

Diary of the Visit of The Angels of Peace from WFWP Russia to WFWP Italy

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“Apr 26th h. 11.30pm arrival in Turin airport. Transfer offered by the Municipality of Turin from the airport to city centre. Arrival around 0.30am. Meeting with the families who hosted the group and transfer to their homes.

Apr. 27th Morning rest. 12 noon lunch at the restaurant “Alla Portata” typical Italian Restaurant; the owner Alessandro had decided to offer 3 meals the group during their stay in Turin . In the afternoon walking transfer from the restaurant to city centre with a stop at the Royal Gardens. H. 3.00pm walking tour in city centre offered by the Municipality of Turin with the visit to the National Cinema Museum located in the monument symbol of the city: the Mole Antonelliana. Then quickly on the elevator to the top of the monument: a wonderful view of the Alps and the whole city at 360 degrees. Dinner at the Holy Ground in the Royal Gardens: Pizza together and transfer back home.

Apr. 28th in the morning transfer to the railway station: a nice modern local train took the group to Bruzolo in the Susa Valley, not so far from French border. What a fascinating spectacle to see the high mountains and the cows in the meadow so close to everybody! For the group arriving from Moscow, especially the children, that was an unforgettable moment. Early afternoon transfer to the gym for the rehearsal followed by the performance in front of about 100 people. Everybody enjoyed it. Among them a grandma 93 years old. The dinner was offered by the women of the village, including the lady Mayor. At 9.30pm back home by local train.

Apr. 29th In the morning a visit to the National Automobile Museum together with Nina, a Russian lady as local guide: children and adults were so excited in front of the old coaches, including the royal ones, the first cars of last century and the most famous racing cars like Ferrari. Lunch offered by local families: sandwiches, fresh fruit and chocolate. Afternoon in the famous “Parco del Valentino” on the River Po. Time for relax, rehearsal and enjoy in the Medieval Village tasting the famous Turin Chocolate. Dinner at home.

Apr. 30th. Morning at Russian school “Azbuka” located in the most ancient National boarding- school dating from the 18th century. The “Angels” could share their school experiences with the Italian children speaking in the Russian language; then altogether they went to the Great Hall for the performance. What a beautiful atmosphere to see the audience full of families with many children watching the show attentively.

Lunch on the street and free time to discovering the city and to go shopping. In the afternoon a small

group of them were invited to celebrate the AfP Lucetta Sanguinetti's birthday. She has hosted 5 persons among the Angels (3 girls and 2 mothers). It was decided to offer her a small entertainment from the Angels programme. Lucetta's daughter and her husband are journalists: during our stay there Olga Vakulinskaya and Maria Gabriella Mieli were interviewed about the project, the programme in Italy and in Russia. We spent a beautiful afternoon together. Dinner at home with the host families.

May 1st In the morning time for sharing with the families at home, lunch and transfer to the Murialdo Theatre for rehearsals, interviews and performance. The theatre was full of people: families, friends, members of many associations and volunteers who accompanied children of various ethnic groups in cancer therapy. Normally the theatre capacity is 220 people. Altogether there were around 280. Everybody enjoyed it: many pictures, a lot of good new contacts, proposals for new performances – a taste of heavenly fun. The theatre is part of the local catholic church called “Nostra Signora della Salute”. The pastor Don Agostino had decided to offer the Angels of Peace performance as part of the centenary celebrations of the parish. The funds collected on that occasion were given to Don Agostino as support for the families in need. The dinner was offered by some families of the church: the Russian ensemble could experience the blessing of praying together with the Catholic members before eating and enjoying their meal.

May 2nd In the morning important meeting with Dr. Mauro Laus, President of Piedmont Regional Council in Palazzo Lascaris, the headquarters of the council. The ensemble was welcomed by the President's staff, then Dr. Laus shook hands with all the components of the group. He showed interest in the work and mission of WFP and UPF and humbly asked to listen to the ensemble. The Angels sang 2 Russian songs followed by the Italian national anthem. The President was so moved by listening to the Russian children singing in Italian and said “I'm so sorry, I had no idea about your beautiful and touching voices singing our national Anthem in Italian, otherwise I would have opened the meeting of the Regional Council with the Angels singing the Song of the Italian People”. We could spend an hour together with Dr. Laus. After that Dr. Patrizia Della Morte, member of the Committee for Human Rights of the Piedmont Regional Council guided the group in an interesting tour of the historical building.



Lunch was offered by the owners of the restaurant “Sovietniko”. After lunch we had 2 hours' free time in the city centre before joining “Famija Turinèisa” in another historical building of the city.

