

MANIFESTO FOR MILAN

For a beautiful, rational, cared-for and rooted Milan

Hearing Vannacci speak about the Greek, Roman and Catholic tradition had the force of a revelation for me. Paradoxically, or perhaps not so paradoxically given that ideas often appear at the same moment in different places, I had been personally exploring very similar themes. The validation I received first from the General's literary work and then from his political activity was considerable, as was the impulse to apply these ideas to architecture, urban planning and Milan with even greater precision, consistency and courage. Futuro Nazionale explicitly identifies Roman law, Greek philosophy and Catholic civilisation as some of the fundamental roots of its vision. This manifesto does not therefore arise from a political programme, but recognises in it an affinity with research already under way and seeks to develop that research in the field I know best: architecture and the city.

The aim is to explore ways of applying the classical tradition to contemporary architecture and urban planning, using Milan as a practical case study. The discussion will begin with an analysis of the present condition and its causes, then move through a number of examples towards the identification of foundational principles and, finally, concrete proposals. Underlying everything is a concept specific to Architettura Vera: architecture is anthropopoiesis. By building space, we also build, at least in part, the human being who will inhabit it. A house, a street, a square and a neighbourhood educate the gaze, produce habits, encourage certain behaviours and make others more difficult. The question that should therefore precede every urban planning decision is simple: what kind of human being do we help to form through what we build?

MILAN IS UGLY - BEAUTY	3
THE WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN - INTELLECT	4
CARE FOR CREATION	4
ROOTEDNESS AND CULTURE	5
ARCHITECTURAL AND URBAN PROPOSALS	6
WHAT KIND OF MILAN?	12

MILAN IS UGLY - BEAUTY

Let us begin, then, with an observation about Milan today: Milan is ugly. Naturally, not all of Milan and not everywhere. The city retains buildings, neighbourhoods, courtyards and spaces of extraordinary beauty. What I mean is something else: in the contemporary city, Beauty has gradually ceased to be considered a necessary requirement of a work.

One of the cultural frameworks through which we can understand this transformation is the postmodern condition described by Lyotard in 1979 through the famous phrase "incredulity towards metanarratives": those great philosophical constructions capable of relating knowledge and human action to an overall order and an ultimate purpose enter into crisis. This incredulity did not arise in a vacuum. It matured in the first half of the twentieth century, between two world wars and Auschwitz, when the Enlightenment's own faith in reason and progress proved capable of producing industrialised horror with equal technical consistency. It is at this point that Adorno writes that to compose poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric: not to prohibit poetry, but to signal that the work's claim to reach towards a higher order - precisely what I call transcendence here - can no longer be taken for granted. The consequence that concerns us here is above all artistic: if the criterion that transcends the work disappears, the work can gradually be judged only from within the system it constructs for itself; it becomes self-referential.

It is here, within the vocabulary of *Architettura Vera*, that I propose a distinction between Art and aesthetics. Art is transcendent: the work of art is not exhausted by its own concept, because it attempts to participate in something beyond itself and against which it can be judged. Truth, Goodness and Beauty are not produced by the work; they constitute the horizon to which it seeks to conform. Aesthetics, in its immanent form, can instead be exhausted by the work's internal construction: its concept, language, novelty, provocation, effect and coherence with its own premises.

A work can therefore be aesthetically extraordinary, culturally fundamental and intellectually complete while still remaining ugly. Simone Weil is an important reference here, because in her thought beauty manifests the order of the world and becomes a bridge between the sensible and the Good. An authentically artistic work, in this sense, does not arbitrarily invent its own criterion; it attempts to make visible something that transcends it.

The Torre Velasca is perhaps the most useful Milanese example for understanding this distinction. Designed by BBPR and completed in 1958, it has one foot in the modern - its structure and its constructive and organisational logic - and one in the emerging postmodern: its skin and the historicist quotation of medieval Lombard towers. This is precisely what ignited the controversy. In April 1959, in the pages of the British magazine *Architectural Review*, the critic Reyner Banham placed it at the centre of his essay "Neoliberty: The Italian Retreat from Modern Architecture", interpreting it as a retreat from the Modern Movement; that same year the tower was presented, and criticised, at the CIAM meeting in Otterlo. As an architect, I can greatly appreciate its historical importance, the culture of BBPR, the attempt to capture the city through form and memory, and the completeness of the reasoning that generated it. At the same time, I can consider it ugly.

