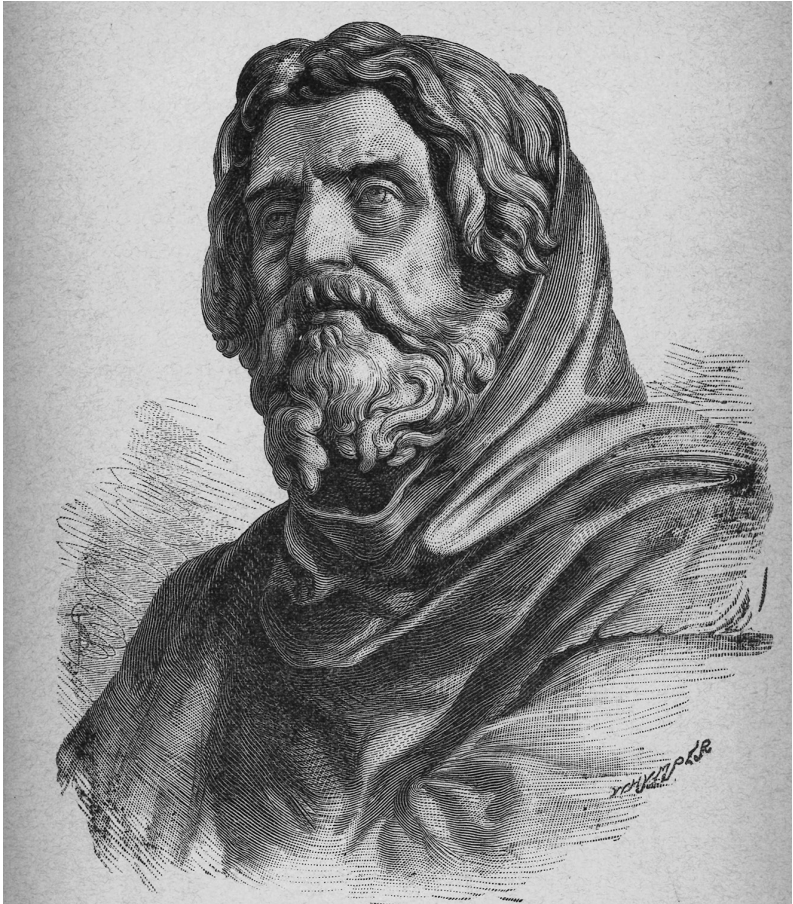


THE WALDENSIAN REVIEW



No. 144

Summer 2024

Editor: *Mrs Erica Scropo Newbury, 85 St Andrew's Road, Cambridge CB4 1DH.
Telephone 01223-315753, email ericascropo@hotmail.com*

From the Editor

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Thank you for your continuing help with prayers, feedback, enquiries, purchases from our website and, of course, **DONATIONS!** Please keep looking at www.waldensian.org.uk for updates and new items. We are also on **Facebook: *The Waldensian Church Missions***.

Congratulations to members of our **Committee** and friends:

Giovanni Bernardini (and wife Noemi) on the birth of Amanda on 20 January 2024

Simone Maghenzani (and wife Joan) on the birth of Anna on 25 January 2024

Daniele Pevarello on becoming a Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin

Huw Anderson on moving back to Italy and becoming Baptist pastor of the International Evangelical Church of Reggio Calabria

Jean David Eynard on obtaining a PhD in English Literature from Cambridge University

Synod 2024 will take place 24–29 August in Torre Pellice, as usual.

Two ordinands have successfully finished their probationary years and, God willing, will become ministers: **Kassim Conteh** and **Maliq Meda**. They were both born outside Italy where they arrived as children and are now totally Italian, even with a little regional accent in Kassim's case ...

Kassim Conteh is a well-known acquaintance on these pages since he came to train in Birmingham at Queen's Foundation with the help of the Waldensian Church Mission. Born in **Sierra Leone**, he arrived with his family in Milan. They had a long tradition of Methodist affiliation – his grandmother was a Methodist Minister, and his mother became a local preacher in Italy –



Richard and Erica Newbury with Kassim.

