

# THE WALDENSIAN REVIEW



**No. 142**

**Summer 2023**

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## From the Editor

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Thank you again for your continuing help with letters, suggestions, donations, purchases and prayers! Please do regularly look at our website [www.waldensian.org.uk](http://www.waldensian.org.uk) and on *Facebook: The Waldensian Church Mission!* There are always news and updates!!

Synod 2023 (20–25 August in Torre Pellice) is going to be ‘full size’ again and the ordinand is ‘our’ **Giovanni Bernardini**, who has been serving in Sicily. This is his presentation:

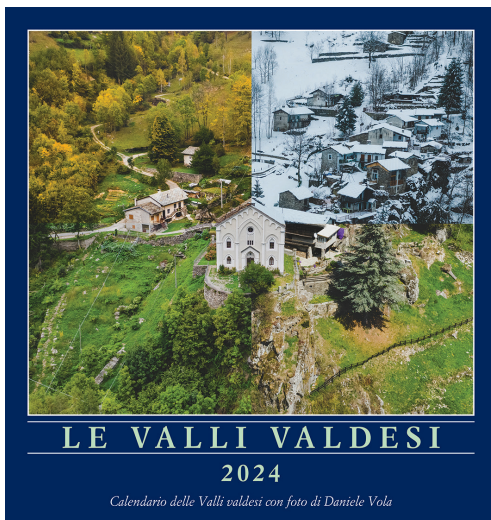
I am 31 years old and I am currently serving in the Waldensian churches of **Riesi** (CL) and **Agrigento**. Like many pastors’ children, I grew up within the Waldensian Church, particularly the one in Turin. However, in my ‘youth’ my journey with God went beyond the borders of the Waldensian churches; for example, for a few years I spent a few summer months as an ‘au pair boy’ at the Community and Family Association in Berzano (AL). There I was able to experience **basic Catholicism** that literally put the hoe and spade alongside the Bible. During the cool hours we worked in the garden, while in the hot hours we experienced community life. Still in the Catholic sphere, I had the opportunity to collaborate and participate for several years in the AGESCI camps; even on this occasion my being ‘the non-Catholic one’ was not only respected, but also welcomed as an element of enrichment and comparison. In the Reformed sphere, I participated for five years in the camps in **England** organised by the **London City Mission** (Baptist Church) and then, like many of our churches, I experienced the multi-ethnic and inter-religious reality of **Agape** first as a camper, then on a couple of occasions as staff for the International Theological Camp.

My curiosity and desire to learn about faith and /or community realities has not waned over the years. In fact, during my years of study at the Faculty of Theology, in addition to strengthening the foundations of my being a believer, I thought that the best (and perhaps the **only**) way to get to know the reality of our BMV churches was to come into direct contact with them. This experiential baggage undoubtedly contributed to beginning the subsequent probationary period with greater serenity and knowledge of what it meant to be part of a community in a specific geographical, cultural and social context. In addition to the desire to get to know Italian realities, a desire arose to come into contact again with foreign realities: in particular, I took part in various forums and conferences for Young Theology in Europe.

It all started from the desire, dare I say the need, to **put myself at the service of God, his Word and people** (of the Communities and otherwise); and now that I am dedicated to it full-time I confirm this choice every day with conviction.

*Cover photo: Congregation with Giovanni and Noemi Bernardini outside the Waldensian Church in Riesi.*

## WALDENSIAN CALENDARS 2024



**Special issue for the 850 years since the beginning of the Waldensian Movement!** Stunning colour photos. Bible verses also in English, reverse with photos and History. Available from October. Please order online from [www.waldensian.org.uk](http://www.waldensian.org.uk) or send a cheque for **£18** (payable to **Waldensian Church Mission**) to **Erica S. Newbury, 85 St Andrew's Road, Cambridge CB4 1DH** Order two for **£32!**

*And this is something he has done:*

The **Waldensian Church of Riesi** this year, through an intense ecumenical dialogue, has re-established relations with the Diocese of **Piazza Armerina**, the Diocese of **Caltanissetta**, the Diocese of Agrigento and the Seventh-day **Adventist Christian Church of Piazza Armerina**. On the occasion of the **Week For Christian Unity** (18–25 January 2023) I, as pastor of the Waldensian Church of Riesi and Agrigento, concelebrated five ecumenical worship services, four with the **Catholic** brothers and sisters (including two with a Priest of the **Romanian Orthodox Church** and the Archimandrite of the **Orthodox Church** of the Patriarchate of **Constantinople**, Holy Orthodox Archdiocese of Italy) and one with the **Adventist** brothers and sisters.

