

**UKHMF TESTIMONY TRANSCRIPT
– CESARE SACERDOTI**

[Testimony: 1hr 50 mins. Artefacts: 7' 09"]

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10:00:00:00

Cesare Sacerdoti

Cesare Sacerdoti born in twenty-fourth of February nineteen thirty-eight, I was in hiding in a convent in Florence and in an orphanage in Montecatini from November nineteen forty-three to August nineteen forty-four.

[Fade to black and back up]

10:00:17:21

Interviewer

OK. So, um, may I, I start by asking have you ever recorded your experiences before?

10:00:26:06

Cesare Sacerdoti

I have not recorded my experiences, uh, as such in any sort of systematic way but my son Jonathan, uh, who is, well, who is probably been followed, following, uh, the memories I have been resurfacing because the amazing thing was that I didn't talk much about that period until 60 years after; which is, apparently is a very common phenomenon and, uh, at that point he was already in, in journalism and media, so he was, he tried actively to, um, record somehow. So he has done -I dunno - hours of, uh, photographs, uh, talking with me and so on and film but he has never done anything with it. So, so it's not done formally. There is nothing like that. I have been talking to, uh, different audience in schools and, strangely enough, even to the, uh, Survivors Centre here in London and, uh, and that's it. But nothing systematic.

10:01:34:22

Interviewer

I'm sure for Jonathan's sake it's also for the family, isn't it, rather than having to do anything with that?

10:01:40:04

Cesare Sacerdoti

Correct. It's, uh,

10:01:41:16

Interviewer

Um, but, but you're right, it is a very common phenomenon that people just don't talk about it and have come to talking about it later on in their life. But may I ask what prompted you to start talking? Was it Jonathan?

10:01:55:00

Cesare Sacerdoti

What-, after about 60 years my brother Vittorio who is now dead – he was younger than I – and we-, he we went through the Holocaust period together and we both of us, we just felt an urge to, to, to get in touch with the successor of our saviours. We couldn't explain it, but we just did it. So we, and thanks to that they had been recognised already, three of them with the last one, as Righteous Among the Nations and we don't know, we don't know what happened. It just, uh, I think is when you start to think about when you were younger perhaps and you see people around you

dying off and so you sort of try to, uh, reconnect with the past and, of course, that part of the past was very dramatic and, uh, and has left certain scars in your personality and so on, and we just felt we wanted to free ourselves of it. So it was a very, uh, it was very hard to go through that journey but was very rewarding at the same time and to, it-, the beauty was to reconnect with these people, the successor were just following the goodness of their predecessor, of the originator, of who was uh, for example, Madre, [cough] Madre M, Maria Agnese Tribbioli, the Mother General of, uh, an order of nuns - or rather a congregation of nuns - who just followed the same principle in the same way to approach. They still look after the vulnerable people all over the world. They look out for them, and they do it with love, and so on. So to re-, It was really reconnecting with goodness. Was very, very strange phenomenon. And then, even reconnecting to, uh, for example, with Padre, that was Don Giulio Facibeni. He had been a, as a young priest he had been a chaplain in the First World War and when the, uh, young soldiers were going out of the trenches and they were being killed by the dozen they would say, "Well, father, if I die will you look after my children?" Well, at the end of the war this young priest started opening orphanages all over the place, and without any money and always trusting in the, the, in the providence of a particular, um, Madonna: the Madonnina del Grappa - where they were fighting. And, in fact, when we were in hiding after having been in the convent of Madre Maria, um, Ma, Madre Maria Agnese Tribbioli, we were in the orphanage of, um, Facibeni, one of the many old-fashioned orphanages and, uh, again we met with the, what they called themselves the children: il Filii del Padre. He was called Il Padre, but he basically look after 7,000 orphans. It was just an incredible thing. And the, we, we met there an association. Some were contemporary but we didn't find anybody who was in that orphanage with us - unfortunately. Uh, we have a photograph of that time. There was also a German chaplain of Wehrmacht who somehow felt very warmly towards the orphanage and, strangely enough, his favourite boy was my brother and, uh, we have a photograph where he sits on his lap. So it, all this is, is kind of, of phenomenon that happened brought us back to want to really be in touch with him.

In the case of this last saviour of ours, Monsignor [Meneghello], well, there was no way to get in touch because, uh, the formal charge is much more rigid. But when we had the ceremony for Mother Maria, um, Tribbioli in Ponte, in Palazzo Vecchio, well, the, the Cardinal who was not Cardinal yet – he was Archbishop of Florence but was still a Monsignor, hadn't been promoted – well, again, a certain warmth came and, in fact, in my speech next, uh, next week, when I'm, at the ceremony there, I'm going to quote from one of his, uh, homilies that he gave on the 15th of November in 2015 after the Paris, uh, events where he's basically explains and he says, "You should not try to ignore your identity and try to lose your face in the faces of all the others. You have to try and establish, try to understand who you are, the values of yourself. Think where you're coming from, your history, and then you'll really have a brotherly way to live together and to have in, in this sort of feeling and behaving, uh, a way to be, a mutual way but based on this principle." First know yourself and don't try to just say like political correctness that's today. There is a sort of a, there's sort of distorted pluralism today. Pluralism today doesn't mean anything. In fact now it's a word that is not fashionable anymore. It was used a lot but no more.