Cover: Head of Waldo, taken from the monument to Martin Luther in Worms (1868). A bronze engraving by the English artist Edward Whymper (1840–1911), better known as a great mountaineer (the first to reach the top of Monte Cervino/ Matterhorn and other peaks).

WALDENSIAN CALENDARS 2025



Beautiful pictures with explanations and Bible verses in various languages, English included. The reverse pages describe the process of integration between Waldensians and Methodists to mark its 50th anniversary. Available from October. Please order online from www.waldensian.org.uk or send a cheque for £18 to Erica Newbury, 85 St Andrew's Road, Cambridge CB4 1DH. Order two for £ 34.

WALDENSIAN AWAYDAY 2025

Programme in preparation, meanwhile keep the date safe: 18 January at URC Downing Place, Cambridge CB2 3EL, 10 am–1 pm.

Among other things we'll celebrate the **200th anniversary of our Waldensian Church Mission**, set up by Canon Gilly and General Beckwith, and the **50th anniversary of the Integration of Waldensian and Methodist Churches**.

but it took a while for them to find Methodists or Waldensians in Milan! It's not the first time I hear of this problem and I feel that maybe the Churches could do more to be widely known ... Kassim was thinking of becoming an electronic engineer, but he felt a Call from the Lord and, encouraged by the then minister in Milan, Eliana Briante, enrolled at the Waldensian Faculty in Rome. After finishing the first level he opted for continuing studies and training in Birmingham at **The Queen's Foundation**, a Theological College calling itself 'international, multi-cultural and ecumenical' with many Methodist students at present. Kassim preached various times at **Ponte S. Angelo Methodist Church in Rome** where **Tim Macquiban** was in charge and later recommended that our Mission support him in his 'year abroad'. He had already undergone a pastoral experience of several months in **S. Germano Chisone** under the guide of Pastor **Marchetti** and liked the Waldensian Valleys a lot.

After Birmingham, he was sent to **Angrogna** (the pastor officially in charge was **Elisabeth Loeh Manna**), where he has now finished his third year. He said the community welcomed him with enthusiasm and he has done an amazing job not just among the younger generation but with everyone, following youth camps and trips (from Bagnau to Padua to Ecumene) performing christenings, confirmations, weddings and funerals – the full pastoral range ... He also got his driving licence and now has a car, which is a great asset everywhere, but in the Angrogna Valley is a must!



Kassim and Maliq.

Maliq Meda did his 'Year abroad' in Edinburgh with the Church of Scotland and served the community of S. Secondo under the supervision of pastor **Claudio Pasquet**. He then moved to **Foggia** where he found a welcoming community, small but very active and well inserted in the local social fabric. Here the Church is busy with diaconal work, from following detainees, to helping children from disadvantaged families, to sheltering the homeless. His mentor – online – has been pastor **Winfried Pfannkuche**, who is now in Rome.

Maliq is married to his sweetheart from school days in Genova, Genesis, since 2014 and they now have an 8-month-old daughter, Sara. This is what he writes:

My name is **Maliq Meda** and I was born in Peshkopi, a town in the north-east of **Albania**, into a **Muslim** family that I could define as non (or, partially non) practising. In fact, Albanian Islam has always been more tradition than practice, thanks to the state atheism imposed by the dictatorship of Enver Hox, which fell in 1990, the year of my birth. I arrived in Italy with my parents and my sister in 2000. After five years spent in Campania, we moved to **Genoa**, where at the age of 19 I began to attend, thanks to a network of friends, the **Iglesia Evangélica Hispano Americana**. When I was little, I was taught that I could pray to **Allah** in times of need, before going to sleep, waking up and after meals. My mother told me that other religions called it differently, but it was always the same, **one God**. Growing up, I didn't have much interest in the mosque first and then much less in the church, but I didn't stop praying to God, to whom I didn't give a name. In primary school I attended after-school care with the nuns, who – I confess – made me forget any interest in religion. However, the dimension of prayer has always accompanied me, and by attending the Iglesia I finally encountered a space and time where I could cultivate this dimension of my spirituality. The unknown god progressively took the face and name of **Christ Jesus**. I have always been a very active and pragmatic person, with a strong aptitude for manual skills and the practicality of life.