The Famija Turinèisa is an association created in 1925 from a group of Turin and Piedmont citizens animated by the love for their land and united by an ideal superior to all political pettiness returning to the village traditions, in defense of the Italian. Since 1926 the Famija has promoted the revival of the Carnival and the resumption of the figure Gianduja who is elected annually by the public notary. Gianduja was born as a puppet, but soon became a mask and a symbol of Turin, Piedmont and in the Risorgimento, the feeling of unity of the Italian people. The Angels of Peace were greeted by Daniela Piazza, President of Famija Turinèisa, Gianduja and Giacometta (female mask, Gianduja's wife) and the

Giacometta, a group of girls dressed in the florist costumes of the 18th century. Giacometta represents the wisdom of Piedmont women, their common sense allows them to solve even the most difficult problems, is ready to help the poor and to react against bullies. After the beautiful performance of the Angels, the Giacometta, offered them a small show of music and Piedmont folk songs involving everyone in the dance. At the end the Famija Turineisa offered the famous Merenda Sinoira, a typical Piedmont dinner.

May 3rd. Morning, lunch and early afternoon at the Middle school “Matteotti” surrounded by a beautiful park in the city centre. More than 400 people including students, teachers and parents participated in the show offered by the Angels. The Italian students also wanted to welcome them with a performance of a small orchestra playing Italian music. The mothers prepared a good lunch and in the early afternoon the gym teacher, prof. Angela Baratta, prepared a special programme for the Russian children. The school won a national prize in “orienteering”. Small teams composed of 2 Italian students and one Angel from Russia had to follow a specific path in the school park following a map, reaching specific points in the shortest time possible. The Russian parents participated in the competition too. Only the students were rewarded. The kids really enjoyed themselves with the rich programme of games. All the children received a beautiful backpack and the top five received an additional prize. But the most touching event was the “bridge of peace” ceremony. Thanks to the vice principal of the school, prof. Claudia Bocca, the class 1c, composed of 11 year old students, were chosen to participate in the ceremony, together with the teachers matched with the parents of the Angels of Peace. Maria Gabriella Mieli, WFWP Italian VicePresident explained in detail the meaning of the ceremony, touching everybody’s heart and everyone of the Italian side participated with a special motivation. The children exchanged addresses with great enthusiasm.

The day’s emotions were not finished yet. It was time to move for the “Casa Teatro dei Ragazzi e giovani” (House Theatre of Children and Youth) for the 3rd big performance. This beautiful theatre was offered by the Municipality of Turin: they gave us the big room with about 290 seats. The funds raised from the free donations were donated to Casa UGI (UGI = Union of Italian Parents with children in cancer treatment) This organization offers them 22 apartments in a very special building, food, transportation, entertainment and anything they need for all the time of the treatment: treatment normally lasts from a minimum of six months even up to 3 years and the children come from all over the world. Among the public people in need participated in the show, Russian families living in Italy and members from the local institutions with their kids. At the end dinner at a Japanese restaurant whose owner too, Mr. Yan, offered the Angels 3 meals.

May 4th. Another exciting day. In the morning the Angels were welcomed to Palazzo Madama by a tour guide who showed the group the large historic building that now houses the collections of the Turin Municipal museum of ancient art. What an incredible experience for the Angels from Moscow to see the masterpieces which had arrived from the Ermitage Museum in the room of the Senate: a corner of Russia in Turin. Lunch again at the Japanese restaurant to the delight of the Angels.

In the afternoon another official programme: welcomed them to “Palazzo di Città” the Municipality of Turin. Again the tour of another historical building with the opportunity to see the halls of the local government and take pictures. Then the performance at the “Sala delle Colonne” in front of the Mayor’s spokesman and the International Affairs, Cooperation and Peace staff. Dinner at the Italian restaurant.

May 5th. In the morning the Angels were received at the Hebrew School “Artom – Colonna e Finzi”. What an intense experience with the children of the school and their teachers! The Angels offered few Russian songs followed by the Italian Anthem and another Italian song. The Italian children offered 3 songs of the Hebrew tradition, the Israeli anthem and asked to listen to the Russian one too. After that a touching interfaith bridge of peace between the Angels from Russia and the Italian Hebrew children. At the end Ruth, one of the teachers, gave us the opportunity to visit the Synagogue. In Turin there are 2 temples: the small one, which is more intimate and the big one. The Angels of Peace last public experience was a beautiful prayer, hand in hand, recited in Russian, Hebrew and Italian.

Lunch at McDonalds and free time in the city centre for shopping and an interesting fundraising experience at the railways station and in the street. The final dinner again at the Japanese Restaurant with the presence of all the families who had hosted the Russian group and one of the teachers of the Italian school. What a moving experience!

May 6th. The last day in Italy. Morning at home. Lunch again at the Japanese restaurant and transfer to the airport: bye- bye Italy!

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