But the desire to pray together continued; in fact, the (great) Ecumenical Vigil of Pentecost, that was celebrated in Riesi, was the fruit of the collaboration

between the Waldensian Church of Riesi, the Parish of San Giovanni Bosco of Riesi, the Diocesan Vocations Office, Youth Pastoral and **Italian Catholic Action**.



*Prayer in the Ecumenical Group.*

With the new year, the tradition of '*andacht*' ['meditation'] together with the employees of **Servizio Cristiano** [the Christian Service] every Monday morning also started again. The *andacht* consists of Bible reading and meditation, an intercessory prayer and the Lord's Prayer said aloud by all present. The *andacht* is also a symbolically important moment because it sometimes happens that diaconal works get busy with 'service' and forget the Word of God and shared prayer. It is important for churches and diaconal works to remember (and put into practice) that both have the task of proclaiming the Gospel ... but they do it in different ways. In Riesi, also thanks to the appointment of the new director of the Riesi Christian Service **Wojje Nedzewicz**, this unity is being rediscovered.

The proclamation of the Gospel is like a prism: one is the Gospel, but many are the 'colours' with which it manifests itself. May the Lord sustain us in the proclamation of his Word.

*Giovanni Bernardini*

*And here is news from Kassim Conteh:*

My training in Angrogna has not yet reached one year, but I have had the privilege of making many experiences during these 9 months in the Waldensian Valleys. Guided by the pastor of Luserna San Giovanni **Elisabeth Loeh**, since October I slowly became part of the community life. By December the progress seemed to be on the right track, when suddenly my life was disrupted by the unexpected departure of my mother. Returning in February after the funeral in **Sierra Leone** was for me like starting all over again, like having to learn how to walk again. It was not only getting reacquainted with the environment and the members, but also regaining new energy and stimulation that such a significant loss takes away.

In my second life here in Angrogna, if I can call it so, things started to go more smoothly again around March. Gradually the energies returned and this led me to bond with the community again, which never stopped being close to me. I slowly started to take over and manage the church activities and had



*Confirmations in Angrogna*

the privilege of leading the **Easter** service which involved the confirmation and baptism of boys and girls in the fourth year of catechism. It was very exciting for me as it was the first time ever to baptise and confirm someone.

In the period following my second arrival, in addition to catechism and Sunday school, I also had the pleasure of conducting services in retirement homes in our area, taking part in wedding ceremonies, making a few pastoral visits, and unfortunately also celebrating a few funerals – we especially remember **Guido Odin** and **Toti Rochat**, who were two very important figures

not only for Angrogna but for all our valleys and beyond. During this time, I was also asked to participate in the meditations of **RBE** (Radio Beckwith Evangelica) '*L'ascolto che ci unisce*' ['The listening that unites us'], and still linked to RBE I also celebrated some services that were then streamed with the programme '*Il culto evangelico*' ['Protestant Worship']. Most recently, I also had the pleasure of going on a trip with the Angrogna choir to **Padua**, where we met the local **Methodist** community and sang together with the Ghanaian choir from Vicenza. It was a lovely experience of meeting and witnessing each other's history and faith, although I confess that I still struggle with the hymns, which are mostly in French or Occitan.

Now that we have come to the summer season, the activities have decreased, but the services in the retirement homes and visits continue. In Angrogna, summer camps have begun at the **Ca' d'la Pais**, which are attended not only by inhabitants of Angrogna but also by young people from all over the valleys. The camps are organised by age group and the aim is always to have a theme that will later be useful to the youngsters throughout their lives. The topic chosen this year for all age groups is that of human rights, and I will be involved with the teenage group, which will take place towards the beginning of August.

Many thanks to all of you at The Waldensian Church Missions for being close to me during this entire period, and for the support and sympathy you continue to show me through Erica and Richard. May the Lord bless you.