The two judgements do not contradict one another, because they belong to different planes. I can recognise it as a great aesthetic work without therefore being compelled to recognise it as beautiful in the artistic sense just defined.

This, then, is what I want to bring back to Milan: the possibility of once again pronouncing the word Beauty as a criterion, not merely as an individual preference. Bringing beauty back to streets, pavements, buildings and shared spaces means restoring places to the city that do not merely occupy our gaze, but make it capable of seeing beyond. The aesthetic object tends to saturate attention with forms, signs and meanings while leaving the human being empty; the artistic object, by contrast, does not hold the gaze upon itself, but becomes a path towards the Good, and in this way becomes Beautiful.

THE WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN - INTELLECT

The second problem concerns the relationship between means and ends, and their possible reversal: what I call postmodern irrationality.

The postmodern loss of a higher order does not eliminate the capacity to reason. On the contrary, our age can be extraordinarily rational, technical and efficient. The irrationality to which I refer is subtler: it consists in the ability to perfect a process indefinitely without possessing an equally strong criterion for questioning the premise from which that process begins or the end towards which it leads.

Consistency, for this reason, is not necessarily a virtue. Consistency means that, once certain premises have been accepted, we correctly derive their consequences. But if the premises are wrong, to be perfectly consistent means proceeding with extraordinary precision in the wrong direction. A system can be coherent, efficient and internally flawless and still produce an absurd outcome.

Here it becomes useful to distinguish rationality from intellect. Thomas Aquinas does not consider them two separate powers, but distinguishes their acts: the intellect apprehends intelligible truth and first principles directly, while reason proceeds discursively from what is known to what remains to be known. For the argument that concerns us here, this distinction allows us not to confuse the capacity to develop a process rationally with the capacity to question the principles from which that process begins.

Bosco Verticale therefore becomes a particularly interesting example. It is an extraordinarily sophisticated work from a technical point of view. Bringing hundreds of trees onto the facades of two towers required botanical, structural and wind studies, irrigation systems, maintenance and specially designed anchors. It would therefore be absurd to call it technically irrational.

The question is another one.

Bosco Verticale deliberately brings together two figures belonging to different orders: the skyscraper and the forest. The forest rises from the ground; the tower arises from the vertical concentration of human activity. Making them coexist requires an enormous amount of technique. But the fact that we are capable of doing so answers the question "how?" and not yet the question "why?".

Although the verticality of the forest is already, in itself, an indication of irrationality, the point is deeper: when technical possibility, novelty or the symbolic power of an operation becomes sufficient to legitimise it, the means begins to produce its own end. It is here that I glimpse the irrational character of the postmodern: an extraordinary rationality of means accompanied by a growing difficulty in questioning ends.

Bosco Verticale, too, can therefore be, in my judgement, an extraordinary aesthetic work: recognisable, coherent with its own premises, technically remarkable and culturally powerful. The artistic question remains different.

What I propose, through the values of the classical tradition, is to set the world the right way up again: to place intellect back at the helm of rationality, and therefore ends before means.

CARE FOR CREATION

Beauty and intellect naturally lead us to the third principle: care for creation.

We need not immediately turn to a papal encyclical to understand its meaning. It is enough to look at Italy. Cultivated fields, dry-stone walls, olive groves, vineyards, rice paddies, mountain pastures, canals, forests, mountains and the accumulated knowledge of the seasons speak of a relationship between humanity and the land that has lasted for centuries.

Much of what we now admire as the Italian landscape is not nature left untouched, but nature encountered, transformed and safeguarded by human intellect.

Italian and Milanese history have never been able to exist apart from care for and work upon the land. The true opposition is therefore not between humanity and nature, but between wise transformation and transformation that is incapable of recognising order and limits.

