



## Carlo Maria Card. Martini



Turin, Italy, 15 February 1927 - Gallarate, Italy, 31 August 2012

**Nomination** 13 November 2000

**Field** Holy Scripture and Theology

**Title** Honorary Professor

**Professional address**

Self-Presentation (PDF) 2002

**Commemoration** – I would like to commemorate our Cardinal Carlo Martini. Carlo Maria Martini was born in Turin on 15 February 1927. He entered into the novitiate of the Jesuits in 1944 and studied philosophy and theology in Gallarate, Chieri, Austria and lastly at the Gregorian Pontifical University, during which time he was ordained a priest in 1952. He finished his studies with a doctoral thesis in fundamental theology entitled: *The Historical Problem of the Resurrection in Recent Studies* (1958).

His thesis represented his first contribution to the research field of the sources of Christian origins, where he rigorously applied the historico-critical method. Following this perspective he went on to work at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome, under the guidance of Father Bea, S.J.

He presented his second doctoral thesis in 1965, which was a textual critique entitled: *The Problem of the Recensionality of Codex B in the Light of Papyrus Bodmer XIV*, which contains a group of codices of the Gospel according to Luke. He immediately began his teaching at the Pontifical Biblical Institute. One of his preferred texts for research was the *Acts of the Apostles*.

I shall now give you some tracts that characterised his personality, which was both intellectual and Christian. The first was his historical culture. He took Erasmus as a reference point and published an essay on Galilee and theology (1967). He was not indifferent to the reality of human misery and always made time to visit the youth detention centre.

On 29 February 1969 he was appointed Rector of the Biblical Institute. He was rector for nearly ten years during the difficult times of the student protests. The Biblical Institute was also criticised but this did not affect his scientific work. His authority was universally recognised. He had contacts with universities from all over the world and was part of the group of five specialists who published the second edition of *The Greek New Testament* (Stuttgart, 1968), which was to serve as a basis for more than eight hundred versions of the Gospel around the world. As soon as he finished his term, he was nominated Rector of the Pontifical Gregorian University in 1978. He was not rector for long however; to general surprise John Paul II nominated him Archbishop of Milan.

He was elected Cardinal on 2 February 1983. This new mission could have distanced him forever from his studies, but it was not the case. His episcopate in Milan lasted until his retirement in February 2002. The extremely intense period was to reveal Carlo Maria's leadership skills, his creativity as well as his great capacity for discernment with regards to problems in the Church and society.

He truly was a man of meaningful dialogue and in 1987 created the lecture series for non-believers entitled *Cattedra dei non-credenti*. Furthermore, during the time of the Red Brigades he strove to build peace, breaking down the logic of violence through dialogue. In June 1984 a group of Brigade members laid down their arms in front of the Archbishop as a sign of renouncing armed conflict. In 1986 he was elected President of the Council of Bishops' Conferences of Europe, where he developed an intense ecumenical activity that culminated in the momentous meeting in Basel in 1989. He published diocesan letters and the texts of his homilies and spiritual retreats, leaving behind a rich patrimony of pastoral thought.

He was nominated a member of our Academy on 13 November 2000. On 15 February 2002, at the age of seventy-five, he asked permission to retire. After receiving approval from John Paul II he transferred to

Jerusalem, the place of origin of the privileged object of his studies, and in a short time he prepared the critical edition of the papyrus Bodmer VIII, a papyrus from the third century and the oldest one containing Peter's Letters. He then proceeded to work on the critical introduction to the Greek Vatican Codex 2000, or codex B, which contains the entire text of the Greek Bible. In Jerusalem he had scientific contacts with the Jewish university, demonstrating that he was a man of dialogue and peace.

After some time however, he began to suffer from Parkinson's disease and the illness progressed until it was necessary for him to return to Italy in 2008 in order to receive care. He returned to the house of his novitiate in Gallarate, and passed away on 30 August 2012. His highly attended funeral was an impressive witness of the gratitude of the people of Milan.

Cardinal Georges Cottier

### **Most important awards, prizes and academies**

Cardinal Martini was ordained priest in 1952 and received his Ph.D. in fundamental theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University in 1958. In 1962 he was appointed to the chair of textual criticism at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome, where from 1968 to 1978 he was also Rector. In 1978 he was appointed Rector of the Gregorian University by Pope Paul VI and was invited by the Pope to preach at the annual retreat in the Vatican, the last held by Pope Montini. He was also called to be a member of the Commission for Relations with the Jews. After being appointed Archbishop of Milan by Pope John Paul II on 29 December 1979, he was consecrated Bishop on 6 January 1980, and made Cardinal on 2 February 1983. That same year, His Holiness appointed him Speaker to the Synod of Bishops on 'Reconciliation and Penance in the Mission of the Church'. In 1989, in recognition of his contribution to the cause of education, the Università Pontificia Salesiana conferred on him the degree honoris causa in education science. From 1987 to 1993 he was President of the CCEE, the organising body of the Bishops' Conferences of the European nations, and in this capacity and others he has made a substantial contribution to the dialogue between, and the ecumenical journey of, the Christian Churches. In the year 2000 he was awarded the Prince of Asturias Prize in Social Sciences.