*Kassim*

## **My Time in Torre Pellice**

For the past two and a half months I volunteered in Torre Pellice at the **Liceo Valdese** and the Waldensian Cultural Foundation. This was a gap-year trip that I had been planning for a while with the help of Erica. I was very excited for it and it was everything I hoped it would be! Although I was very nervous at the beginning as I had never gone on such a trip alone, I soon found my feet, helped along by all the kind people that welcomed me into their workplaces and lives. I found that Torre Pellice was a place that made me feel very peaceful and the opportunity to meet different people in a different place, using a new language, gave me room to be myself and a new-found confidence. My work in the Liceo consisted of helping Shalya, the secretary, in her work there and also helping teach the younger children English. I was also very kindly given the opportunity to sit in on some lessons to help improve my Italian, and accompany the older classes on some of their school trips (which included the Museo del Cinema in Turin!). This allowed me to make friends with students my age – friendships that I hope I will maintain for a very long time. The other aspect of my volunteering work was at the Waldensian Museum in Torre Pellice. I mainly worked in the bookshop, but also in the '**Barba**' offices, collating in-

formation for the English guided tours. I found this rewarding and interesting and I quickly learnt a lot about the Waldensians! I enjoyed discussing this new knowledge with all the international visitors. In both the Liceo and the museum, I was struck by the strong sense of community. This was particularly emphasised by the inauguration of the **cobblestone for Jacopo Lombardini** in April. This was a very moving ceremony, led by members of Class V, which took place in the Synod Hall of Casa Valdese. During my time in Torre Pellice, I attended the Tempio Valdese there, and also the one in **Angrogna**, where I had the privilege of playing the organ for the Pentecost Sunday service. I enjoyed



*Jenni in front of the Waldensian Museum in Torre Pellice.*

attending services that were different to my normal ones, and how much of the sermons I understood was a good way of measuring my Italian progress! I feel very privileged to have had such an enriching experience in such a beautiful place. I have grown in confidence and independence and have found a new place and community which I will always look forward to returning to.

*Jenni Buss*

*This is the project we recently supported:*

## **Communication Project**

During the ecclesiastical year 2022-2023, the 'Youth and evangelization in the Waldensian Valleys' project was taken up again, slightly reworked, together with the involved subjects: **RBE Radio-TV and Riforma-L'Eco delle Valli Valdesi**. The main objective was to create an opportunity for the young people

of the first District, to get in touch with the realities that deal with communication within the Protestant context, but also to give voice to the content that these young people wish to express, through the means of radio, video and journalistic writing.



*The group at Villa Olanda, outside Radio Beckwith Evangelica. Photo: S. Revel*

All Waldensian churches in the first District were invited to encourage their youth's participation. The first two meetings were held on 20 March and 3 April 2023, when the youngsters visited the editorial offices of *Riforma* and RBE; respectively seven and six young people took part and they were mainly coming from Val Pellice and Pinerolo. With those who attended the second meeting, we collected ideas and availability for the next stages of the process, which will continue in the next summer months (when they will be less busy with the school). The youngsters will work in smaller groups on their different ideas, supported by the professionals of the two involved realities.

## Colporteurs

Although the heyday of the Italian colporteurs (*colportori*) was the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the figure of the itinerant evangelist/Bible-/book-distributor had been significant within the Waldensian (Italian Protestant) Church since mediaeval times when they were known as **Barba** ['uncle' in dialect].



In 1532 the little Church decided to join in with the movement for reform which had begun in Germany and Switzerland. Given the importance they put on the Bible, the Waldensians also decided to have the Scriptures translated and printed in a language ordinary people could understand. At this stage, with the fluidity of the border in southern France/northwest Italy, the local language was actually French and the early colporteurs probably spoke more French than Italian. One, **Barthelemy Hector**, was seized in about 1557 for distributing Protestant literature and Bibles, tried in Turin and burnt as a heretic.

Of course, Italy as we know it now did not come into existence until unification in 1861 and it had only been in 1848 that Waldensians, as non-Roman Catholic Christians, had any rights at all – and even then, their services were merely tolerated and all printing and publishing needed the permission of a Bishop.

