

Eminence, dear friends,

I would first like to thank His Eminence, Archbishop Mario Delpini, who celebrated Holy Mass in suffrage for our loved ones on the twentieth anniversary of their tragic death.

I thank Mayor Giuseppe Sala, representing the city of Milan, and all the religious, military, and civilian authorities who participated in this service as numerous as every year.

I want to warmly thank the prestigious La Verdi youth choir that, as always, accompanied our prayers with moving sentiment.

We have reached the twentieth anniversary of the tragedy.

The time passed has been long and short: unmeasurable.

But what is time?

I quote from Kahlil Gibran:

*The timeless in you is aware of life's timelessness.  
And knows that yesterday is but today's memory and tomorrow is today's dream.*

*And is not time even as love is, undivided and spaceless?"  
But if in your thought you must measure time into seasons, let each season encircle all the other seasons. And let today embrace the past with remembrance and the future with longing.*

So this is our present: embracing the past with remembrance, and the future with longing and dreams.

The embrace of the past catapults us into the pain of that day.

Devastated, we met and shared our stories. We united. We dreamed of a new future and walked together.

One conviction united us: no one should have to go through what we experienced.

Our painful experience was transformed into strength and action. "Comitato 8 ottobre. Per non dimenticare" was born. Thank you, Paolo. A special prayer goes to you, who has reached Eternity.

Thanks to Pasquale Padovano, who is always here among us.

And today a thought and a prayer also go to the victims of the recent plane crash, which affected us greatly due to the shocking fatality and tragic coincidence of the impact site: Via 8 Ottobre 2001, the street that commemorates our loved ones.

For the second year we have a special cathedral for our prayers.

Our Bosco welcomes us again, with the rustle of the leaves and the branches that bow to us as if giving us the strength to continue. In these difficult years we learned that life is made up of trials, sorrow, and tears.

But it is also made up of victories, joys, and smiles.

And so, the history that we have lived in these years has become a message of hope, serenity, and trust in the future.

For this important anniversary we have managed to entrust our memory to the written word and have finally created a book, "Non è colpa della nebbia" [*It is not the fog's fault*] which talks about the tragedy of Linate, but also the activities of the Committee. I want to thank the author Francesca la Mantia and to all those who, in various ways, contributed to its realization.

The story of the accident, told to young people, has already been presented in a preview thanks to the President of the City Council, Dr. Bertolè, in the Council Chamber a few days ago, in the presence of the highest representatives of ENAC and SEA.

Through the Committee, we have worked and obtained innovative interventions to improve aviation safety.

We did it for our loved ones, but we also did it for us and for all our family members, because life is energy and the future can be today's dream.

Our commitment continues for the new generations and for all.

Today the youngest ones will lay white flowers, a symbol of purity and hope, at the memorial.

Tomorrow we will continue our journey.

We have not been passive on this path, despite the pandemic this year.

We participated in several initiatives. For the ENAC course on "*Family Assistance*", we were involved throughout the year with our touching testimonies and the assignment of scholarships: the presentation of the Pettinaroli Award to Commander Radini and, in memory, to Commander Zipoli.

Today, a commemorative postmark was also created with postcards designed by generous artists Serena Pruno, the mother of Valentina Giumelli, and by colleagues Marco Baudinelli, Gabriele Pardi and Laura Fiaschi.

Our international conference is also coming up, and we hope part of it will be with in-person attendance.

And finally, we received great news a few days ago: ENAC intends to formalize October 8 as a day "not to forget" as early as next year.

With the gradual return to normality, we are confident that we can soon realize new projects.

And now, after a virtual affectionate embrace that I would like to give to each of you, we will continue the ceremonies here in our woods.

And let's not forget, as Saint Teresa of Calcutta said, that scars are a sign that it has been hard. The smile is the sign that you made it.

Thank you for everything, thank you for your presence and for the smiles and support that we will continue to give each other.