10:07:42:17

Interviewer

Okay. Thank you very much. Um, you mentioned, um, just before you gave me that answer or at the beginning that your brother has passed away, um, and actually as you came, you know, uh, uh, slightly older it was a chance to reconnect with that part of your life. So he must've had some relief that he was able to do that before he died?

10:08:03:18

Cesare Sacerdoti

Yes. It was a, it quite, well, it was about, uh, is, it was sudden, so he didn't realize.

10:08:10:05

Interviewer

Mm.

10:08:11:02

Cesare Sacerdoti

and he's younger, that was younger than I, but it was a relief for him to see that we had accomplished, to find a way to recognise and to show our gratitude and a fact, the fact that we don't forget. Remembering is very important. You know, in, uh, in, in Judaism there are two commandments – not part of the ten commandments. One is, uh, says, uh, remember and, and the other says do not forget. And there is a difference between the two. In fact, you know, you, you can actively remember something, or you don't forget. That can be done quietly. Or the not forgetting might be don't forget the details because everything is important. Remembering is very, very important in the way we are brought up.

[Cut for camera]

10:09:01:00

Interviewer

So a few more general questions, um, and then we'll go through specifically. So, you have made some efforts to return to the beginning of your story, and your life. Um, with the time that has passed, do you, er, find it easier to forgive the people who changed your life?

10:09:25:10

Cesare Sacerdoti

Well, that is an interesting question. Um, after the, after the events for many years I couldn't even think of meeting a German for a start. Er, I go, um, for the last 16 years I've been going on archaeological excavation in Israel and there are volunteers from all over the world. And there has been, particularly, one German volunteer with whom we have become very good friends and he has dramatically changed, he has sort of managed to cleanse me of displeasures against the Germans. As far as generally forgive? Yes, my father was a good teacher in that. My father, after the war - he had been captured by the fascist and the SS - when he was asked to give evidence against one of the gang that arrested him, he said, no, he refused. He says, we have to think about reconciliation now. And that was, that's where I come from basically. That's it.

10:10:32:09

Interviewer

Gosh, what an extraordinary thing for him to have done so quickly, to move forward and, and to forgive - or at least, um, try to, try to be constructive rather than to give evidence. Um, can I ask you in that, in that 60 years where you said that you didn't speak, did you speak to nobody? and in that time how, how were you feeling? Did you manage to block the experiences from you or you, were you living with them and just didn't want to share?

10:10:58:21

Cesare Sacerdoti

I was living with the experience of all this. You can't just, er, block them altogether. At least I didn't, which I think was healthy at the end. With my brother, we'll talk but my brother did not remember that much. He was only two and a half so, you know, and in fact, what he remember is probably what I told him about talking about all this. And, um, you live with it. It has an effect on your personality. I always felt somehow, the nine months in the orphanage, I knew that with my brother and another boy that I had identified there as another Jewish boy - although we didn't open up to each other - that I felt different, I felt an outsider. And that stuck with me all my life. So in that respect, yes I had it. Er, and I tried to live as an outsider. So, if, of course if you, if you feel the part well you live it and that what is it. It's only in older age now I don't feel that anymore. And I think what helped to free has been the reconnection and start to talk and start to analyse it in a more serene way.

10:12:13:20

Interviewer

So now that you are talking about it, and you're sharing your testimony with generations to come with the technology that we're using, does that give you some relief?

10:12:24:01

Cesare Sacerdoti

It gives me relief to know that I have to remember and, er, not just remember now but remember for the future. But I am very sceptical about the fact that in fact the memorialising those years and these experiences will carry on for a long time. I think people have now less and less interest. There is an increasing number of Holocaust deniers, and the Holocaust denial is almost accepted. It's, er, as something, well it's another figure. Say it's a question of freedom of speech very often, which is already showing that is doubtful that really these things will be remembered.

10:13:13:15

Interviewer

You mentioned that your friend in Israel, the German, er, man, has, has, helped to, um, with your journey of reconciliation. But, but the word Nazi. What does that mean to you and how do you feel about the Nazis now?

10:13:26:22

Cesare Sacerdoti

Well I, I feel basically that it ca, that what, what basically where the Nazi could

happen again today. There are all the signs for me again. Um, there are certain events at times which really frightens because they are sort of flash, flash memories of what, when I was a young child. Don't forget I was only five and a half when that happened. But there are certain impressions, certain memories that are impressed in my mind. Impressed in the mind of a child which have been sort of filtered by the years and then expressed now by another, by an old man basically. But, er, they, the characteristic of the Nazi is not unique and there are now fundamentalists which are very similar to the Nazis. And it's no question of mincing words. They come from a particular kind of Islamist, I mean, it's simple as that. There are fundamentalists in every walk of life, if you like, on anything but those are really tremendous. And they could cause it again, a war, they cause again, er, and they are already causing again a hell of a big massacre and displacement to what? There are millions of, of refugees coming to Europe. There are thousands, ten thousands of people being killed and this is even probably a more frightening one, because the Nazi had a crazy doctrine, but they were very precise in what they were doing. Islamists they even kill each other. So it, it looks absolutely horrendous.

10:15:09:05

Interviewer

So that must be a very depressing, um, realisation for you, that there, there were huge lessons that we could've learnt at the end of the Second World War and somehow, globally we haven't?