After the 1848 decree, called '**Lettere Patenti**', a British General, who had served under the Duke of Wellington at Waterloo and who went on to be a major benefactor of the Waldensian Church, challenged them not to remain isolated in their valleys of northwest Italy. This was the moment, General **John Charles Beckwith** told them, to start the evangelisation of the whole of the peninsula: 'From now on, either you will be missionaries or you will be nothing.' However the initial problem was finding enough men (and women) who spoke Italian, not just the French of the northwestern Alpine area.

Another problem, that of printing and publishing the literature, was initially solved by contacting the British and Foreign Bible Society/Scottish Bible Society which had already been involved in the clandestine circulation of Bibles before Unification, especially in Sicily and southern Italy. The diffusion of the evangelical press in Italy was also being encouraged by the Religious Tract Society. The Waldensian Church founded a publishing company and also a mission station in Turin in 1855 to organise distribution; and interestingly the first type used by their printers came from a foundry in Edinburgh. **Rev. R. Stewart**, the Church of Scotland Minister in Livorno, was also proactive in the diffusion of Bibles and Protestant literature.

In its annual report for 1870, the Italian Evangelical Publication Society stated that 'The sales of the books of our society must clearly depend on the Colporteurs'.<sup>1</sup> However it needs to be remembered that not just evangelical Christians, but also the Catholic Church and secular movements, were using similar methods to reach people with their literature.

During the Capture of Rome on 20 September 1870, the final event in the Unification of Italy (or *Risorgimento*) – the defeat of the Papal States and the end of the temporal power of the Papacy – the colporteurs were the first to enter Rome after the army. **T.H. Bruce** from the British and Foreign Bible Society organised this and personally chose colporteurs with dogs to pull their book carts. They circulated around the city and set up tables and displays. One did so in the piazza by the Pantheon. The reaction to their presence was mixed;

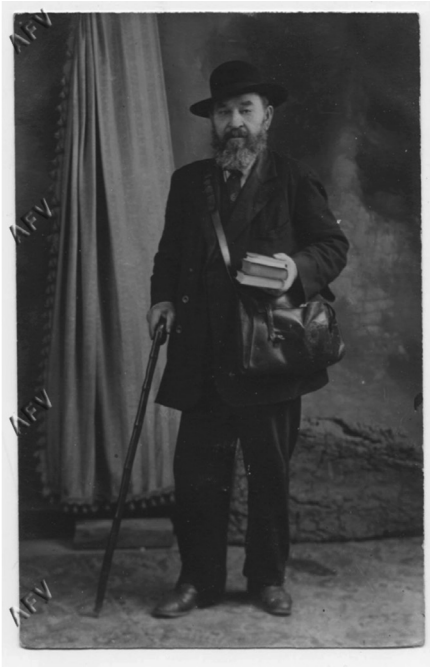
some were receptive, but others disagreed with them and got the police to move them on.

Italy at the time had high levels of illiteracy. Before Unification, 75 per cent of the population could not read or write (90 per cent in Sicily), but by 1871 literacy levels had risen to just over 31 per cent and by 1901 this was 50 per cent. The colporteurs played a significant part in helping to raise literacy levels with their emphasis on providing cheap reading materials '*ad un soldo*' ['for one penny']. An example of this is *L'Amico di Casa* (a family magazine published a number of times a year) which cost a mere 20 cents and contained Bible texts and biographies of reformers like Jan Hus and Martin Luther.

From 1840 to 1848, four new versions of the Diodati New Testament and two Bibles were published by the Bible Society / Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge for distribution in Italy, but along with the Scottish Bible Society they could only supply a part of what was needed for distribution. The Claudiana was involved as well, but it was still quite a small enterprise..

Generally the colporteur was the first to visit an area. They sold books and Bibles and chatted to people. Alongside the colporteur there was often a teacher who would start a small school. On a return visit, the colporteur was often accompanied by an evangelist or preacher who, if successful, was then followed by a pastor to minister to the small group of believers and start a new congregation. This pattern was repeated up and down the country. In Liguria a congregation was started in this way in Bordighera and the ministers were partly financed by an English lady, **Mrs Boyce**, whose father had served under Wellington, as Beckwith had. The colporteur was often regarded as a missionary – although some had to sell their stock in order to support their family.