Before studying Theology, I graduated as an IT expert at a technical industrial institute in Genoa and then undertook – for just one year – the IT curriculum at the University of Genoa. However, having an analytical and reflective nature, as many have told me since childhood, at a certain point I started to ask myself if I really wanted to spend the rest of my existence communicating with **artificial intelligence**. You can give commands to a machine made of circuits and it follows them. It has capabilities superior to those of humans and in a certain sense it is a living micro-organism, but it still remains a machine; at the end of the day, you click a button and it turns off and the next day it starts all over again. With people it's not the same; in fact it is exactly the opposite. They are unpredictable, often unreliable and there is always a problem to solve and deal with. These human characteristics, like others, take shape and life in relationships as a place to discover ourselves, others and God. The place in which I learned, also driven by necessity, to **build bonds and bridges despite and through differences**. And I believe that this is one of those gifts that the Lord gives us. I believe that the vocation to which I feel called also comes from this, and from wanting to put this – something I consider to be my gift – to service. After attending the Iglesia for about three years, I felt the need to undertake studies in Theology with a view to the pastorate, not least because the Community and pastors had recognised in me the **characteristics and gifts required to become a minister of the Gospel** within the **Waldensian and Methodist Churches**, a vocation that at the same time gave voice to my personal search for faith. The study of Theology allowed me to delve deeper from different perspectives into something that was changing me, changing the way I saw life, others and my world, as well as satisfying my intellectual curiosity. The path in the Faculty contributed to the maturation of my vocation and faith: as someone once told me, it helped me to deconstruct and reconstruct it – something very important for my personal as well as academic training. I can define my vocation of faith as a **conversion** that I experienced not so much in the transition from Islam to Christianity, but as an **existential change** given by the meeting of two different paths: that of my personal research and that of the Spirit that blows where he wants. This meant that the Gospel that



Maliq Meda.

reached me through others became the Gospel for me. A dynamic of life and conversion for life that has often questioned me about the importance of **testimony, as individuals and as a Church**. As a young candidate for ministry, in these two years of probation, I have been able to experience similar questions and live the Church from a different perspective. On the one hand, I had the opportunity to put to use not only what I learned over the years of theological studies but also my technical and IT knowledge. On the other hand, I was able to observe and reflect on the life of the Church and I believe that some points could be the subject of further study during my pastoral ministry and therefore of concrete contribution for the local communities and Churches. Starting from my personal story, I cannot fail to consider the **intercultural dimension** of our communities. A challenge that forces them to seek new balances born from the **need for integration**. As well as the figure of the pastor, who I believe is interconnected and interdependent with the Church. A certain **shortage of vocations** and the **ever-increasing need for new ministries** are linked, in my opinion, to both the Reformed and the Methodist ecclesiologies and their avatars and therefore also to the liturgical and homiletics of the Waldo-Methodist Churches in Italy. Testimony or missionary vocation, intercultural, pastoral care and ecclesiology are all interdependent elements in my opinion and have played an important role in my faith and academic journey. But they are also elements that largely constitute **the identity of a Church**. The challenges they pose are certainly not immediately resolved and require a certain ability to know how to renew without distorting one's identity. How to do it? I don't know, even if it is a request that I had to face several times and which each time has presented itself as new and with different characteristics. But there is a **verse from the Bible** that has often accompanied me along this path of life and faith: John 8:31 '[...] **If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.**' A verse dear to me because it reminds me that the part of me as a believer lives on this cohabitation with the Word and in the Word which continually shapes me if and when I let myself be shaped. So even when everything changes, when the world and the people around me change, when I change and when my relationship of faith with Christ changes and evolves, it always remains a starting point, **a point of arrival and back**. Because many things, even if it is painful, can change and must change. But there are some aspects that are mine alone, that do not fall away and that allow me to recognise myself for what I am, because they are born and live in relation to our Lord whose loyalty does not fail.