10:15:24:04

Cesare Sacerdoti

We did not learn from the Second World War. Nothing at all. I remember as a child after the war the change of atmosphere. And you could feel that the grown up were really believing, we have defeated evil, now everything is going to be wonderful. We are really going to see now Utopia, if you like. And that's gradually the [Syria?] incident as of today about - what is it? - 73 years now, later? We're, I wouldn't say back to square one but very close to it unfortunately. There are good things. Er, the present government in England is doing something that there is no other government is doing. Well, the initiative of taking the, now the, er, testimonies of people, which is late but it's not too late. It's never too late for whatever, whatever it may work I don't know, Spielberg has done a lot in that respect. . But generally speaking there is nothing that is being done to try and avoid it happening. There is this political correctness which deforms everything and avoids to face the issue and this is the problem. Basically as it happened in those days, you know, going back 73-75 years ago, the issues were not faced. And so it was an encouragement to, what one can only define, the force of evil really, to gallop and prevail until goodness prevail in a quiet way. And, and it will again but this cycle is frightening.

10:17:08:19

Interviewer

So, we're going to talk about some specific questions about your life in a moment's time; but because of your voice, I just want to ask you for a general comment. Um, with the technology that has been explained to you, we will be able to, um, share your testimony with your great, great, great, great, great grandchildren. Um, you have a unique perspective, because of what happened to you and your brother, and therefore this is an opportunity to speak to those generations that will listen to you

about a lesson in humanity, a lesson in forgiveness, a lesson in tolerance and, or, or something else or none of those. And I just wondered if you had a message?

10:17:50:13

Cesare Sacerdoti

Er, a message for the young generation? There is one, one thing that I find quite concerning, er, is the all the different kind of media of today. I think they are not controlling it, and, in fact, the media is almost taking over the lives of the young people. Um, you-, I, I was waiting for a train yesterday and there were eight people. Four were young people with their thumbs going on on their cellphone, not even looking up. The older people were reading a paper, I was reading a book and that was it. Don't become slave of the technology. You must master the technology. Don't let it then just run wild in such a way that basically the one that will master will be the one that will oppress you again. That is a great danger today. Er, you have to be alert. Yes, forgiveness is a great thing but know yourself. That's what I said earlier. Know yourself and try and be alert to what is going on around you, because things do happen. If you are not alert things can just take over and when you realise it, it's too late.

[cut for direction]

10:19:12:19

Interviewer

So we're going to the beginning now. Um, about your early life and pre-war; um, and what your family was like. There was you and your brother, and your parents. Clearly your father, particularly, had a, a very big impact on your personality. So were you a religious family? Tell me about the life you were born into.

10:19:31:23

Cesare Sacerdoti

We, my father was a minister. He was a young, er, he was a cantor, not yet a rabbi. He became a rabbi later. And my uncle, my mother's brother, he was another cantor at the same congregation in Florence. The rabbi of the congregation was a, um, Rabbi Nathan Casutto. Let that memory be a blessing to all of us. Nathan Casutto was eventually taken to the camp and never came back. But we lived around the synagogue. We lived very near the synagogue. As a young child I was going to the kindergarten there. My father take me in the morning when time he was going to the synagogue to officiate. And then on Saturday we would all walk to the synagogue for the service. And, er, the synagogue in Florence has got beautiful grounds. So it was partly-, I mean, the, the whole of my pre-war memories are beautiful memories, full of light and colours. But the lights, the lights are marvellous. In my life lights have always been a signal of something. That they really express what's going on. Er, the synagogue in Florence has got, er, windows of multicolour glass and according to the season and the time of the day, the light filter into it was something had bring his memory back and of a happy time. It was light, colour and, and joy. I lived a sheltered life but I, I was only five - five and a half. So we lived around the synagogue. My father, my, er, religious family. And then when they,.

10:21:22:13

I was born on the-, 1938 in February.

10:21:26:07

the racial law were promulgated, the first decree was in September of that year. But there was already building up of racism, er, which was starting to develop. Um, there was, um, a crazy magazine that was published: *In Difesa di Razza*, In Defence of the Race. there was some, certainly-, I have got a few issues of it which I found recently on, um, on the flea market in Italy and they are absolutely-, If it wouldn't be, that led to what they read there would be an absolute laugh, but you see they, they have to be taken seriously, even today. So when that started we were not allowed to go to, er, public park. My mother found a little way round it. The, er, botanical garden were not public park, so she used to take me there. But there were no children to play with, so it was not the same thing. We were not allowed to go to seaside resort or mountain resort and she took us to, Tonfano on the Versilia coast and the day after we had arrived, we had just been one, one in the morning to, on the beach with my brother and my mother and the carabinieri came to the house where we are staying and said, you shouldn't be there and you know it. So you better leave, otherwise I'm coming later to basically take you away, to take you back to Florence. So, these were very, for a child of that age they are impressions. Then when you asked what happened, of course you are explained.

10:23:10:03

Then in 1943 we had the Seder in our house, and we had lots of guests. My parents' home was always open to anybody, even after the war. After the war we had lots of survivors that came to, from they were Polish of origin, then we just shared what we had. It is an empty room, 'cause they had stolen everything, and we shared what we had. But even before my parents were, they always kept an open house. So the Seder of 1943, we had guests and some neighbours on the same landing of our apartment, they called in the police and the police officer said, you can't have so many people and, you know, Jews are not allowed to have a late, there were all sorts of, all sorts of things. And I remember when our, the Seder was interrupted, and all our guests were sent away. That's something that stuck in my mind.