For more than 30 years **Matteo Prochet** was **President of the Committee for Evangelisation** and one of his roles was to supervise the colporteurs working within the Waldensian Church. It was therefore his responsibility to co-ordinate the network of workers travelling around. One of the things on which he was quite insistent was that the colporteurs sent him reports, updates on the literature they had sold and details of their experiences; he was also keen on checking up on the moral conduct of the colporteurs, who also had to obey his rules. He saw the role not as just selling the books, but living in a way that was worthy of the ways of God. Prochet was a prolific letter writer who used this, the only method of communication at the time, to express his concerns and give the receiver his advice. These letters are now an amazing source of information, as are the records left by the colporteurs themselves. **Piero Scannarotti** left meticulous records and in a journey between January 1887 and February 1888 he sold 2,765 portions of the Bible, 782 pamphlets, 778 almanacs, 203 Bibles and 145 New Testaments. He states that the Gospels (at fivepence) were the most popular, along with *L'Amico di Casa*. He also once submitted a report in verse.



*Two photographs of colportori from The Waldensian Archive in The Centro Culturale in Torre Pellice.*

Thanks to these letters, we have the names of many of the men who took on the role of colporteur, such as Francesco Modon, Angelo Castioni, Angelo Deodato and Giovanni Besso. Their work was at times dangerous and they were frequently physically attacked; sometimes they were simply refused permission by town councils, who were afraid of uprisings. Sometimes the public themselves turned against them – as by having different accents they were viewed as foreigners, not to be trusted, and often considered heretics and excommunicated for selling prohibited publications. In 1884 one colporteur, Adolfo Mazzarini, was even accused of bringing cholera to the town of Brindisi. Another, Ignazio Glorioso, was threatened with death as he travelled around Sicily, but undeterred, he just moved on, going to Caltanissetta, then to Caltagirone and Vittoria. But more than once he was attacked and forced to flee for his life; he was beaten with sticks, stoned and on one occasion had to be escorted out of a town by a guard for his own safety. These experiences were quite widespread, but even so these men took their vocations seriously and spent time praying for their own safety so that they could continue to work. They documented the positive aspects of their work, too. Selling a book or a Bible to someone was often the first step towards a conversion.

Many colporteurs described the joy of seeing people become believers, little congregations being created throughout the peninsula which they would visit on future journeys.

‘Who is the colporteur? It is that man we see of the roads of the towns and the countryside, armed with a bag full of holy books and particularly the Holy Bible, who is available to anyone who wants to talk. He will enter houses, barracks, and goes up to the gates of the prisons hoping that all will accept and study the Word of God offered by him.’<sup>2</sup> Some men were colporteurs for just a year / one journey, or perhaps accompanying another colporteur – similar to short-term Christian work now. About 50 per cent remained in their jobs / vocations for at least 10 years and there is documented evidence of 11 colporteurs who were active for many many years – often more than 20; Ignazio Glorioso for 23, Angelo Deodato for 50+. From **1869 to 1890** there were about 40 colporteurs active in the peninsula, most in **Piedmont** and **Sicily**.

So what was a colporteur’s journey like? Angelo Castioni has left details of a journey undertaken between August 1878 and July 1879, passing through Milan, Pinerolo, Cuneo, Genoa, Florence, Rome, Naples, Matera, Taranto, Brindisi, Cerignola, Vasto, Ancona, Rimini, Piacenza and Brescia. ‘I sold a Bible to a Baker and, passing by later in front of his shop, I saw him reading it to his wife, I entered and stayed with them for about an hour in order to teach them all about the truths contained in it.’<sup>3</sup> Later on he describes being in Pescara, not selling anything but a crowd had gathered. Some of the crowd were initially quite hostile, but they listened with interest. These men must at times have seen the similarities between their work and the missionary journeys of the **Apostle Paul** in *Acts*. But we should not forget the women who often accompanied them as teachers and ‘**Bible women**’. These ladies (for example **Giuseppina Pusterla** and **Elena Gay**) sometimes stayed put in a community to run a Sunday School and Prayer Meetings, often continuing to distribute literature, while the colporteurs went on their way. The Waldensian and Methodist Church employed 12 such women in 1892. Unlike the colporteur, whose work was generally amongst the poorer people and workers, the women worked with the bourgeoisie, often visiting them in their homes.