### **Summary of scientific research**

Cardinal Martini's scientific research has centred around biblical studies. After writing a Ph.D. on the historical question of the Resurrection in recent literature in the late 1950s he continued his studies of Holy Scripture abroad. In 1966 he published an important monographic study of the Codex B in the light of the Papyrus Bodmer XIV (Il problema della recensionalità del Codice B alla luce del Papiro Bodmer XIV). As the holder of the chair of textual criticism at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome he prepared a new edition of A. Merk's *Novum Testamentum Graece et Latine* and was then a member of the committee entrusted with the task of preparing an edition of The Greek New Testament. The second edition of this work was published in 1975. This Greek version of the New Testament was the basis for more than 800 versions of the Gospel in the world and Cardinal Martini was the only Catholic member of the group of five editors. Subsequently, his research was directed towards the early Christian community as it appears in the New Testament and to commentary on the Acts of the Apostles. Such studies of the Holy Scripture have been accompanied by constant reflection on the role of the Word of God within the Church. The thoughts and insights of Cardinal Martini, especially in relation to the New Testament, have also found expression in the publication of works for a less specialist audience, which have often been translated into several foreign languages. Another educational initiative of Cardinal Martini of great relevance was the series of meetings in his archdiocese on 'questions of faith' (known as the 'Cattedra dei non credenti') directed, within a complex social and cultural context, towards those who encounter difficulties in relation to faith or obstacles on the path to its attainment. During these meetings he also directed attention to the subject of science and the tenth meeting was specifically dedicated to the subject 'the horizons and limits of science'. Loyal to the spirit of St Ignatius, he has constantly organised and personally directed, for a broad number of social groups, the spiritual exercises created by that Saint, in which he has engaged in an absolute originality of approach involving an accompanying *lectio divina* of Holy Scripture. Together with all these cultural and spiritual initiatives, Cardinal Martini has also laid emphasis on always being near in a spirit of charity to the weakest, to the humble, and to those most in need in the poorest districts of Rome, Milan and other parts of the world.

### **Main publications**

In addition to reviews and smaller writings and numerous contributions to articles, collections, lexicons, his major works include the following: Martini, C.M., 'Il problema storico della risurrezione negli studi recenti', *Analecta Gregoriana*, 104, P.U.G. (Roma, 1959); Martini, C.M., 'Galileo e la teologia', *Saggi su Galileo Galilei*, pp. 1-11 (Firenze, 1967); Martini, C.M., *The Greek New Testament*, 2a ed. riveduta (in collaborazione con Aland, K., Blanck, M., Metzger, B.M., Wikgren, A.)(Stuttgart, 1968); Martini, C.M., *In principio la Parola*,

ed. Leumann Centro Ambr. Doc. Studi (Milano, 1982); Martini, C.M., *David Sinner and Believer*, St Paul Publications (1990); Martini, C.M., *The Joy of the Gospel*, The Liturgical Press (1994); Martini, C.M., *Ripartiamo da Dio*, Centro Ambrosiano (1995); Martini, C.M., *Et Dieu se fit vulnérable*, Cerf (Paris, 1995); Martini, C.M., *Alla fine del millennio lasciateci sognare*, ed. Centro Ambrosiano (Milano, 1996); Martini, C.M. e Eco, U., *In cosa crede chi non crede?*, 'Liberal-Sentieri', Atlantide ed. (Roma, 1996); Martini, C.M., *Jérémie; paroles pour aujourd'hui*, Saint Augustin (1996); Martini, C.M., *Dialoghi in Cattedrale*, San Paolo (1997); Martini, C.M., *Cristo è tutto per noi*, ed. Centro Ambrosiano (Milano, 1997); Martini, C.M., *L'assurdo di Auschwitz; e il mistero della Croce* (con Bettinelli, C., Formigoni, G., Gallas, A., Vecchio, G.), ed. Ancora (1998); Martini, C.M., *Sogno un'Europa dello Spirito*, ed. Piemme (Casale Monferrato, 1999); Martini, C.M., *Orizzonti e limiti della scienza. Decima cattedra dei non credenti*, Raffaello Cortina Editore (Varese, 1999), pp. 160; Martini, C.M., *Un cammino educativo*, ed. Gribaudi (2000); Martini, C.M., *Conversazioni pastorali*, ed. Ancora (2000); Martini, C.M., *Si può amare la Chiesa? Descrizione e parresia del ministero*, ed. Ancora (2000); Martini, C.M., *La pratica del Testo biblico*, ed. Piemme (Casale Monferrato, 2000); Martini, C.M., *La bellezza che salva*, ed. Indialogo (2000), pp. 78; Martini, C.M., *Mi ha mandato. Omelia nella messa crismale del giovedì santo*, ed. Centro Ambrosiano (Milano, 2001); Martini, C.M., *Notti e giorni del cuore. Un cammino di introspezione con Maria*, ed. Indialogo (2001), pp. 80.