

Silvio Pezzotta, going beyond forgiveness

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Vanity Fair has published a **long article about Silvio Pezzotta**, the father of Mariangela, who was killed eleven years ago by Andrea Volpe, with the help of Elisabetta Ballarin, in its magazine and on its site. At the heart of the story, there is Silvio Pezzotta's decision to accept (and encourage) **the new life of Elisabetta Ballarin**, who, at the age of 15, took part in the tragedy as a member of the group "The Beasts of Satan". Ballarin was sentenced to 23 years in prison; she was allowed to continue her studies, and, after 7 years, was granted permission to work part-time outside prison.

The Vanity Fair article also contains **many references to the documentary made by the Swiss television channel, Radio Televisione Svizzera Italiana**, which also contains the only real interview with Elisabetta Ballarin.

One passage from Silvia Nucini's article puts **the focus back on one recurring matter: Silvio Pezzotta's decision is strong and divides public opinion**, it creates controversy, that, at times, is very harsh, that often concerns Pezzotta himself, but also affects, for example, Confcooperative, the trade association that set up a scholarship in memory of Cristina Lonardoni (the mother of Elisabetta Ballarin), **a woman who had worked for years in the world of cooperatives, who died in an accident in the home**. **On the first scholarship being granted to Elisabetta Ballarin**, Silvio Pezzotta said:

"Forgiveness is a wonderful thing, but it has nothing do to with this; it's a step that doesn't exist. I simply hope that Elisabetta, who is a completely different person today, from the heroine-filled, coerced girl that she was that night, is given the opportunity to return to the world and to have a normal life and a family, once she has paid her debt to society. I train disabled people on handcycles, and when someone comes last, or stops halfway through the race, I tell them they've done well, all the same. I work with the elderly, and when I go to see them, I always given them a hug. It might seem nothing, but it means a lot. I think that, in life, we should always encourage and recognise people's efforts. I do it with everyone, including Elisabetta."

di Translated by Bandera (Reviewed by Prof. Rolf Cook)