By the turn of the century there were fewer and fewer colporteurs and gradually attention turned to the consolidating the many little congregations which were now spread throughout the peninsula. Also with the rise of **Fascism**, Protestants found their lives increasingly restricted, as the State aligned itself to the **Roman Catholic Church**. The aristocratic, mainly British, ladies who had supported individual colporteurs financially, like the aforementioned Mrs Louisa Boyce, were no longer around and the First World War brought with it conscription and other demands. The work continued, but there were not so many involved as in the nineteenth century. It must have been very satisfying for the colporteurs to realise that in this new century there were now many growing congregations throughout Italy, while in 1848 the Protestant church had almost exclusively been limited to a small mountainous area of Piedmont.

## Notes

1. The Annual Report of the the Italian Evangelical Publication Society (Società per le pubblicazioni evangeliche in Italia – OPEI) (1871). Florence: Claudiana.
2. Quoted in ‘G. Solari’, from A. Deodato (1983). *Vicende di un colportore nella Sicilia di fine ‘800*. Supplemento al *Bolletino della Società di Studi Valdesi* 152.
3. ATV Angelo Castioni, agosto 1878–luglio 1879.

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- G. Solari (1997). *Produzione e circolazione del libro evangelico nell’Italia del secondo ottocento: La casa editrice Claudiana e i circuiti popolari della stampa religiosa*. (Studi e testi). Manziiana: Vecchiarelli. ISBN: 9788885317972
- P. Stephens (2015). *The Waldensian Story*, 2nd edn. Florence: Claudiana. ISBN: 9788868980696

Nicky Raddon

## Monsignor Mark Langham (1960–2021) An Ecumenical Friend

Mark Langham’s death in January 2021 is a continuing sadness for Waldensians and Methodists, among many others. He was a wonderful person: modest, kind, generous, a good cook and unstinting host, and with a shrewd and unmalicious sense of humour. He was also a warm-hearted Roman Catholic priest. He welcomed my wife and me to **Rome** when we went there in order for me to set up an office for the world-wide family of Methodist churches supporting and developing **Methodist links to the Vatican and institutions of other churches**; and at the same time to serve the Methodist Church in Italy and its Waldensian partners as the pastor of Ponte Sant’Angelo Methodist Church. He became not just a colleague but a good friend.

Mark was in Rome at that time as a senior official in the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity in the Vatican. His particular responsibilities were for relations with Anglicans and Methodists and for co-ordinating the Roman Catholic contribution to the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Mark was loved by people of all traditions who knew or encountered him. The fact that they could have the same view of him from their different perspectives is a tribute to who and what he was. He proved that being a good Catholic did not preclude being a good and understanding friend to Anglicans, Methodists and others, including Waldensians. While we were both in Rome, a ceremony was held to dedicate a plaque on the outside wall of **Ponte Sant’Angelo Methodist Church** to the **Waldensian** preacher and New Testament scholar **Giovan Luigi Pascale**, who was **martyred** on that site in **1560**. Mark asked me if it would be all right for him to attend. He slipped out of his office nearby and joined us unobtrusively. He made no fuss, but the gesture was noticed and appreciated. Then, just a few weeks later, my

wife and I were with him at the Venerable English College for the annual commemoration of the English Martyrs (the Jesuit priests who came from there to England in the time of Elizabeth I).

He returned from Rome to lead the Chaplaincy at **Fisher House** in **Cambridge** until his death.



*In the Hall on 19 September 2015, from left: M. Langham, K. Howcroft, E. Scropo, D. Cornick, R. Williams.*

In 2015 there was a **Waldensian 'Awayday'** in Cambridge. One discussion sprang from the recent historic moment in **Turin** when **Pope Francis came to a Waldensian Church and asked for forgiveness for what Catholics had done to Waldensians in the past**; and **Alessandra Trotta**, now the Moderator of the united Waldensian-Methodist Churches in Italy, prayed over him. The question was whether corporate repentance and forgiveness for historic events is possible. Mark was one of the panel of Speakers, along with the Rt Revd Prof. **Rowan Williams**, former Archbishop of Canterbury, the Revd **David Cornick**, a United Reformed Church minister who was then General Secretary of Churches Together in England, and myself.

