

## Italian National Blessing Department focuses on a 100-day witnessing campaign

Giuseppe Cali  
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*Front row from left: Martine Masner, a Frenchwoman and the director of the European Witnessing Department, the writer, his wife Elisabetta Nistri, and other members at the meeting to prepare for a one-hundred-day condition with a focus on witnessing.*

On November 26-27, all pastors, youth representatives and those working in our national Blessing Department, met at our property of Colle Mattia, Rome, to focus on witnessing and the mobilization during a one-hundred-day campaign. On Saturday 26, we welcomed the participation of Martine Masner, the director of the European Witnessing Department. After a short introduction from Giuseppe Cali, Mrs. Masner gave a speech to explain the purpose of her mission. Notes from her speech: "True Mother established the World Mission Strategy center with the purpose of substantially advancing providential work and raising our level. How can we witness today?"

How are we to leave our past behind us, and reverse our situations? First, we have to be humble and open-minded, in order to continue on the restoration course and overcome situations that are blocking us. When we see the huge Blessing Ceremonies in some countries of the world we are astonished, but we think that here in Europe this is not possible. We have to understand how they were able to accomplish it. They focused on establishing a strong foundation of faith through doing Hoon Dok Hae and putting Divine Principle into practice.

"Furthermore, we have to establish more synergy among us, as Europeans, by sharing experiences and the materials that we produce. What new material do we need to witness successfully? We have many new resources nowadays, coming from the United States and other countries. We can study these and translate them.

Dr. Tyler Hendricks gave a series of forty very good lectures. The spiritual world is ready, but sometimes we are not. True Father is working hard there to mobilize spirits. We have to develop the heart of a heavenly tribal messiah that wants to liberate people. Witnessing can change the spiritual situation and make people happy again."

Following her talk, each city and department gave a report on the general witnessing effort and the situation of the communities. Four youth representatives reported on the circumstances of second-generation members in Italy and the efforts they are producing to establish a solid foundation and development. The national representative of the Blessing Department reported specifically on the effort they are making to support families in reaching a good level of health and commitment. A very open and deep discussion followed, as a means to evaluate the current situation of the movement, to identify the problems that hinder our efforts and the resources we can count on to solve problems and be successful.

### **Challenges and resources**

On a whiteboard, we pinpointed, one by one, the concrete issues that affect our members and their families, which are the areas we need to deal with in our pastoral care. Just to mention some of them: We lack of time and energy due to our involvement in jobs that sap the vitality of pastors and members. We endure strong providential pressure due to high goals, and a lack of financial resources to invest into creating a proper environment and having proper materials. We lack of strong motivation due to the disorientation and uncertainty generated recently in our movement by the destructive behavior of some groups. As members, overall, we lack strong enough collective spiritual conditions.

On the other hand, we have incredible spiritual resources and providential status. We discussed possible solutions to employ in order to elevate our families out of any current stagnation. We could support blessed family life by improving the unity of a couple and unity between parents and children. We could

provide guidance to members who are seeking to develop better relationships based on true kinship. We ought to be careful that we spend time in purposeful activities aimed at enhancing the relationship -- communicating, cooperating and sharing more. We could promote and improve our identity and sense of belonging as citizens of Cheon Il Guk by sharing testimonies of blessings received after hardships. We could use our time to improve our spirituality, deepen our inner peace, create in our minds a young spirit that thirsts for renewed optimism and finds joy in our lives and in our missions. We could gain strength by setting better spiritual conditions. We could improve and clarify our organization of witnessing and educational efforts to become more effective at rescuing God's children from the darkness of the world, and cooperate more, working in groups, organizing workshops for tribal messiahs and youth to prepare them properly for the mission of witnessing and educating.

### **Effective first approaches**

We realized, as well, that especially our first approach to the public is usually unrealistic and overly theological, not genuinely connected to people's real life issues. Recently we are experiencing new ways of teaching based on real life themes such as a couple's relationship, childhood education, bridging the generational gap, life after life, forgiveness, loneliness, the true beauty and value of man and woman, the juvenile condition, health and wellbeing. We can also introduce the life and mission of True Parents as peacemakers. In fact, nobody is doing so much for world peace as they are doing. Whenever we invite people to such events, guests fill the halls. Sometimes, we invite experts in "real life" fields to speak, but we always include the Divine Principle and True Parents' viewpoint.

Having found that topics of this type work better we decided to organize evening programs in each church based on those topics. The national leader introduced a new FFWPU leaflet and new Divine Principle lectures, which we discussed the merits of. In the evening, after showing a video of True Parents' visit to Italy in April 2011, Giuseppe Cali gave a speech on the topic, with a filial heart toward Heaven, let us be the light of the world. An excerpt: "We never represent only ourselves as individuals.

We have to develop a clear awareness that wherever we go and whatever we do, we represent Heavenly Parent and True Parents. We are never alone. At all times, as actual ambassadors of Cheon Il Guk, we represent all our brothers and sisters, the people of Cheon Il Guk and the heavenly culture. People of the world are struggling a lot these days and nobody cares to give them hope and embrace them with true parental heart. In Italy, our country, nowadays people are experience extreme suffering, due to earthquakes, floods and financial restrictions. We cannot just observe anymore, from the windows of our churches. We have to go out and rescue them, bringing them new hope and awareness, strengthening their hearts with our love and Divine Principle, giving them the highest possible gift ever: the blessing."

### **Invest and inherit**

Watching a video of True Parents in Italy in 2011, we were able to recall clearly how miracles follow them. That was an impossible, but in the end, incredibly successful meeting. No one other than True Parents could have organized that event in such a short time. True Parents are already victorious and we have only to invest our lives in the field of world salvation, in order to inherit their victory completely. Our foundation of faith now consists in trusting God and True Parents 100 percent, more than we trust anybody else, even more than we trust ourselves. This will make it possible for those in the highest spiritual realm to open the way for miracles in our lives and missions. This is the only way. We cannot win with traditional, reasonable tools, because without God and True Parents we have insufficient power to overcome the foundation established by Satan in society over thousands of years. With peaceful minds, determined hearts and unbeatable faith, let us brighten our lives and the lives of all those who surround us. Let's become miracle workers for Heaven!" We concluded the day by praying all together and singing "Urie So Wonun Tongil."

The next morning, at 6 AM we began our Pledge Service and Hoon Dok Hae, reading from Pyeong Hwa Gyeong the speech that True Father gave in 1992 to the "World Media Conference." We discussed the situation in the world, inspired by what Father said, which have remained true even to this day.

After breakfast, we had a final session, lasting until lunch, to organize Blessing Ceremonies and activities all over the nation until the next celebration of the Foundation Day anniversary. We concluded this amazing and meaningful meeting, full of new hope and determination, with uplifted spirits, ready to go back to our cities to mobilize the spirit and the body of our brothers and sisters and establish a much stronger providential foundation in Italy in these God-given one hundred graceful days.