



MEDIOBANCA

PRESS NOTE

MEDIOBANCA, *L'ARTE DI VIVERE CON LENTEZZA ONLUS* AND *LA KASA DEI LIBRI* JOIN FORCES TO STAGE THE THIRD YEAR OF "THE PRISONERS ASK WHY?"

The prisons of Piacenza and Pavia will be the first institutions to welcome **The Prisoners Ask Why?** in this its third year. The initiative, devised by *L'Arte di vivere con Lentezza ONLUS* and *La Kasa dei Libri* with the support of Mediobanca, seeks to promote social inclusion in prisons through reading.

After the pandemic brought activities to a halt, some of the most important figures in contemporary Italian literature, along with volunteers from among Mediobanca's own staff, will again have an opportunity to walk into these two prisons, to connect with the inmates and offer them a window on the outside world. The starting point for this dialogue will once again be books and literature, which will serve as the stimulus for collecting the prisoners' "whys", to provoke them to think and ask questions.

The questions will be put to the authors based on a schedule drawn up with the prisons participating in the initiative. The first meeting will be on 14 December 2021 at the prison in Piacenza with author Andrea Kerbaker, while on 16 December the inmates of the *Torre del Gallo* prison in Pavia will meet with PierLuigi Vercesi.

Ella Ceppi, Chairman of the *L'Arte del Vivere con Lentezza* charity, commented: "We don't need much, the prisoners often say to us, just a kind gesture, someone to listen to us. Having a writer there with them, whose experience can act as a sounding board for their doubts, helps them to make sense of the present, reflect on the past, and shed some light on the future, in order to help them understand themselves better and hopefully make a new start."

"We've been actively promoting social inclusion for several years now, with the objective of generating value for the communities in which we operate", said **Giovanna Giusti del Giardino**, Head of Group Sustainability at Mediobanca. "With *The Prisoners Ask Why?* we're renewing our commitment to the prisoners, as we're well aware of the difference that literature and dialogue can make in the process of their re-education and reintroduction to society", Giusti del Giardino added.

"I've been going into prison for many years now, mostly to listen. There's very little that's heroic in what the prisoners tell me, no *Count of Monte Cristo* stuff or anything like that. Just the true stories of people who are unable to live their lives freely. But there's a lesson here too: being deprived of your freedom, which is such a painful thing to experience, brings a dose of humanity with it that you're often hard pushed to find elsewhere", said **Andrea Kerbaker**, writer and founder of *La Kasa dei Libri*.

Milan, 14 December 2021