10:24:13:15

And then it started to deteriorate further. You see, it was just starting to-, I don't know, it felt like if my life was going adrift, everything was falling to pieces around and, of course, the combination of all that is when then finally we were split from our parents and I mean, that was it. And after we had been to the convent where the nuns were, our first refuge there and, er, my brother and I were sent to the orphanage.

10:24:46:01

Interviewer

Um, I'm going to come to that in a minute, 'cause it's such a significant part of your story. Um, you say that you had, you were so young, but you just had impressions of your life falling apart. Your parents obviously would've tried to protect you from what was happening but you, you couldn't fail to, to feel, even at such a young age that things were going very badly wrong for you and your family and your religion.

10:25:12:09

Cesare Sacerdoti

I don't really think that grown up, even myself today, do realise how much a child, even at five, really takes in of what's going on. Er, also one has to realise that the grown up of those days, could hardly talk about anything else but about the situation. It was a great worry. In a sort of a strange way my father at least had not lost his job. So in that respect our life has changed relatively little because all Jews were sent away from any, er, state employment, er, from the universities and from the armed forces, of course, and all that. And you have and you felt the atmosphere, you know. It was very rare that a grown up would laugh, so there was a switch really. Not sudden but, you know, gradual but within a short period of time. So you did realise what was going on. And then in listening and as I, you know, when you think back then through the years you realise that it translated according to the maturity. And that how it comes till then.

10:26:28:19

Interviewer

You were clearly a very sensitive and a very intelligent young boy. Your life was immediately affected wasn't it, with your kindergarten and your teacher?

10:26:37:19

Cesare Sacerdoti

Yes. Yes. Er, the kindergarten to me had been a, a wonderful place. I still remember one of the things they were doing, teaching us how to do the, er, to do your laces up with a funny wooden frame, with two pieces of material and it was thing that you had to do it; and things like that. And, and this little teacher, she was a very small woman was, er, she unfortunately disappeared in the, in the camps. And it was a very happy atmosphere, was part of the youth and even the caretaker of the ground of the synagogue, they were friendly and, er, it was, it was, it was really from joy, gradually the light going out, again. I always deal with, with the light. Perhaps because when things started, the big change when we had to go to the orphanage is happened in November, it's, winter was coming somehow. Perhaps there is an association with that, I don't know.

10:27:42:16

Interviewer

OK. It's, it's extraordinary that your life is affected by light so much. It's, it's very touching. Um, your life changed when the Germans occupied Northern Italy didn't it? Do you remember that? Do you remember being told what was happening?

10:27:59:20

Cesare Sacerdoti

What I remember is that when, er, on the 8 September since the, when, the war, er, Italy agree an armistice with their [*life?*] forces and, er, there was an illusion that the war was over, and everything was over. And I remember in the states of Florence with my mother and my little brother, we all had that little, er, paper, Italian flakes but the reality was different. And the Germans, of course, occupied Italy and that's the point where really you felt, even you felt really the, the darkness that they're coming. And that's when basically, er in a matter of, er, weeks things got very worse and then in the end on the, we had, we had to run away.

10:28:46:04

On the 7 November we had to run away and went to the first refuge.

10:28:50:24

Interviewer

Your synagogue was raided wasn't it?

10:28:53:11

Cesare Sacerdoti

The synagogue was raided, yes. The, the raid on the Jews in Florence was postponed in the first place because [*Daneker?*], the captain of the SS who raid the gate in Rome, did so well that basically I think was an expressed wish of Hitler that he should carry on. Also the, the German had a little bit of problem in manpower. They learn quickly enough to use the fascist militia, the Italian one and, er, Daneker had the flu or something like that, unfortunately he didn't die at that time. Er, so it was delayed raiding the other places further north. And then in the end Florence was done under [*Daneker*] direction but by his deputy, er, Alvin something or other, I don't remember his surname. And, yes, of course, the synagogue was raided and, um, even the old people's home was raided, and they took, they deported these old people. There was an old man, somewhere who was 101, he was lucky enough to die just before. We used to go to the old people's home, which was not near the synagogue, it was near the Lungarni and so my mother used to take me there to meet the old people because it was too, the old people were part of the family. Like it is now in Florence, the old people's home there is now it's attached to the synagogue and it's all part of the family. My parents went there when they got very old, and they met all their childhood friends there again. So we felt when the Germans arrived and, er, and then we had to be on the run basically.

[Cut for direction]

10:30:37:09

Interviewer

Um, so your father was a minister in the synagogue. You said you went on the run. Where, where did you go? Where did he go?

10:30:44:17

Cesare Sacerdoti

My father went hiding first into, erm, Convitto di San Leonardo, which was a sort of a home for retired priests, Catholic priests. You see in Florence there was a situation that before, um, the occupation by the Germans, we Italian Jews were not in risking deportation. But there were many, um, foreign Jews that came from Germany; they went to France, from France they came down south of France, which was under Italian occupation, then armistice. So they came down further south and many were in Florence as well. And, er, they, my father was, er, and my uncle under the Rabbi Carsutto form a committee with the cardinal of Florence and they were also Freemasons, was all really all the people of goodwill to help these refugees, these Jews that were coming to Florence, er, financially, finding them a place to live and so on. After the 8th of September, rather, to be precise, when the Germans started raiding, really the date was the 7th of November in Florence. Then, er, we were in the

