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# The Church in Italy

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# The Church In Italy

A Brief History of Some of  
the Italian Churches of Today



*"They of Italy Salute You"*

*Heb. 13:24*

## Five Years Ago . . .

The gospel in its purity and simplicity was unknown in Italy. There was not a Christian worshipping according to the New Testament order. Today there are groups meeting in twenty-five or more cities and towns from the mountainous Alps of northern Italy to the toe of southern Italy and on the isle of Sicily.

Como, Padova, Milan, Turin, Alessandria, Moncalieri, Bologna, Florence, Leghorn, Civitavecchia Rome, Frascati, Ciampino, Velletri, Salerno, Serrapedace, Spezzano, Piccolo, Cosenza, Catene, Petilia Policastro, Catanzaro, Messina, Catania, Palermo are the names of the places where the church may be found worshipping. Come Christians are to be found in the island of Sardinia, at Cagliari, and it is hoped that a work can be started there soon. Others are at Trieste.

There are more than six hundred FAITHFUL CHRISTIANS in Italy today. They have been tried in the fires of temptations and persecution. Many have fallen, unable to bear the cross laid upon their shoulders. We weep for them, but we rejoice in the strong faith of these faithful ones.

### Italian Preachers

On these pages we show the pictures of a few Italians who are devoting their lives to preaching the gospel to their people. Eighteen men are now preaching and eight others will be ready to join with them by summer. THIS IS OUR GOAL—to place the gospel firmly in the hands of the Italians.

In order to use these men effectively, support of \$100.00 per month is needed for at least eight of them. Brother Cline Paden is anxious to arrange this while here in the States.

Within the next year it is believed that the church in Milan will be self-supporting. It was begun a little more than three years ago. This will be the story of a number of the Italian churches in the next few years.

### The Church In Rome

AUGUST, 1952.—On the first Lord's day of this month the church in Rome began meeting in their new building at Via Achille Papa 25. Six members living in the city and converted through personal work from Frascati composed the church. Brethren Sandro Corazzo and Cline Paden have worked with this church from its beginning. Brother Gerald Paden joined them in August, 1953.

Six weeks after it began meeting the church building was ordered closed by the government and was closely guarded by armed police. This action (resulting from Catholic pressure) was intended to kill this congregation before it had become grounded. But the church was never more alive than during this difficult period. The attendance grew, though the police followed members in an attempt to discover the meeting place. Some of the most faithful members are found among those contacted during the time the church was closed. From the original six members, the church in Rome has grown



Corazza

to almost fifty members in the past eighteen months. An outstanding event of last year was a meeting in which Brother Salvoni of Milan preached. More than 300 were present on one occasion.

This congregation pays \$40.00 monthly from its own contribution for a meeting place in another part of the city where several Bible classes are taught weekly.

The late Brother Paul Edwards of Florida raised the funds to purchase a printing press which is now stored in the basement of the building in Rome. It will be put into operation as soon as permission can be obtained from the government.

The Bible Correspondence Course is under the capable direction of two of the faithful members of the Rome church. It is sent over all of Italy.

### **Church at Frascati**

It was here that the church in Italy had its beginning. There are about 50 members of the church there who continue to meet in the chapel at Villa Speranza. A number of the boys of Frascati Orphans Home are among its members. Two faithful gospel preachers have gone forth from this church, Brethren Sandro Corazza and Salvatore Puliga. Brother Salvatore Cajozza, who was converted by Brother Carl Hecker, labors with him at Frascati. The church looks forward to the time it can be located in the city where an effective work can be done. Among its activities of the past year is the publishing of a 75 page booklet, "Now that you are a Christian" (R. B. Sweet). Also the translation and publication of "A Preacher and A Priest" (Brownlow).

### **The Church at Ciampino**

About twenty or more Christians meet here. They have had to work almost alone during the past two years because of the lack of preachers, but they have continued faithfully. They have been meeting in homes.

### **Civitavecchia**

Dario Maffei, an ex-baptist preacher, who was baptized in Rome, moved to this city, some forty miles away, last summer. He was able to convert the five elders of the Baptist church and others. There are about thirty members in this congregation.



**Maffei**

### **Cosenza**

There are four small groups meeting in this province, Serrapedace, Spezzano, Piccolo, Catene and Cosenza. Salvatore Puliga and another brother are working with these congregations. This work is altogether the work of native preachers. There are more than 60 members in this area.

### **The Church at Velletri**

Rodolfo Berdini has been working with this church for the past three years. Last summer a building was purchased

and a meeting conducted. The future for this church is bright. We do not have the information on the number of Christians there.