It is here that Beauty and care meet once again. There is a relationship between the ugliness and neglect we allow to proliferate in creation and the ugliness and neglect we allow to proliferate in our hearts. I do not intend to propose a mechanical relationship of cause and effect. It is an anthropological relationship: if a person inwardly loses the sense that something possesses an order and deserves to be cared for, that person will more readily build and treat the world with the same disposition; at the same time, living daily amid ugliness and abandonment gradually educates us towards ugliness and abandonment.

Anthropopoiesis therefore works in both directions: the human being shapes the place, and the place in turn shapes the human being.

Bringing Beauty, intellect and care back to Milan does not mean decorating the city. It means improving the relationship between people and the place they inhabit.

ROOTEDNESS AND CULTURE

By bringing Beauty, intellect and care for creation back together, we arrive at the concept of the rooted individual and the rooted people. A rooted individual recognises the territory in which they live as part of their identity and, for that very reason, feels responsible for caring for it. Someone who sees a street only as the route required to get somewhere else will scarcely perceive what happens there as something that concerns them; someone who recognises it as part of their neighbourhood and their history will have a different relationship with that same space.

Rootedness does not mean immobility and does not necessarily coincide with having been born in a place. Milan has always changed also through those who arrived from elsewhere. One can put down roots by choosing a place, coming to know it, gradually taking on its history and accepting responsibility towards the community that already inhabits it. A tree grows precisely because it has roots; without roots it does not become freer, it simply falls.

Here we encounter the limit of law. Aristotle had already understood that virtue is also formed through habit and that the political order therefore participates in the formation of the citizen. Thomas Aquinas, while defining law as an ordinance of reason for the common good, reminds us that human law cannot claim to repress every vice or make immediately virtuous the person who is not yet so.

Good politics must therefore understand that culture can reach where law cannot. Not everything that is good can be imposed, and not everything that is wrong must be prohibited. Justice indicates a direction; the law must translate it into a form proportionate to the actual community, and establishing that proportion is one of the legislator's most delicate tasks.

A good law should therefore state clearly the end it intends to pursue but, whenever possible, act above all on the conditions that make that end practicable, avoiding the direct prescription of every behaviour required to achieve it. Spaces, incentives, customs, examples and real possibilities guide behaviour long before a command intervenes.

A busy street encourages informal oversight without imposing it. A well-cared-for park invites care without prescribing it. An accessible gym makes it easier to practise sport without forcing anyone to train. An understandable administrative procedure makes it easier to follow a rule without continually increasing penalties.

It is in this sense, and only as an analogy of method, that I find Laozi pertinent. In chapter 57 of the Daodejing, the sage says: "I take no action, and the people transform themselves." Governing does not necessarily mean intervening continuously and directly in the final outcome.

Politics should therefore proceed with caution, without confusing caution with inertia: create conditions that make the Good knowable, accessible and socially practicable; keep personal adherence as free as possible; reserve coercion for what is necessary to justice and the common good.

ARCHITECTURAL AND URBAN PROPOSALS

The premise has defined the principles; from this point onward, the proposals translate them into the space and administration of the city.

The operating criterion remains the same in every chapter: where Milan possesses direct authority and tools, it must act decisively; where the causes belong to national or global systems, it must understand them, choose a direction and use intelligently the levers the city actually possesses. Recognising the scale of a problem does not mean giving up on addressing it, but avoiding the mistake of presenting a local measure as the arrogant solution to a much larger question.

Water

I believe it is appropriate to reopen the Navigli dossier in order to assess the best way today to enhance the role of water in Milan. No option should be excluded a priori. The aim is to make water perceptible, accessible and lived once again.

- update the feasibility studies for the partial or complete reopening of the Navigli, assessing costs, benefits, hydraulic consequences and urban quality;
- make water-quality data public and easy to understand;
- establish, as a long-term goal where technically and medically possible, water suitable for bathing;
- study targeted interventions on existing watercourses that are currently degraded or diminished by urban development;
- consider Regent's Canal in the King's Cross area of London as a possible case study, where the relationship between canal and city has been reconstructed through access points, paths, places to stop and new public spaces overlooking the water. Granary Square, opening onto Regent's Canal, is one of the clearest examples of this strategy. The principle can be studied and adapted to Milan's different waterways wherever conditions allow.