There is no candle that when lit does not give light

It often happens (too often) that pastors and members of our congregations prefer to live out of the time of reality. Seeing congregations becoming fewer and fewer in number, one might be (badly) tempted to take refuge in memo-

ries, in those years when churches were full of people and pastors were not lacking. Unfortunately, today the situation has changed a lot, and it has changed for the worse. There are fewer pastors and fewer people choose it as a 'profession'. Yet there is no shortage of vocations. On one hand we have fewer pastors, on the other we have more and more people approaching the academic study of Theology and enrolling in courses at the Waldensian Faculty of Theology in Rome. Of course, this does not mean that all people who study Theology will, in the future, go on serving their congregations. But, and this is an important 'but', it does show that **God and Reformed Theology** are still an interesting subject.



'Two Women with a Candle' by Peter Paul Rubens (Mauritshuis, The Hague).

Frequently I hear phrases such as 'today people no longer need God and feel to be part of a congregation'. False! If that were the case, we would not see some churches increase in number (in Sicily, for example, Pentecostal churches are numerically giants). People need God, they need to feel part of a congregation, and they need spirituality. Do we know how to offer these three things? Language, communication has changed, and perhaps we struggle to keep up with the pace of a fast-changing society. We must not, in my opinion, however, fall into the temptation of distorting our theology to make it more 'attractive'. We must not change the theological content of the message; we must change the way we proclaim it.

I am currently the pastor of the churches of **Riesi** (close to Caltanissetta) and **Agrigento**. Both churches have a glorious past when the church was full on Sundays. Today it is very different. Sicily was and is a land of mission. It remains a land where preaching a theology different from the Roman Catholic one means choosing to sow in the desert, entrusting every sprout to God. But if *'the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not'* (John 1:5 KJV), we too must struggle to make the Word of God shine through a preaching that is coherent with our theology, and made credible in the concrete actions we take. Witnessing and proclaiming the Gospel means keeping the candle of faith burning in us and in others because, as we know, *lux lucet in tenebris*.

Giovanni Bernardini

Awayday 2024

It was held in Cambridge at Wesley Church on 20 January during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and the theme was **Synodality**. We had speakers from different Churches: Rev. Dr **Tim Macquiban**, former Director of the Methodist Ecumenical Office in Rome, Rev. Canon Dr **Jeremy Morris**, National Ecumenical Adviser for the Church of England, Father **Ian Nowotnik**, National Ecumenical Officer for the Roman Catholic Bishop Conference in England and Wales, Rev. Dr **Robert Pope**, Convener of the URC Worship, Faith and Order Committee, Deacon Dr **Alessandra Trotta**, Moderator of the Tavola valdese and The Lord the Rev. Dr **Leslie Griffith**, our Patron and member of the Council of Europe focusing on human rights, migration and refugees. Music and worship were led by Rev. **Steven Cooper** and friends from Wesley Chapel, London.

From Tim Macquiban:

It's a great pleasure and privilege to be here sharing this Waldensian Awayday in the company of distinguished church leaders from other ecclesial traditions, especially in this Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. *Ut unum sint* – that they may be one – was the key text which birthed the then Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity in the wake of the Second Vatican Council. In my previous work in Rome for five years as Director of the Methodist Ecumenical Office, this octave of prayer for Christian Unity was always the busiest and happiest time of year, culminating in the Papal Vespers at the basilica of St Paul on the feast of the Conversion of St Paul on 25 January.

Several of us were at the Ecumenical Symposium convened and hosted by the Centre for Catholic Studies at the University of Durham, in response to the call from Pope Francis for the Catholic Church to focus on what it means to be a synodal church. Out of that conference on *Learning on the Way: Receptive Ecumenism and the Catholic Synodal pathway*, we as representatives of other churches were invited to come and share our insights into Synodality to help reflect together on the themes emerging for the Synod of Bishops held in Rome this past October.

So when it came to thinking about this Waldensian Awayday, the theme of Synodality was thought to be a good way for us to learn more about our own traditions and how the different ways we might consider this as part of our ecclesiology and very essence, might help the Catholics as they continue in the synodal process, as well as to help sharpen our own sense of what it means to be Church and how we relate to other Christians. All this seeking that unity which Christ desired for his disciples.

