

## Abraham's dream is alive

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**Abraham has died, but the memory that people have of him, helps tens of families in his home town, Ethiopia.** This is the story of a boy who was well-known in Varese, some people who knew him were scouts, others frequented the town center and the small club of Bosto, **all of them remembered the smile of this boy, with the defaced face because of a very rare disease**, the neurofibromatosis of Von Recklinghausen, but with a **unique strength and enthusiasm**. Now that Abraham is no more with us, his friends and his Italian family have decided to realise his dream, therefore they want to help people who live in his village of Tigray, Wellele, giving them water, light and bread. The association "Progetto Abraham" has already realised two projects (a well and the delivery of sunlamps) and is going to give life to the third, which involves the building of a mill. In order to promote it, **an appetizer in Pohla Varese's headquarter in 19 Valverde Street has been organised at 18.30 on Saturday the 28<sup>th</sup> of March.** During this evening the new project will be explained, the ways people can help this non-profit organisation to raise funds will be illustrated and people will remember Abraham.

**THE STORY-** Abraham was born in about 1976 in Wellele, in Tigray, a region situated in the north of Ethiopia. When he was a child he had to run away towards Eritrea with his parents and his brothers, to avoid famine and war. During the journey his mother died, and his father, who did not have resources, left him in an orphanage in Asmara. In Asmara, in 1993, Bianca Gibelli, an Italian doctor noticed him, and she convinced him to come to Italy, in this way he could be treated and face the first operation. During his preoperative and post-operative stay in Italy the Belli family in Calcinate del Pesce hosted him, they have become Abraham's family since 1995, they did not adopt him, but he lived with this family until he decided to return in Ethiopia in order to rediscover his origins and meet again his brothers. He was a scout in Varese 7 and Varese 3. He worked for Fumagalli firm in Varese but he was especially able to carve out a normal life, surrounded by the affection of many many people.

In 2008 he decided to go back to Ethiopia to meet his brothers again. An exciting travel, that allowed him to redeem; poor and ill, he could come back home with a job and a possibility to help many other people. In 2010 he went back to Wellele, for his marriage, with a wedding celebration that was organized by his brother, but the day before the wedding, a cerebral hemorrhage caused by his disease, killed him, on the 8th January 2011. Abraham was buried in Wallele and Paola and Luisa Belli went with other friends to Tigray for his funeral and to say goodbye to him for the last time; Right there, struck a match.

### THE PROJECT

Abraham's dream was that of helping people who lived in his village. He spoke about that at home and his friends and his Italian family decided to try to realize that. The first contact was with an NGO from Emilia Romagna, Butterfly onlus, and the on site collaboration with Vis (volontariato internazionale per lo sviluppo) and the diocese of Adigrat allowed them to realize, thanks to the contribution of many benefactors, friends and acquaintances of Abraham, the first of his dreams: the construction of a well, with drinking water, for animals, for cooking and washing. And then a second step, thanks to the contribution with all people close to Abraham, allowed them to buy lamps to light up a village, which cannot have electricity.

Today, in 2015, the third dream: realize a mill to grind cereals cultivated in the village (where about 200 people live, in a rocky area connected by dirt roads that are hard to go through) and to avoid long and expensive travels up to villages and other close towns. Around 12 thousands euros and a couple of years are necessary to arrive to the realization of the project. In order to launch the project, an event has been organized on Saturday, 28th March at 6.30 pm in 19 Valverde Street in Varese, where people can learn about Abraham and contribute to the realization of his dream.

di Tommaso Guidotti traduzione Licata & Eumei (Reviewed by Prof. Robert Clarke)