Green space

The care of the city's green spaces - parks, flowerbeds and gardens - must be rescued from neglect and entrusted to the informed work of agronomists, landscape architects and designers. It is not enough for a space to be green in order to be a good and beautiful place: an abandoned lawn remains abandoned even when it contains grass.

- place the maintenance and quality of existing green spaces before purely quantitative expansion;
- entrust design and management to appropriate expertise, considering botany, use, safety and durability together;
- increase green space where it is genuinely useful, favouring ecological continuity and spaces that can actually be used;
- make parks and gardens more actively inhabited and therefore more effectively overseen;
- measure quality, condition and use alongside simple surface area.

Construction times and respect

Projects are often presented amid media clamour, generating excitement through renderings and announcements, only to enter a long phase in which citizens see mainly fences and diversions, experience unjustified delays and struggle to understand when the work will be completed. It is a matter of efficiency, but also of respect.

- create a single public page where the main public and private construction sites can be monitored;
- indicate the start date, expected completion, progress and responsible parties;
- make delays and their causes immediately visible;
- provide regular communication throughout the duration of the work, not only when it is announced;
- apply the available tools more rigorously so that public works and major private developments comply with schedules, requirements and obligations towards the city.

Building procedures

The events involving Milanese urban planning reveal a problem that extends beyond individual responsibility: when regulations, interpretation and administrative practice diverge, the cost of uncertainty falls upon citizens, professionals, public officials and businesses.

- publish clear guidance on the interpretive practices of public offices;
- make the criteria used in decisions more traceable and accessible;
- establish efficient preliminary consultation procedures for complex projects;
- reduce administrative times without replacing simplification with opacity;
- ensure that the same rule is genuinely accessible to the small property owner and the independent professional as well as to the major developer.

This is connected to the position against crony capitalism: when success depends more on privileged access to decision-makers than on the quality of the proposal, the market ceases to be truly open. A good rule must be understandable and usable even by those who have no special relationship with the system of power.

Streets and mobility

The street is probably the city's most widely used public work and one of those least often considered as a unified design. Signage, surfaces, pavements, trees and mobility must once again be conceived together.

- study a rationalisation of signage in order to reduce the forest of signs, poles and signals that contributes to visual disorder;
- prepare a verifiable multi-year plan to resurface and maintain roads, whose neglect and potholes create danger and damage for citizens and vehicles;
- define a Milanese standard for pavements and pedestrian areas, paying particular attention to beauty and to materials capable of ageing well;
- truly complete the existing cycle network before multiplying disconnected stretches;
- assess secondary roads running parallel to major thoroughfares that could be dedicated primarily to pedestrian and cycle mobility, while preserving low-speed local vehicle access and leaving the principal roads to the mixed use already provided for by the highway code;
- subject Area B and, above all, Area C to regular, transparent and non-ideological assessment, measuring their actual results, costs and side effects, and retaining, modifying or reducing them on the basis of evidence.

On cycling, we must likewise move beyond the ideological opposition between bicycles and cars. Supporting cycling is positive when it encourages outdoor physical activity, frees space and enables a more human presence across the territory; it becomes counterproductive when it is used symbolically to punish a different means of transport or when cycle lanes are built without continuity.

Housing

The housing question cannot be understood solely by looking at price per square metre. Milan is undergoing a property, demographic and social transformation at the same time, and precisely because it is Italy's most attractive city, it experiences the contradictions of these changes with greater intensity.

The natural population balance is negative, and the gradual generational turnover in property ownership may, over time, return part of the housing stock to the market or otherwise bring it back into circulation. At the same time, the city continues to attract students, workers, tourism and new residents from Italy and abroad. Milan now has a structurally negative natural balance, while migration helps sustain its population: in 2023, the positive migration balance more than offset the deficit between births and deaths. Over a longer horizon, a national policy supporting higher birth rates - although outside municipal authority - would move in the same direction and would not be incompatible with the timescale of generational turnover in the housing stock. A recovery in birth rates would also help strengthen continuity between generations and, with it, the rootedness made of memory, belonging and responsibility towards place, without excluding the possibility that those arriving from elsewhere may also gradually become part of it.