Here is a short contribution from a Methodist. While we have our district synods for conferring at a more local level, it is the words **conference** and **connexion** that from the very beginnings of Methodism have expressed this notion of synodality in the Methodist way of life. At its heart is the desire for



*Front row, from left: Editor, N. Raddon, A. Trotta, R. Morris, I. Nimmo-Smith,
Back row: S. Cooper, T. Macquiban, R. Newbury, A. Morris, H. Anderson.*

conversations to minister grace. Conferencing is one of the means of grace, the works of piety, that **John Wesley** encouraged his followers to pursue in their quest for the Holy Living started in the Oxford days of the **Holy Club**. From the beginning John Wesley invited his helpers to meet with him annually to shape this Methodist **missional renewal movement** which became a Church. Its heart was in small groups of mutual discipline and accountability in this crucible of holy living and practice of a sanctified life. And in that the role of women and lay people was significant from the beginning, though somewhat differently valued by different branches of Methodism over the years.

Being **connexional**, of the different aspects of local, regional and national identities interlocking and relating closely to each other, is fundamental to Methodism, British and worldwide, though expressed in widely differing ways. Being connexional entails a sense of belonging, mutuality and interdependence. And right from the beginning part of this has been the stories and expressions of lived experience which form part of the discernment process of what it means to be Church in its ministry and mission. But inevitably, just as in the time of Jesus and the squabbles amongst the disciples as to who should be at his right hand, there are tensions between a desire for unity and a need to express the variety of gifts that the apostle Paul highlights in his letter to the Corinthians. Yes, there is a need to celebrate diversity while holding to the unity of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church which, in the

proclamation of the creed in its liturgy and in the formulation of its historic document the Deed of Union, the Methodist Church hold central and dear. Synodality therefore should not imply for Methodists a sectarian separatist outlook of sacred selectivity.

Our connexionalism demonstrates a multi-faceted ecclesial vision which embraces spirituality and mission, governance and fellowship. It's not contained within a rulebook of how to order ourselves (important though that it is to have!). It is manifest in a **Way of Life** which touches every level of being in our Church, from the local to the National. And implicit within this is our commitment to becoming and being a justice-seeking church, committed to the principles of solidarity, dignity and justice as expressions of the equality, diversity and inclusion we seek. And part of this process involves listening to the different stories, often out of the pain of rejection and hurt in matters of gender, race, sexuality and social resources.

So a key question would be: for us, and maybe for others, if we are committed to the synodal process, **whose voices are we hearing?** And how do we handle the tensions and disputes which arise because of the different people we are with our different readings of scripture and tradition. If conferring is so central, what are the limits to our discussions? And in this, what is the **relevant weight given to Scripture, Tradition, Reason, and Experience** in our decision-making? This has been a crucial factor in the whole handling of the human sexuality debate in the past 30 years.

In all this the place of young people, of women and of lay people in our church governance is crucial. How do we allow their voices to be heard and enabled and empowered to be an equal contributor around the table? And what is the role of the **Holy Spirit** in all this? The disturber or the comforter? The one who casts down the mighty from their seats or forms a protective ring around those who hold the power and the ability to preserve the *status quo*?

As we got to the end of the ecumenical symposium in Durham as a practical workshop in receptive ecumenism, we Methodists were challenged to reexamine our own sense and understanding of synodality, with the courage to embark on this synodal process recognising the tensions between aspirations and reality. Yes, with a renewed confidence in sharing what is good about a renewal movement focused on small groups and the connexional collaboration of an inclusive Church but open to the work of the Holy Spirit in letting go of fossilised structures for a renewed church in a period of decline, not inward looking but outward facing, prepared to embrace fellow pilgrims in an ecumenical journey which makes space for all with a generosity of grace which listens to all.

Let us hope that together we can, in the words of Sister Natalie, 'plant seeds and allow dreams to flourish, in strengthening relationships and learning from each other'.

I end with verses from a **Charles Wesley hymn** which encapsulates that desire for **unity** through fellowship that **he and his brother practised and preached in the birth of Methodism:**

Christ, from whom all blessings flow,
Perfecting the saints below,
Hear us, who Thy nature share,
Who Thy mystic body are.

Sweetly may we all agree,
Touched with loving sympathy;
Kindly for each other care,
Every member feel its share.

Join us, in one spirit join,
Let us still receive of Thine;
Still for more on Thee we call,
Thou who fillest all in all.