Mark is sorely missed. I thank God for him. May he rest in peace and rise again in glory.

*Rev. Ken Howcroft*

## Book Review

*The Po: An Elegy for Italy's Longest River*, by Tobias Jones (2022). Apollo Books £25.

I read in the summer this recently published work by Tobias Jones. It is a wonderful book, tracing his journey from the delta on the Adriatic Sea to the source of the river Po in the Alps. Its sub-title, *An Elegy for Italy's Longest River*, indicates that it is more than a travelogue. Rather, it is a lament for the natural world laid waste by human folly and greed. Not only do the chapters reveal the beauties of a landscape, often mysterious and magical but now marred by pollution, but also the troubled history of a region (mostly Lombardia) comprising the present regions of Veneto, Lombardy and Piedmont with the adjoining Emilia-Romagna.

It reads like a journal on a pilgrimage by a devotee of Italian culture who is an acute observer of the natural environment, who understands human foibles and a deep appreciation of the way that history and events as well as the personalities of the peoples of the regions have been shaped by the river both as a provider of life and as a natural barrier to be overcome. From the 'sullen flatness' of the delta and the Lombard swamps to the 'immense plump valleys' of the foothills of the Alps, Jones brings to life the landscape across which he journeys, reading as he goes from the deep wells of Italian literature and the accounts of colourful characters from Medieval and Renaissance history of the rich variety of cities bordering its banks. Then he takes us into the painful episodes of more recent conflicts, engendered by the deep political divisions in Italian society explored more in his book *The Dark Heart of Italy*.

The last chapter, 'The Stone King', marks the last stage of his journey as he leaves the plains where the castles, towers and churches are built mostly of brick, and enters the foothills of the Cottian Alps where the buildings are mostly of rock and stone. For Jones, the material of the environment is symbolic of the need for refuge from the forces of the plains for the movements driven to the margins. So the story of the Waldensians shaped by the harsh landscape is retold as the survivors of centuries of Catholic oppression reclaim the Valli Valdesi as 'our little Canaan', a promised land beyond the desert experienced by the wandering peoples. This and other chapters are wonderfully evocative, engendering a warmer understanding of the particularity both of the regional identities uncovered and the sense of otherness under threat from the desires to unify and remove such differences.

This is a **must-read** book. One wishes that we, too, could travel the route with such a well-informed and observant writer. But the book will take you to these places by the power of the pen!

*Rev. Tim Macquiban*

**WALDENSIAN CHURCH MISSIONS, VAUDOIS PASTORS FUND  
& CANON ARMSTRONG BEQUEST - SUMMARY ACCOUNTS  
YEAR ENDED 31/12/22**

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	
Individual Donations	2004.33	2069.10	
Tax Refund		440.06	
Legacies	1000.00		
	3004.33		2509.16
Vaudois Clergy Trust	1590.49	3233.91	
Publications	1650.91	1116.51	
Dividend & Interest	3621.43	4233.03	
	6862.83		<u>8583.45</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9867.16</b>		<b>11092.61</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
<b>Payments to Italy</b>			
Student	9850.00	3917.40	
Youth Project		2619,86	
	9850,00		6537.26
Review	412.00	439.60	
Deputation			
Sec/Post/Stationery	2494.22	2282,98	
Publications	630.12	962.17	
Sundries	5.00	150.00	
	3541.34		<u>3834.75</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13391.34</b>		<b>10372.01</b>
<b>NET INC / EXPEND</b>	<b>-3524.18</b>		<b>720.60</b>
Opening Bank Balance	<b>28412.82</b>		<b>24888.64</b>
Income	9867.16		11092.61
Expenditure	-13391.34		-10372.01
Closing Bank Balance	24888.64		25609.24



## Government gives to Waldenses

Too good to be true? No! For every donation which you make to the Waldensian Church Missions, the Government will add a further 25%, providing you are a tax-payer.

Since 5 April 2000 the new Gift Aid scheme has replaced Deeds of Covenant and the process is much simpler. This applies to all donations of any size or frequency. Thus a gift of only £1 made once will be increased by 25% as will a monthly donation of £100.