A significant share of contemporary immigration responds to a genuine demand for labour in services, logistics, hospitality, care and construction. To speak generically of "clandestine immigration" is not lexically accurate. The question that concerns us here is broader: to what extent do we want the demographic deficit and part of labour demand to be met permanently through new migration flows, and what effects does this choice produce on the social and housing structure of the city?

The same question applies to tourism. Tourist appeal is an economic resource, but when a growing share of residential property is allocated to short-term letting, the supply available to those who wish to settle in the city declines. The third report (2026) of the Osservatorio Casa Abbordabile records that, between 2020 and 2024, the share of temporary rentals rose from 34% to 49%, with a corresponding reduction in long-term rentals from 66% to 51%. These phenomena are significant enough to enter housing policy, without thereby becoming the sole explanation for the housing crisis.

The interpretation I propose is therefore this: falling birth rates, international mobility, labour immigration, tourism, inadequate incomes and generational turnover in ownership all contribute to the future configuration of supply and demand. Merely fuelling demand in order to preserve the rising value of the property market would once again confuse what is economically advantageous with the Good of the city.

Here the Platonic image of the beast returns. If placing my apartment on Airbnb guarantees the highest return, the market communicates very clearly what it is economically advantageous for me to do. But that does not mean I must do it. I may freely judge that renting it on a stable basis to a person or a family represents a better use of my property, even if I relinquish part of the return.

The first response is therefore cultural and concerns incentives. The law can intervene in short-term rentals or other mechanisms when necessary, but it should do so in proportion to the real situation and after understanding the effects it will produce. The aim is not to prevent profit, but to avoid maximum individual profit automatically becoming the only criterion by which we decide what kind of city to build.

The issue of wages also belongs to a broader scale. Milan can influence housing supply and some living costs, but wages, taxation and the labour market depend largely on national and European systems. The task of a city administration is therefore to use its own levers fully, without pretending to possess those it does not have.

Milan already has an Extraordinary Plan for Affordable Housing that confirms the objective of 10,000 homes at sustainable rents over ten years. The question is not to invent a parallel plan, but to assess and, if necessary, rethink the existing one in light of the demographic and property-market Milan now taking shape, verifying its scale, location, timing and ability to make a real impact on supply.

- assess an increase in the supply of regulated, social and affordable rental housing;
- recover unused public property and accelerate its return to the housing supply;
- assess new public and private residential construction where infrastructure, services and urban characteristics allow;
- assess future needs by considering falling birth rates, generational turnover in housing stock, migration, temporary populations and tourism together, avoiding the automatic projection of current demand into the future;
- at the same time, prioritise the recovery, replacement and intelligent densification of already urbanised areas, avoiding unjustified land consumption;
- use public land and property more strategically through transparent forms of public-private cooperation;
- set numerical objectives, schedules and costs for the plan and publish regular progress reports;
- favour stable tenancies over the exclusively temporary or tourist use of property, acting first through incentives and assessing proportionate regulatory measures where necessary;
- carry out the clearance of unlawfully occupied properties promptly, protecting ownership and returning public housing to those entitled to it;
- provide serious support to vulnerable households affected by clearances: logistical assistance, coordination between services, guidance towards existing alternatives and temporary accommodation where eligibility conditions are met.

The principle behind this last point is simple: enforcing a rule does not mean merely telling a family, "you must leave". Legality and care for the person can proceed together.

The beauty of Milan also depends, finally, on the beauty of its homes.

- make the criteria for assessing architectural quality more explicit;
- consider proportion, materials, relationship with the street, facade, ground floor and the building's capacity to age with dignity;
- subject major interventions on existing facades to a serious assessment of the quality of the result;
- avoid imposing an official style, concentrating instead on the quality of the work and its relationship with the context.

The aim is to raise the artistic quality of Milanese architecture throughout the city.

Pollution

Milan has a real pollution problem that must be addressed with the same approach: recognise the problem, understand its scale and act decisively where the city possesses real levers.