Love, like death, hath all destroyed,
Rendered all distinctions void;
Names, and sects, and parties fall:
Thou, O Christ, art all in all.

Move, and actuate, and guide:
Divers gifts to each divide;
Placed according to Thy will,
Let us all our work fulfil.

For those who would like to hear all the talks: please check out our **Facebook blog**.

Waldensian Manuscripts

Later in the afternoon we – Alessandra, Tim with wife Angela, Richard and I – went to the **University Library** to be greeted by librarian **Kevin Roberts** who showed us some of the rare Waldensian ancient manuscripts that used to be the treasure of our sadly missed Peter Meadows. As we all know, these manuscripts were sent in different ways to safety in Geneva, Dublin and Cambridge to be in good hands for posterity. It was a very interesting and friendly visit to the Cambridge ones – the perfect ending to a great day.



The Casa Unionista (Church Hall) in Torre Pellice needs help!

The Consistory of Torre Pellice Church – the body that rules the life and ministry of the congregation – has decided to make a better use of the spaces provided by *Casa Unionista* in order to expand and serve not just the congregation but the whole community, above all the youngsters. The project will consist in several parts, starting with the first, financed by the Waldensian Church Mission, which is restoring and improving some rooms of the building in desperate need of attention. The aim is to *attract adolescents, young people and young adults* – but with no preclusion to others! – who



would like to practise and play music and other activities. This consists in work done on basement rooms, bathrooms and internal stairs as the minister Michel Charbonnier is pointing out in the picture shown. **Donations are welcome!**

850 years ago...

In 1174 in Lyon the rich merchant Valdo felt the call to become a real follower of Jesus: he gave all he had to the poor and started preaching the Gospel. His followers were called *the poor men of Lyon* but what brought trouble to him and the then called *Valdesi* (Waldensians) was the **preaching** which the Church by that time had already allowed only to the ordained clergy. Persecutions that on and off, large and small, continued until the Reformation. After the Reformation, especially when the Waldensians voted to become part of Geneva Reformation, they were fought against as Protestants until the seventeenth-eighteenth century and discriminated and secluded until the mi-nineteenth. Italy was born in 1861 as a liberal nation but Fascism re-established the special power of the Roman Catholic Church and the Republic voted in 1946 kept some of it in its Constitution! Only in 1984 the Waldensian Church and the State signed the *Intese* that in principle started a new era of freedom. Still now often the fact that all religions are free and equal is only a commendable idea ... The *Intese* were a remarkable goal though and they were achieved because of the determination of Giorgio Bouchard, the Moderator and the Prime Minister Bettino Craxi.



From left: G. Spini, (Methodists) S. Aquilante (Tavola valdese), G. Bouchard (Moderator), B. Craxi (Prime Minister), A. Forlani and G. Amato (for the Government).



2024 has been a year of many celebrations: among the many there was (and is) the **exhibition at the Waldensian Museum** in Torre Pellice based on what we know about **Waldo** and on how he and the Waldensians were seen and judged across the centuries by friends and enemies all over Europe and other parts of the world. It's a great exhibition that the **curators are willing to export, which can be easily organised without high expenses, ideally in a library!** We had the privilege to visit it with special friends such as Albert de Lange.

HIKING from the Waldensian Valleys to Germany walking or cycling following via France and Switzerland the escape route of Huguenots and Waldensians during worse times! Blog: **In the steps of the Huguenots and the Waldensians** – a European hiking trail... 300 km from Saluzzo to Geneva in 10 days while the whole cultural itinerary sponsored by the Council of Europe is 2500 km long! Check **Fondazione Centro Culturale Valdese** and its blogs for advice! Church groups of young and not so young, students of Collegio valdese, individuals have tried different ways and always with enthusiastic reports!

A New History of the Waldensians

In order to mark the 850 years since the start of the Waldensian Movement, 'our' Claudiana has published a new colossal history in 4 volumes, each of them with one editor who has assembled 20+ experts (national and international) for each subject. An interesting and intriguing read.