### Catanzaro

In the province of Calabria and at the instep of the foot of Italy are congregations at Catanzaro and Petilia Policastro. There are about thirty members at each locations. Brethren Minestroni and Coco have worked there during the past two years.

### Church In Milan

During one of the periods of greatest opposition against the church, letters came from all parts of Italy asking for information. Forty of these letters came from Milano. Brother Harold Paden move to this city to contact these people, many of whom are now members of the church. Others have labored there with him, but at present Fausto Salvoni and Guiseppe Torierri are the only ones assisting.

During the past three and one-half years this church has grown to 110 faithful members, the largest congregation in Italy, and it is increasing rapidly. Aiding in the personal work are the 8 preacher students who are studying the Bible in the school. They are studying Bible subjects and languages and the majority will finish this year.

The church has a choice location in the heart of the city, an auditorium that seats 250 and with adequate class rooms. The zeal and enthusiasm of this congregation is great and it is wielding a marvelous influence in the city and about.

The day that this congregation will become self supporting is not too far in the future.



Salvoni

### The Church at Padova

This church counts among its members converts from Catholicism, Judaism, and Protestantism. Brother Howard Bybee moved there some three years ago and soon converted Raffaello Paone, an ex-priest, who had been a Methodist preacher for some years. These two brethren have made a splendid team and have done a marvelous work. Brother Salvoni has held two successful meetings with as many as 500 in attendance. Extreme opposition on the part of the bishop of Padova has given the work much publicity.

There are about 45 members in the church and funds are on hand to purchase a building which will mean much to their future growth.



Paone

### Como, Alessandria and Moncalieri

All of these works have been started by the Milano congregation. Alessandria was the first church ordered closed

by the Italian government. It is some 60 miles south of Milano.

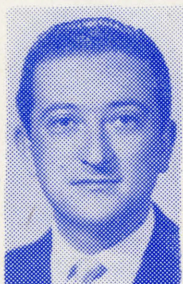
Como is near the Swiss border. Moncalieri is but a few miles from the French border and Brother Pownall of Turin meets with the brethren there.

### Churches in Sicily

Messina and Catania: The work in this area has been carried on exclusively by Italian preachers. About fifty members meet in Messina, but we do not have information on the number in Catania. Brethren Francesco Scafi and Antonio Buta labor with these congregations. Brother Carl Mitchell worked with them a month about two years ago.

### Works Recently Begun

Salerno: Brother Ruggiero has moved to this city and has begun the work of establishing the Lord's church. This city is only a short distance below Naples and is his home city.



**Ruggiero**

Palermo: Brethren John Butts, Bernard Howell and Aurelio Nori have moved to Palermo, Sicily, a city of 600,000 people to begin the work of the Lord. It is one of the most modern cities of Italy. The Cardinal is noted for his opposition to "protestants".

Bologna: One of the major cities of Italy. Brother Minestroni has moved to this city and will be joined later by Brother L. V. Pfeifer (tentative). There are a number of people in the city who have shown an interest in the gospel. The prospects are bright. Brother Pittman had planned to work in this city, but has been refused a visa.

### Florence

Brother Carl Mitchell and Lido Petri are laboring in this city. The work was begun about 7 months ago. At this time there are 12 members and about that many more ready for baptism. There are many contacts and the prospect for the growth of the church is bright. Pressure is heavy on the new converts, but a successful work in this cultural center of Italy is expected.



**Minestroni**

### Leghorn

February 10, 1954, news dispatches from this city tell that the police have ordered the closing of the church there. Brother Wyndal Hudson has refused to do so, on the advice of our Italian lawyer, Mr. Rosapepe. Possibly by this time there has been some decision.

Brother Hudson has a large group meeting and has found several members among the army personnel (supply base for American soldiers in Austria. 2,000 men stationed there). He

is teaching the Bible to 140 children in the Army school each week. Some of the older students have asked to be baptized. A good work will be done there, the Lord willing.

### **Turin**

Brother Melvin Pownall has recently moved to Turin. About 10 members in this city. Brother Pownall has about 40 young people with whom he is working. Brother Ugo Monaco, one of our preachers in the armed forces, is stationed there and helps in the work. We are happy to have the American consul and family in the greater part of the English services.

### **Let's Keep the Work Growing**

Briefly, we have tried to give you a picture of the Lord's work in Italy. Brethren, let's stay behind this great work. Perhaps your congregation will be able to support an Italian preacher. Let's keep every one of them at work. We must have literature, rent halls and furnish the needs of these men. The people of Italy will accept the gospel. They are Catholics because they have never heard the gospel.

Your prayers—your fellowship—will assure greater success in Italy. May we count on you?