The geography of the Po Valley, the density of urbanisation, the productive system, heating and mobility make it impossible to attribute the problem to a single cause. For this reason, I do not consider a policy that automatically identifies ecological transition with replacing one technology with another to be sufficient.

- study the entire mobility system instead of limiting action to replacing one form of propulsion with another;
- support research and experimentation aimed at reducing emissions from brakes, tyres and road wear;
- act decisively on the energy efficiency of buildings;
- plan the progressive reduction of emissions from heating systems;

- introduce design criteria for public works that consider the pollution produced before, during and after construction;
- evaluate materials and construction systems across their life cycle;
- prepare the city for greater electrification if the national energy system makes increasing quantities of dispatchable, low-emission energy available, including the hoped-for development of nuclear power.

A deeper question nevertheless remains. As long as the Good is identified with the continuous maximisation of production, consumption, GDP growth and the velocity of money, care for creation will continually come into tension with economic incentives. It would be naive simply to order people to withdraw from those incentives; we must also question the system that produces them.

The issue is not, in fact, one of "degrowth", but of nourishing and directing the human will: recognising the error of treating as an end what should remain a means.

It is in this sense that I consider Bitcoin interesting as a possible instrument of transition. Not as a municipal policy against pollution, but as an example of a broader systemic transformation that changes the relationship between time, saving, consumption and monetary power. The thesis requires its own treatment; here only the anthropopoietic principle is relevant: the monetary system also contributes to forming the human being who inhabits the city.

Milan cannot transform by itself the energy, productive or monetary systems in which it is embedded. It can, however, choose how to position itself within them, change what depends upon it and prepare for the transformations it considers just. There is no need to claim that everything can be solved before beginning to move towards the Good.

Centre and periphery

There is a real divide between central Milan, the periphery and the hinterland. Yet, from the perspective of flows and everyday life, these three parts constitute the true city of Milan. Here the scale of action is clearly urban and metropolitan, and therefore more decisive intervention is required.

- consider Milan in the totality of its flows, places and citizens;
- progressively reduce differences in the quality of public space and the composition of functions between centre and periphery;
- prevent beauty, green space, maintenance and safety from becoming territorial privileges;
- strengthen coordination with the municipalities of the hinterland;
- develop shared metropolitan strategies for housing, mobility, infrastructure and major urban transformations.

There can be no urbanistically first-, second- and third-class citizens.

Safety

It is impossible to speak seriously about Milanese urban planning without speaking about safety, because safety is also a spatial matter. Policing, justice and certainty in the response of the State belong partly to different institutional levels, but the city possesses important tools for making public space more lively, legible and observed.

A beautiful city is more readily cared for; a cared-for city encourages belonging; belonging produces informal oversight. Jane Jacobs understood this mechanism well when she spoke of "eyes on the street": a space that is inhabited, crossed and observed possesses a diffuse social control that an empty space cannot have.

- increase oversight across the territory by encouraging the daily presence of people in the streets;
- move towards reducing large mono-functional spaces that remain deserted for hours;

- encourage neighbourhood shops, sport, services and activities capable of keeping public space alive;
- design lighting, sightlines and routes with safety explicitly in mind;
- maintain parks, stations, pavements and squares continuously;
- coordinate urban interventions with the presence of law enforcement in areas with recurring problems.

The problem is also cultural. A society founded on the logic of "either me or you", in which one person's identity is automatically experienced as a subtraction from another's identity, generates conflict. What we must promote instead is a culture of addition: I can be fully what I am without demanding that the other be less of what they are. Understanding and coexistence can become an enrichment precisely because different identities exist and have something to encounter in one another.

- distinguish clearly between those who are entitled to remain and those who are not: for the latter, avoid municipal policies that create improper incentives for irregular residence, while respecting the essential rights guaranteed by law and strengthening coordination with the competent authorities and assisted voluntary return programmes;
- for those who remain lawfully, invest more decisively in linguistic, civic, cultural and occupational integration. But the encounter must be reciprocal: Milanese citizens must also be able to know the cultures entering the city.