Vol. I, Editor **Francesca Tasca**, 25 authors, *As New Apostles: twelfth–fifteenth century*, from when Valdo from Lyon decided to give up his riches and follow and spread the Gospel, despite being excommunicated, to the gathering of followers – men and women – to the building up of the Movement and the clandestine preaching amid persecution and its surviving through the Middle Ages. 687 pp.

Vol. II, Editor **Susanna Peyronel Rambaldi**, 29 authors, *Becoming Reformed: (1532–1689)*, from Provence and the Waldensian Valleys to Calabria, via Chanforan, Olivetan, Gianavel. Resistance, Arms and Faith. New organisation of parishes and churches; inquisitors converting people and kidnapping children. Escape in Switzerland and Germany. The Glorious Return (to the Valleys). 864 pp.

Vol. III, Editor **Gian Paolo Romagnani**, 22 authors (including our Biagini and Maghenzani!), *From Glorious Return to Emancipation (1689–1870)* (and the conquest of Rome I would add!): reconstructing the community, papist infiltration, Geneva influence in training ministers, the Enlightenment in the Valleys, Free Masonry, traders and businessmen, relationship of the Waldensians with Holland and England, Napoleon, Christian Revival, British Travellers, Gilly and Beckwith, expansion of Literacy, Waldensian Bibles. 844 pp.

Vol. IV, Editor **Paolo Naso**, 35 authors, *Evangelization and presence in Italy: (1870–1990)*, from 'Alpine ghetto' to National Church in newly born Italy. The opening of schools, diaconal activities, the birth of the Faculty of Theology and of the publishing company Claudiana. The small Church, strictly connected to sister Churches in Europe and other parts of the world, becomes a champion of liberal and progressive values. The difficult 20+ years of Fascism established – among many other things – the infamous 'Lateran Pacts' that made the Roman Catholic Church *State Church*, a legacy still lingering. Post-war

period in a rather clerical situation is not easy but there is progress: the birth of the Federation of Evangelical Churches, the integration of the Waldensian and Methodist Churches and at last the '*Intesa*' between State and Waldensian Church. 820 pp.

PLENTY OF PICTURES! Each volume €64.



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**

I (title) (name)

(address)

Postcode Tel. no.

would like all donations I make to Waldensian Church Missions from the date of this declaration to be treated as Gift Aid donations. I understand I must be paying income tax or capital gains tax at least equal to the amount being reclaimed by the Missions. I understand that I can cancel this Gift Aid declaration at any time.

Signature of donor Date

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

Executive Secretary: Erica Scropo Newbury
85 St Andrew's Road, Cambridge CB4 1DH
Telephone 01223-315753, email ericascropo@hotmail.com

Hon. Treasurer: Mr Mark Stephens
5 Woodgate Close, Woodgate, Chichester PO20 3TA
Telephone 01243-545877, email marklynne5@btinternet.com

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.

tick

- Change of address:
- I wish to donate £ . . . for the magazine:
- Please send me more / fewer copies of the *The Waldensian Review*:
- Please send *The Waldensian Review* to (new supporter):

Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms

Other:

No. of copies:

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE TREASURER AT THE ADDRESS ABOVE

Publications

The Waldensian Story: A Study in Faith, Intolerance and Survival
by Prescott Stephens — £25 *inc. postage and packing*

The Waldensians' 'Glorious Recovery' of their Alpine Valleys
The legendary 'Recovery' with a brief summary of the previous 500 years
by Richard Newbury — £3 *plus postage and packing*

Think of a Farmhouse in the Mountains
From refuge for antifascist partisans destroyed by the Germans to 'The
House for Peace' holiday camp and retreat. In Italian and English
£12.50 inc. postage and packing

**What the British found when they discovered the French Vaudois
in the Nineteenth Century**
by W.S.F. Pickering — £3 *plus postage and packing*

All these books are available from
Miss Nicky Raddon, 19 Sampson Avenue, Barnet EN5 2RN
Email: njraddon@hotmail.co.uk (preferred)
or telephone 0208 3648182

Please email for exact cost of postage

**Souvenirs and information can be obtained
from:**

The Huguenot Society
PO Box 444
Ruislip HA4 4GU

admin@huguenotsociety.org.uk

The Huguenot Cross, symbol of Protestantism all over Europe