same situation as the foreign Jews, if you like. So the, our resting, our life was in the hand basically of the church. And that's where Cardinal Leo de la Hosta was an incredible leader. He, this man who when he, when Mussolini visited Florence he shut all the doors and the windows of the palace. When the racial law came out in '38 he went to the Duomo, to the Cathedral and his servant was saying how all men are equal, basically, arguing against the racial law. Much more courage than the Pope. This man was frightened of nothing. And, er, he then asked the clergy, his people of his diocese to help the Jews. He didn't order them because he knew it was a risk and they all responded beautifully. Very few exceptions. They were all heroes. It is not accidental, and I think many more could be recognised by how the shame who is quite tough in the way they scrutiny, the proposal. We have got, just for our family, we have got five that have been recognised, either by proposal by us or by others because they were quicker than us. There is another priest that I would like, the one that basically was my father host. After the Convitto di San Leonardo, where he was hiding first, then, er, at the end of November, towards the 26th-27th when the raids of the Germans were harder, he moved from the Convitto to the house of Monsignor [*Capritti?*] who was a canon of San Gaetano and then became the, was, he was the Prior and then became the Canon of San Lorenzo in Florence. And he had... there he had him, and as I found out later, even the father of another survivor who lives now in Florida, in New York. We have been in touch. He was older than I and, er, now she must be 86. I think she's still alright. I don't know, we correspond by email.

10:34:26:07

Interviewer

So your father went into hiding first and, and then your mother and your brother? And tell me how you travelled? How did you travel with your mother?

10:34:34:22

Cesare Sacerdoti

Well, from, er, when we left our apartment in Florence - our home - we, in those days you had the carriages, like they were, like taxi rank with a horse in Florence. I mean, it was a, yes it is, it's a finer thing but the world has moved a heck of a lot. There was no, in those days. And, um, we run with very few things - with us. One thing that my mother took with, with us were the photographs of the family. That's why I have a few of those days. And, er, the other thing that, er, we took was a cardboard with written, um, an amulet, written by my uncle when my parents got married just say, God Keep Us Healthy and Protect Us. And, er, I still, I have that now and I had it framed and I keep it in my house. So we run this, er, horse, er, er, carriage and there were two young teenager; one became quite a, a well-known, er, journalist. He, he moved to Madrid in the end and the other one became a very well-known chef and training chefs, he went to the States. Er, he was mainly teaching people Italian cuisine. And they were, the nephew of the bakers, two sister in the street where we lived, the bakers and they came to help us. You know, to, my mother and my brother to go to this convent on the other side of town. And, er, and there we arrived in this convent where we found many other women with children hiding there.

10:36:20:15

Interviewer

Do you remember the urgency of your mother packing and getting you ready or, or was it something that had planned?

10:36:25:05

Cesare Sacerdoti [interrupts Interviewer]

Yes, the, yes, the [*clears throat*] this home was now a very crucial moment. You see that's when, when fear you felt, your ship is not just broken the, the key. It's now that all the cables are broken, you don't know where you're going. And, um, yes, that, that is a very, it's a very strong memory. And, er, I, they did, as, as they pacify memories when we arrived and this little nun that welcome us there. She, she was this little thing. Incredible. Very small woman, even for me was, I was a little child but even to children she was small. And the strange things she always, all the nuns in her order that she founded they're all small. I suppose [*laughs*] she didn't like to look up. Even the ones that, er, they have grown up a bit now, one generation later but not much. We sought, er, three of the nuns of those days with my brother and 60 years later and there were sort of little old ladies. And that was fantastic. Really a very, a very fantastic exchange. And they had memories of certain things which they shared with us. And I had memories as well of the same event but told to me by another of those days just put another perspective. It made a 3-D somehow, you see?

[cut for card change]

10:38:03:18

Interviewer

We were just talking before we stopped about the moment that your mother had to gather you up and take you, and that was clearly a very, very traumatic experience for a small child, let alone a smaller child your brother, but maybe he didn't remember it as much as you?

10:38:20:20

Cesare Sacerdoti

Yes it was er. Er, it was leaving home which through the last, the, the last, the previous year had become the only sort of er, safe haven, that hasn't changed at, when you went across the, the front door of the building it was different from what it had been before. So this is what I er, sort of sensation then translated into words when you then left home and you know you're leaving home that, that makes a difference, 'cause you don't know well what else is left? Your mother and your brother. Your father already was hardly there, and he was replace and then he stepped up that you are left just with your brother and that, that was very hard. But leaving home was the, the biggest single event that really um, somehow turned my life, turned my life into a different thing.

10:39:26:11

Interviewer

Very, very traumatic.

10:39:28:08

Cesare Sacerdoti

Yes. I don't know why it has to be so traumatic leaving home more than other events during that period, but the one, I remember leaving home as a very painful experience cause we, we left at sort of er, before it was still daylight when we left. You see like my memories always connected to the light this is the strange thing, it's like when years later we went to the convent and we walked through the corridor of the convent there and I said, 'this is not really how I remember, I said this is all, I said it was sort of green, a green light around here. And so there was a nun who says, "yes it was". He says, "but it was all the tiles were removed and now we have put the panels." It was just incredible. I think light has got a lot of influence on my life.

10:40:26:21

Interviewer

Umm. So, from that moment of getting in the carriage where you, as you said you were a boat that had been cut free of any moorings, you didn't know where you were going, but where did you go?