Coexistence does not require cultures to dissolve into an indistinct neutrality. It requires roots strong enough to permit encounter and a shared place recognisable enough that those who inhabit it feel responsible for respecting it. The law can protect safety and sanction those who violate it; culture must help form people who do not require the threat of punishment in order to respect the place and those who inhabit it.

Sport

I consider sport a fundamental means for the development of the person. The body is not an accessory to the human being, and a city that produces sedentary life also performs an anthropopoietic action. In this field, the city's capacity to intervene is concrete and immediate.

- verify the quality, maintenance, distribution and accessibility of Milanosport facilities;
- increase provision in underserved neighbourhoods;
- facilitate private and community-based sporting initiatives;
- recover unused places, where possible, through sporting activities;
- integrate sport and movement into the ordinary design of parks, neighbourhoods and routes;
- consider sports facilities also as places of encounter, informal oversight and rootedness.

Church, parishes and oratories

The history and urban structure of Milan are inseparable from the presence of the Catholic Church. For centuries, churches, parishes and, later, oratories represented not only places of worship, but centres around which assistance, education, social relationships, sport, culture and neighbourhood identity were organised.

This function remains important in the contemporary city. In many parts of Milan, the parish and the oratory are still among the places where children, adults and older people can meet regularly outside purely economic relationships. For this very reason, their activity touches many of the themes addressed by the manifesto: spirituality, formation, sport, safety through an active presence, identity and rootedness.

We therefore recognise the importance of the Catholic Church's work across the territory, especially through parishes and oratories, and we intend to assist and support it, within the scope of municipal powers and according to transparent criteria, whenever its work produces a concrete benefit for the community.

- encourage stable dialogue between the administration, parishes and oratory organisations;
- facilitate, within municipal powers, the maintenance and redevelopment of spaces used for educational, cultural and sporting activities;
- cooperate in initiatives against loneliness, marginalisation and youth distress;
- recognise oratories as places for neighbourhood sport and a steady local presence;
- protect the urban role of parishes as places of identity, memory and rootedness;
- support, with respect for religious freedom and public criteria of general interest, initiatives that produce a concrete benefit for the neighbourhood.

In this respect, the parish represents a particularly clear example of the principle set out earlier: it does not form a community by ordering it from above how to behave, but by building relationships, habits, occasions and places in which that community can take shape.

Finally, it is important to add that recognising the historic and social role of the Catholic Church does not contradict the full protection of freedom of religion and worship. We therefore commit to:

- study, according to criteria of actual need, urgency and territorial proximity, the availability and allocation of suitable spaces for prayer and the religious life of the different faiths permanently present in the city.

WHAT KIND OF MILAN?

All of this brings us back to the initial question: what kind of human being do we help to form through the city we build?

Milan works. It produces, innovates and attracts people and capital. But functioning is not enough to define a good city, just as efficiency is not enough to define a good life. A machine can function perfectly and travel in the wrong direction. This may be one of the confusions of our time: we have enormously perfected the rationality of means while progressively ceasing to question ends through the intellect.

I do not propose an immobile Milan or a nostalgic return to the past. I propose restoring a hierarchy: technology is a means, the economy is a means, law is a means. The end is the human being and, through the human being, the common good.

This also requires a sense of political proportion. A city does not govern national demographics, European wages, global migration flows, the monetary system or the energy system by itself. But neither is it powerless before them. It can understand their dynamics, choose how to position itself within them and use decisively every lever that belongs to it.

Where it can build, it must build well. Where it can maintain, it must maintain. Where it can simplify, it must simplify. Where it can educate through space, it must assume responsibility for doing so. Where the problem exceeds it, it must avoid both the arrogance of believing itself omnipotent and the convenience of declaring itself powerless.

The city is at once the product of the human being and one of the instruments through which the human being produces themselves. For this reason, urban policy must not limit itself to asking how many square metres to build, how many trees to plant, how many cars to remove or how many cycle lanes to trace. It must ask what form of life those decisions are making possible. This, ultimately, is the political meaning of anthropopoiesis.

Truth is Goodness, Goodness is Beauty, and beautiful architecture is Architettura Vera.