



Missione Cattolica Italiana in Olanda

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The Italian Catholic Mission in the Netherlands (Missione Cattolica Italiana in Olanda, MCIO) was founded on September 6th 1954 thanks to the initiative of the Italian Episcopal Conference, with the intent of providing spiritual assistance to the many Italian workers that were immigrating to the Netherlands in the post-war period.

After the war, the Italians were the first “guest workers” who came to the Netherlands. Chimney sweeps, granite workers and ice-cream makers came mainly from northern Italy and developed quickly to become small business owners (mainly shopkeepers and restaurant owners). This first wave of immigration was followed by the arrival of other Italian immigrants, this time mainly from the south of Italy, particularly from the islands of Sardinia and Sicily. They worked in the Limburg mines, in textile industries, and in steel factories.

Since the beginning, the Mission was entrusted to the Friars Minor: father Romedio was the first one, followed by few others spread over the country. Father Lino was the responsible of the Mission in the early eighties and, since 1993, the Mission is led by father Tommaso de Jong.

In the 90s, every two weeks, there were religious services in Rotterdam, Den Haag, Oegstgeest and Amsterdam.

In Den Haag, the Mass was celebrated in Oude Molstraat, in the Sisters’ chapel and was accompanied by the choir of the Mission.

In 2001, MCIO moved from the jurisdiction of the Diocese of Haarlem-Amsterdam to Rotterdam, and in 2003 the "Stichting for the Italian Catholic Community in the Netherland" was founded.



The Pastoral Council has been established more than 15 years ago and, together with a group of catechists and people with goodwill, it takes responsibility of assisting father Tommaso in his missionary activity and in conducting the Mission. The Community receives valuable spiritual help from archbishop Aldo Cavalli (Apostolic Nuncio to the Netherlands), from Monsignor Jain Mendez (Advisor to the Nuncio), from father Robert Kurvers and from father Giancarlo Rizzo.

MCIO is a reference and contact point for many Catholics living between Amsterdam, Leiden, The Hague and Rotterdam.

Over the years, the Italian community has significantly changed from its origins: today it is mostly constituted by staff employed at various levels in international organizations, oil companies and other multinational



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corporations, catering and hotel industry, students and researchers at the various and prestigious Dutch universities. About 550 families are members of the Mission.



At the present time, the Holy Mass is regularly celebrated on Sunday in Amsterdam (Onze Lieve Vrouwekerk Chapel at Keizergracht, 12:00), Leiden (Kerkelijk Centrum "De Regenboog" in Watermolen, 12:00) and Den Haag ("Onbevlekt Hart van Maria" church in Bloklandenplein, 18:00).

More than a hundred of children and teenagers are involved in catechism courses in preparation for the First Communion, Confirmation, and After-Confirmation.



Adults also have monthly catechesis meeting in Amsterdam and Den Haag. Father Tommaso regularly holds pre-wedding courses.



Just few numbers: since the beginning of the year

- three babies have been baptized;
- twenty children received the First Communion;
- thirteen teenagers received the Confirmation;
- seventeen couples attended the pre-wedding courses.

Do you want to know more about our Community? Please visit our website

<http://www.missionecattolicaolanda.org/>



Den Haag, October 7th, 2017
Mary Star of the Sea Catholic Parish, St. Agnes