All that is required is for the donor to complete a simple declaration in the form given below and to forward this to the Treasurer whose address is on the inside of the back page. Once this form has been completed it covers all future donations by the same person. Unlike Deeds of Covenant, you are not committed to regular giving for a number of years.

Some of you have already completed such a form, but for those who have not, I would urge you to consider seriously this opportunity for the Waldensian Church Missions to benefit from the Government's generosity, but more importantly, to enable our giving to our friends in Italy to be increased.



### WALDENSIAN CHURCH MISSIONS

Registered Charity No. 277255

#### GIFT AID DECLARATION

To: **Waldensian Church Missions, 5 Woodgate Close, Woodgate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO20 3TA**

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## The Waldensian Church

It is the native Protestant Church of Italy whose origins pre-date the Reformation. It arose from an evangelical movement founded in the 12th century by Waldo, a rich merchant from Lyon, who was to inspire St Francis: he gave all away to the poor and started preaching the Gospel in the vernacular, which caused conflict with the Papacy. Travelling in pairs the Waldensian itinerant preachers, having learnt the Scriptures by heart, set off to found underground communities from Sicily to Russia. The ensuing persecution by the Inquisition drove them into their mountain fastness in the Alpine Valleys of northwest Italy, where they remain in what are still called the Waldensian Valleys. At their Synod in 1532 they voted to join the Genevan Reformation, a decision that brought even more persecution upon this exposed outpost of Protestantism. Their sufferings were recorded in Milton's famous sonnet "On The Late Massacre in Piedmont". Their survival down to the present has been a remarkable testament of faith.

The Waldensian community was emancipated in 1848, but did not reach full freedom until 1984. Since the Italian unification in 1860 they have established churches throughout Italy and, following emigration, in the USA, Argentina and Uruguay. In 1979 the Italian Methodist Church combined with them and they hold a common annual Synod, which is the controlling authority of the Church and takes place in Torre Pellice. The Churches of Rio de la Plata have their own Synod, Board and Moderator.

The 60 parishes have founded 120 outreach activities ranging from schools, hospitals, children's and old people's homes, radio stations, and ecumenical community centres, often catering for the needs of the most deprived and mafia-ridden parts of Italy, especially the disadvantaged South and the new immigrant communities.

The Waldensian Church has a theological college in Rome, a publishing house, Claudiana, and a weekly paper, *Riforma*.

### The English Committee of the Waldensian Church Missions

This was founded in 1825 as a support group for the Waldensian Church in Italy. Since 1979 its finances, together with those of the Vaudois Pastors Fund, have been administered by Trustees under the terms of the Scheme drawn up by the Charity Commission and dated 18 January that year.

The Committee seek to arouse interest and financial support in England and Wales for the Waldensian Church. Twice yearly we publish a *Waldensian Review* and occasionally other literature. We also arrange meetings for Waldensian pastors visiting this country and support students of Theology who want to spend the compulsory 'year abroad' studying in this country.

There are similar Waldensian support groups in Scotland, Ireland, USA and in various European countries.

**The English Committee in aid of the Waldensian Church Missions**  
Established 1825

*Patron:* The Lord The Rev. Leslie Griffiths  
26 Stroud Road, Croydon, London SE25 5DR  
email lesliejohngriffiths@gmail.com

*Chairman:* Ian Nimmo-Smith  
17 Mariners Way, Cambridge CB4 1BN

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*Hon. Treasurer:* Mr Mark Stephens  
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**The Scottish Waldensian Missions Aid Society**

*Chair:* The Rev. Mary Cranfield  
The Manse, Daviot, Inverurie AB51 1AJ, Scotland

*Secretary and Treasurer:* Mr D.A. Lamb, SSC  
36 Liberton Drive, Edinburgh EH16 6NN, Scotland  
Telephone 0131-664-3059

*The Waldensian Review* is sent twice a year to those who are interested in the Waldensian church in Italy, its history and present-day work and witness.

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**Think of a Farmhouse in the Mountains**  
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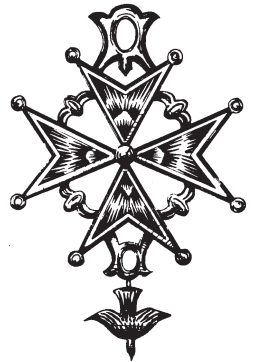
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