

Testimony of Carlo Zaccarelli, The first Italian member to join in Rome, Italy

Carlo Zaccarelli
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I met the Movement in Rome in March 1966. Doris Walder, later blessed to Dennis Orme, was the pioneer in Rome. My mother had met Doris first, in the small flat near the Coliseum. I drove my mother there twice a week but I never went in. When they moved to a larger apartment in Via Salaria 300, I was invited to the opening party. It was Barbara Burrowes (now Von Praag) who opened the door. I met Doris and the other members, Martin Porter, Marion Dougherty [Porter], Dawn Faroni. I felt warmly welcomed, and soon Doris asked me if I want to hear an introduction to the Principle. While she gave me the lecture, Martin Porter translated for me into Italian, since my English then was not good enough. I visited again regularly with my mother. By the third chapter I could understand without translation. Visiting regularly, I attended the lectures given to other guests, I practiced giving lectures, and one day I was introduced to my first student, a young priest. A very prayerful moment for me! Witnessing was done wherever possible. As I was attending University, I gave leaflets to students. I hired a small room in the campus, and asked Martin Porter to give a presentation. I designed and produced an invitation leaflet with our spirit printer. Five people attended, and later each of them visited our centre for follow up lectures. That was the time I began translating the Divine Principle into Italian. It took me around four months, at the time while I was attending University.

In 1967 Rev Young Oon Kim visited us and directed Doris to go to Holland and support Teddy Verhien there. Martin Porter became the leader of the Italian Movement.

Life in the centre followed the tradition set up by Doris. We would go to the seaside at night for prayer and a swim in the pitch black sea. We tried to reach to potential members. Mark, a young American joined for a brief spell. Daniela, an Italian girl, became a regular guest. She did sky jumping as a sport. Another girl from Naples, a professional typist, came regularly and typed the first draft of the Italian Principle.

One day a young man who had studied Principle with us, came with his luggage and said he wanted to move in. We were overjoyed, since no new members had joined since Doris had left. We quickly prepared his bedroom, and while he was settling down we met in the kitchen to celebrate our new

member. But only few minutes late our new guest appeared on the kitchen door with a disturbed face. "You have been controlling me, he said, you are taking away my freedom. I will not let you do this. I am going to the police". We remained there, shocked, we could not say a word within ourselves.

An hour later the doorbell rang. Three policemen asked to come in. They wanted to see the house. We showed them around. They could not find anything suspicious. "You must come to the police station for questioning". We all went, to be questioned one by one. At the station my interrogator asked "Why are you living there? Why are you not with your family? Why are you controlling this man's mind?" It was unusual in Italy for a young man to live away from his family who was in the same city. We gave him a copy of the Principle notes we were using for teaching. We were all released without charges. The experience gave us a realistic view of our activity.

In 1968 Doris moved to England and became the leader there. In November she invited me to visit England. At that time there was persecution in Italy and Martin decided to move our Centre from Rome to Milan. I was asked to go back to Italy and find a new centre in Milan. Patricia Hardman (now Hartley) joined the Italian members. We were preparing to meet True Parents who were to visit England on 21 March.

My mother had joined forces with some negative parents and I went to Rome trying to solve the issue. Trying to go to England, my money was not enough for the journey, so I bought a ticket to Holland, thinking to meet the Dutch Family and travel with them to England. But the border police in Holland would not let me through, since I only had one pound in my pocket.

I was stuck in Kiel, with one pound and a bag of Italian Principle books. Someone told me there were Italians in Frankfurt, working in the Railway. They could help me find the money to go to England.

I walked the streets of Kiel, on the quiet evening. I saw a hotel. I asked the reception: "Is an Italian guest here?" He gave me a name. "Can I talk to him?" I told him I was a student travelling with a new book of unique value, a new explanation of many historical events. I showed him the book.

"Can I find it in the shops?" "I am afraid it is a limited edition, it cannot be found in the shops yet" "Can I buy it from you?" "...I really should not..." "It is 73 marks" That was what I needed to go to Frankfurt. After working in the Railways for a week, I called Doris in London. She sent me the money for the train to London. So I was there when Father arrived on 21 March 1969, bringing President [Hyo Won] Eu, Mr. [Osami] Kuboki, Mrs. [Won Pok] Choi. It was the first time I met Father. Leaders had arrived from France, Italy, Austria, Germany, Holland. After three days Father went to Essen, where he performed the blessing of the European leaders.

I stayed in England few months. Martin and Dawn Faroni had moved to a smaller flat in Rome.

Carlo Zaccarelli is the first Italian member to join the HSA UWC in Rome, Italy. He translated the first version of the Divine Principle book into Italian; was as a missionary to Syria and in 1970 and is a 777 Couple.