



The Origins of the Italian Unification Movement

Rome, Italy, October 8, 2017

By *Giuseppe Cali*

On Sunday October 8th we held a special Sunday Service in Rome, based on testimonies about the beginning of the Unification Movement in Italy.

Special guests to give their testimonies were: Franco and Giannina Ravaglioli, former National leaders of Italy, Elio D'Alberti, former National leader of Spain and one of the first members to join in Italy and two more ladies. These two ladies were Doni and Marisa, being Doni the first Italian members ever to join in Italy. Even though she had important missions at that time, for personal reasons, she left the movement after several years of dedication and for many years she carried on her own life. In these last few years, thanks to the re contacting of Franco and Giannina, she came closer to our movement again. I myself with my wife Betty went to have dinner in her home where she lives with her husband, some time ago. Actually, they are both spiritualists and have a group of spiritual researchers around them. It is very interesting to see how these two ladies still respect True Parents so much and expressed their gratitude for the teaching

they received from them. After so many years they remember very well all the main content of Divine Principle and still they use it as main base for their life and spiritual search. They spoke about the life they were living at that time, with so many sacrifices and spirit of witnessing and also the time in which they could meet True Parents directly. It was very inspiring with many new details since they spoke about a time in which even Franco and Giannina were not yet members. Many spiritual experiences, but especially the first meeting with True Parents when she was still deciding to join and she was just 17 years old in 1965.

Then Elio D'Alberti spoke about the spiritualist through which many members joined at that time and the first problems they had to face together with Martin Porter that was the first National leader. Beside witnessing, he was in charge to support the movement financially, together with Mario Ferrario and so they could start to develop. Then Giannina Ravaglioli first and then Franco, gave their testimonies about the witnessing spirit they had filling up the centers with guests, and the experience to become the first Italian National leaders of Italy. Franco spoke also about the spiritual background of the

buying of the property in Colle Mattia, through the guidance of a spiritualist. He showed us several pictures about the early times in which they were together with True Parents.

It was a very precious collection of testimonies of historical early times in which most of the members were not yet there. I was very happy to see many 2nd gen attending the meeting, since they will be those who will have to pass those testimonies to the future generations sometime soon. On the same time, we traveled back in time, reminding how strong was the spirit and determination we had when we joined, the same spirit that True Mother now wants us to find again. We all realized how much blood, sweat and tears were shed by God, True Parents and elder members, to allow us nowadays to break through in society and this realization is very precious especially for the young brothers and sisters that have such a precious inheritance to receive with pride and gratitude.

We concluded with a nice lunch together in which we could continue to share many other beautiful testimonies together. With infinite gratitude to Heavenly Parent and True Parents!