, that poverty is a reality that must not be hidden but that must be fought and defeated. The duty of the European institutions is to protect the weakest and not to ask for other sacrifices by adding pain to pain. Today Europe with the Recovery Plan gives us great opportunities to abandon indifference: it is our challenge, that of a new world, which respects people, nature, and believes in a new economy based not only on the profit of few, but on the well-being of all. For this I want to say Happy Holidays, Happy New Year, Merry Christmas. The time of Christmas is the time of the birth of hope. And we are the hope when we do not close our eyes to those in need, when we do not raise walls on our borders, when we fight against all injustices. Best wishes to us, best wishes to our hope".

The FEAMC is close to his family with prayers and to those who worked with him for a better Europe, marked by the values of the Gospel.

Vincenzo Defilippis, *FEAMC president*