10:40:38:19

Cesare Sacerdoti

We left home and we went to Via dei Serragli to the convent of the Pio [*Ferraio di*] San Giuseppe where Madre Maria Agnese Tribbioli, who was the founder of this congregation, er, was there waiting for us, and, er, she we arrived there were taken to a, a big room - a dormitory - where there were many other women with their children, and in a corner there was a curtain where a nun was sleeping. And we were integrated straightaway within the life of the convent. The convent was running a kindergarten and nurseries and so on, so we were assigned, I was assigned to Suora Gennarina and, er, my brother to Suora Catherina and they were looking us er-, The mother said will you look after this child and so. And we the mother stayed mainly in the dormitory you hardly ever saw them, and I remembered and one of the nuns remembered that was well when we met them sixty years later that we were taken to mass and there was er, the Cardinal Generale - Monsignor [*Tirupati?*] - who was taking the service, a mass and he was in his sort of er, clerical garment. Er, my brother thought, mistook him for our father cause had similar sort of gears on, so he started calling him, "papa, papa." And the nuns were very embarrassed, but they went. And the other thing that I was into, I was very behaving very well they said, but I wasn't really participating, so one of the nuns we met sixty years later said I went to the mother superior and said this child that doesn't even make the sign of the cross or anything and the mother said, well she says you know, because she told them we were all refugees from area, displaced people from where the war had displaced thousand of people, she says, you know he'll be upset you know, don't press him too much. Because the nun did not know that all those mothers and children were Jews. The mother had not told them because didn't want to put the, her sisters, er, the risk as far as the er, Nazi fascists were concerned, and, er, so you know there was this little woman that always hovering around and this tenderness. It's a, it's something extraordinary to remember - even now as I talk about it - some sort of words, you feel you have been touched by something and follows you all your life it. It's extraordinary. This woman is by, by the way with Catholic Church is going through the process of becoming a saint. So she has already I think gone one or two stages, I don't know exactly what, and er, the interesting thing they asked for my testimony there about what she did. Er, that, that was the convent there. It was a short period because we were only there for three

weeks, but I remember also that event

10:44:11:05

the other, an other sort of funny thing that happened when even my little brother was just running around the dormitory he didn't want to go to bed, and he then he ran into the corner where the nun was, and he put himself under her robe, so we were all embarrassed, and the nun started laughing and everybody laughed and I remember that because the grown up didn't laugh in those days, so it is general laugh it was something that stuck in my mind. Yeah, things that probably don't make much sense to somebody who hears it now, but you have to, if you can, imagine the kind of atmosphere; the heaviness of this dark period there which was incredible. I think a baby must have felt it as well.

10:45:00:22

Interviewer

What's amazing you describe to be touched by kindness?

10:45:04:22

Cesare Sacerdoti

Yes.

[Cut for direction]

10:45:05:22

Interviewer

...having been in such turmoil and the darkness that was surrounding you, to have been touched by such kindness and such light in, in, in so many ways um, has made a lasting impression on your life?

10:45:19:09

Cesare Sacerdoti

Yes I'll never forget Mother, Mother Maria Agnesi as I never forget even the, the other nuns when I went later, er, and when we met the three old nuns it was, one of them I think was a little bit senile but the other two were incredible. One particularly suora Gennarina was a, she had such clear memories of those days. She remembered my father visiting in the evening - 'cause she was often in charge in the evening - he would come in the evening - she was in charge of the gate to answer the bell, like they do in the convent.

10:45:58:12

Interviewer

Um, there was one afternoon that your father came on a bicycle - didn't he - and he explained that you needed to hurry?

10:46:04:00

Cesare Sacerdoti

That, my father came on a bicycle on the twenty-seventh of November when it was

the time to run away er because the convent of the Piazza del Carmine, er, had been raided and fifty women and children were taken. None of them came back from the camps. And [cough], and there was this little boy who - his name was [Elio?] as I knew later - who was hidden by one of nuns under her robes and that's how he, he was not taken, and he then ended up - as I learnt later that it was that boy - in the same orphanage where we went because the Florentine church were working in a tremendous way. Their logistics were incredible. They worked fantastically. They didn't manage to save us all, but they saved a lot of us; and after the raid at this convent my father came because my father was still in touch with the underground er, the committee that was established before - as I have mentioned - was not meeting anymore. Now everything was in the hands of the Cardinal and his lieutenants and so on, amongst which of course Monsigneur [Renigello?] the one that is going to be, has been recognised now as a Righteous Amongst The Nations. So he came and say, well we have to run away, and Mother Maria Agnese had been told as well, and all the while and she used the word dispersed as well. And er, we walked down, my father with his bicycle and we walked with him, and we went down Via Seragli to the Piazza Goldoni just crossing the Arno. At that point my father realised that, er, it was a sort of like a pickup, er, car where there was these er, band of fascists that were called the Banda Carità. They were an infamous group of people. They really had a, they were vicious particularly against Jews and Partisans, but they were really the, the scum of the earth. And er, they um, pointed at my father, so my father realised that they recognise him, because Florence you must realise was no such a metropolis people knew each other. And they, so he jumped on his bicycle to drag them away and he managed to. My mother realised what was going on so she walked back to the middle of the bridge to throw us in the river and throw herself in the river, and luck has it that a, a friend an old Jewish friend who was part of the underground, - Gina [Frilli]- she happens to pass on the bridge at that point and stopped her and took us away to her flat. Er, I remember we had some sweets then, my father must have brought when er, he came to pick us up, and in the rushing away and all this commotion my brother lost his sweet and he started screaming, so my mother gave him my sweets – whatever, it was nothing. These funny little details that you remember are crazy.

10:49:30:17

So from there we went to the flat of Gina, and from there my mother realised that my father must have been captured because you know he ran away they went after him. So she decided to go - it was already getting dark and there was a curfew - to go to the house of a evangelist pastor there, and, er, she went there to see what could be done because he was again, again part of this underground that tried to help people; and he had contact within the, the German, with the German authority or what have you.

10:50:15:10

My father in the meantime had been captured and taken to Villa Triste, which was the headquarters of the, er, German SS and of this Banda Carità. And, er, they tried to question him because they knew he was part of this committee; and er, he didn't answer. They left him in, they took his shoes they took his jacket, just left him in trousers and shirt and they sort of they were pretty rough with him, but he wasn't talking, so they said, well this is a bird who doesn't sing so we'll give him to the SS, and they pass him onto SS in the same building. The SS put him in a waiting room

where there was another man, obviously not a prisoner, and after a while he was kept waiting and waiting every so often, um, a German SS would pass through. At one point my father asked the other man - it was dark by then and he said, well I need to go to the toilet where is the toilet, and the man who must have been probably working for them and not er, not necessarily a fascist or what have you, said why don't you go down in the garden it's dark nobody sees you. So my father went - he had no shoes even on - he went there and he's in the garden. The gate opened and the lorry was going out, so he ran after the lorry and then he kept running and running in the darkness. He got lost, my father had lived all his life in Florence when he stopped he didn't know where he was. He didn't know what to do so he rung the bell at a house. Er, two women were there they let him in. He told them he was an Italian soldier running away from the Germans - inspiration -, and they, the women, the two women were one the mother and the other the wife of an Italian soldier of which they knew nothing. Anyhow they gave him clothing, shoes and an overcoat. Everything fitted him. It just one of those things you don't know what the heck was going. And then from there he found his bearing and they told him where he was, and he went the house of Gina - why he went there nobody knows - when he arrived there he asked, "where-," because he saw us and says, "where is Marcella?" (my mother). And she said, "well she has gone there." She said I must go to her. Says, "you're mad," she says, "you just ran out, you go out now?" He said, "I must go she must be worried," of course you know. So he walked there. He rang the bell and my mother said, "they must have followed me. Now they'll take us all". He said "well," he says, "anyhow we have to open the door." So they met him. Well I was told that it was quite a reunion if you like.

10:53:14:14

Anyhow at that point, er, my father got in touch with Monsignor [*Minagello*], the man we are, whose memories we are celebrating soon, and he organised for er, Dom Facibeni to take us into one of his orphanages - Montecatini we went. And so we spent the night at, er, there, at the friend and then in the morning we were handed over to Dom Facibeni and our parents told me, he says, 'you look after your brother. Er, say your prayer very quietly so that nobody hears it. Be careful not to wee in front of anybody else so that they, they wouldn't see that you're circumcised; and obey the sister where you are going you are going to a place where there will be other children and the sister nuns will look after you, and that was it.

10:54:14:06

So we went and I felt that looking my brother very strongly, but it is something that helped me a lot as well. And so we went to the orphanage where we were there for nine months and it was a, the, the memories of the orphanage, the arrival there, there was a set of nuns which then later on changed and they, for the meals the first few days we were eating with the nuns not with the other children; and we discovered when we were moved to the children that the children ate better than the nuns. But there wasn't much food, was not much of a difference, and of those few, first few months I remember the cold and the hunger which in a way were a blessing because you couldn't think about much else. And there was in the ground of the orphanage a carob tree and you know fruit of the carob but very tough, but they are sweet, the only sweet thing we had so when we could get a carob we were very happy with it.

10:55:20:21

And there was a little episode that happened there which was incredible. The, er, caretaker of the place, of this villa which had been given to the padre, er, to use it as an orphanage he was fattening up a pig for later on in the year to be eaten by everybody, and nearby there was a station of the Wehrmacht who came and confiscated a pig, There was a chaplain of the Wehrmacht who was just in, in the er, what do you call it, I think the [*sanitikorps*] which he, he was not an officer and he had taken to er, the orphanage if you like under his wing and he brought us bread and things like that - that horrible German bread which was still would fill you up so it was something. And so he managed to intervene, and the pig was returned to the orphanage and was killed straightaway and not to wait that he fattens up before they change their mind.

10:56:26:10

And after the war for the first time, but many years later, I was going to Montecatini with my wife for the exhibition of an artist friend of mine, and when we arrived there it was early so I said, "well I'd like to try and go and see where the orphanage is. To see just the building from the outside." Anyhow, we got lost because I hadn't been to Montecatini anyhow as a child I didn't know it, not that it's such a big place, but with all these roundabout everywhere. I see a man standing in front of his, in the garden of his house, so I stopped there. This man without an arm, and I ask him, I says, "look during the war there was a place where there was the orphanage of the Maddonina del Grappa," and so on. He said, "oh yes I know where it was." He says, "yes", he says, "you have to go here" and so and so and so. He says, "they'll tell you that it is this villa, which is where you're, you're going now," because we told him where we we're going, "It's not that villa. That villa is now the library but was not the orphanage. The orphanage is where there is now an old people's home." And I said, "oh, you seem to know it very well?" And he said - so he said - "were you there?" I says, "well", I says, "you know I was there in the war" and I told, he said, um - and I told him the episode of the pig. Well, as a young man he's the one who killed the blessed pig! They called him in to kill the pig. You know the coincidences in life are just incredible, absolutely incredible. Anyhow, when we went there, after that we went to the exhibition we went to the villa, and it was this, er, old people's home. It was different, you know all built around there, we found an entrance we go there and so they say, well what do you want? So I told them what it was, and I said, 'but there is no ground?' He says, "well, no I mean everything is built around here now," and I told him you know what it was and there was a chapel and so on, I said, "but I can't find my bearings here. Can I go around I just want to?" So they took me where there was a main staircase and I said, "oh yes now I can find my bearings." I said - allowed me to go upstairs. "There it was where the refectory where we ate and," I said, "and there the chapel", I said, but it was not where the chapel was, I said, "the chapel was there", and I directed them. "Oh," he says, "that's where the staff room is now, that's why there are frescoes in there." So it was quite an extraordinary visit as well. It's a very strange when you try to go back in time, sort of strange things, but I recognise, the place. In fact my wife was with me and by my description she could recognise the place as well.

[Cut for card change]

10:59:16:05

Interviewer

Um, reliving your memories of going back to the orphanage is incredible. So interesting to hear that, but just before that - and we'll talk about the orphanage again in a minute - um, you described almost a moment of passion, of your father just desperately find your mother and just the coincidences and the chances of being able to, to meet each other. But just before that, you talked about a moment of total desperation in your mother's life, where she took her two sons to a bridge. Do you remember that?

10:59:50:20

Cesare Sacerdoti

Oh yes. I remember it. I believe that my mother love us a lot. Yeah. But you know, um, I think what basically happening at that time I, I have sort of had conversations with survivors that were taken to the camps and came back. The time when you're running away, er, you can divide, if you like, different stages. When you're running away, is, is a different kind of drama than when you're caught. In fact, even my father - the short period that he was captured and kept - he said that in a way he was worried about us, but he felt well now I'm caught, I can stop running. It's a, it sounds like a crazy way to look at things, but the drama of running all the time is, er, I'm not trying to, to say that when you are caught and you go to the camp, it's, it's a picnic. Don't get me wrong, but the running continuously, it's extenuating really, and I think my father-, my mother felt that this is the end. Now he has been caught, they will capture us, I want to end it this way. I don't want another stage. And I thought about that a lot of times. I say, how can a mother do it? But I thought, I would do the same as a father in a situation similar today. Er. Although, you know, er, my father wouldn't have done. My father was a man of faith and he, he always said in any situation, God will provide. My mother was much more with her feet on the ground.

11:01:50:18

Interviewer

And I'm sorry to ask again, because it must be a very, very painful memory but to be in the middle of a bridge with your mother who is panic-stricken, what did she tell you that she was going to do? What, what, what, what were you thinking? Can you remember that?

11:02:04:08

Cesare Sacerdoti

My mother didn't say anything to us and if she was panic-stricken, she didn't show it because I can visualize her with my brother like that and she was, and it was almost like a cold decision. That's the impression I have of that, and I saw a different mother. Like when I think back, how could she do it? How she had the courage. Because I say, how could she have the courage because I - reasoning - I think I would have done the same, or I would have tried to do the same; if I would have had the courage, I don't know. She had it. And I admire her all my life for that because she wanted to save us from something that she knew was terrible. because when people tell us or tell you or whoever, well one didn't know what it was. Rubbish. People knew what was going on and how they knew it. People prefer not to talk about it. It's like when you have antisemitic episode today, people look the other way. They don't want to know. What's going on in [Oslo?]. What happened there, they, they woke up. People turn the other way. It's, and it's happening every day, everywhere, and even today, is an escalation, continuously. All the signs are there.

People wake up.

11:03:30:07

Interviewer

By absolute chance, your family friend came and changed the course of your life. Um, you've explained then what happened, er, that your father was taken, and he was captured for a while and that you were then taken to the orphanage. Um, can you, again, it's another incredibly painful memory, but you were given a great deal of responsibility as the elder brother. Do you remember your parents explaining to you why you were in an orphanage, where they were going, what that meant in terms of your responsibility and what you had to do?

11:04:01:22

Cesare Sacerdoti

When my parents told me and my brother, my brother was very young, maybe two and a half, you know. It's nothing. It was, we basically understood it. I did. I mean, my brother I don't know. But I understood the situation. Not that I could have basically explained it to you, at the time, but I knew that we are running, and we had to hide cause there were people that wanted to get us and they, they wanted to harm us. That was quite clear. It's not, um, in that respect, er, I don't know how we were told that people were, but we knew. We were aware of it. We were aware that we had to hide, that we had to disperse, that, that there was an awareness of, which I can't describe in, in, in precise words, but we knew it. And to look after my brother, I just got the message and that was it. And when we were in the, er, orphanage, sometimes I would keep some of my food to give him. There were small things like that. If I had a carob I would give him the bigger piece. Things of that kind. Looking after was, you know, the nuns were looking after us. There was, everything was missing there. Warmth and food but they gave us a lot of different kinds of warmth. They were fantastic. The second lot of nuns, they were missionary nuns and the priest, a missionary priest as well, were looking after us and the other children there. After the war, the priest came to the Jewish school where I was after the war to say good-bye to us because he was going to a mission somewhere in Africa, you know, and I don't remember, I don't know the name of these people. Many of the people who were in our life at that time and were wonderful, to me they are just, er, ethereal figures of which I don't know the name even, but they are alive still within my memory.

[Cut for sound]

11:06:08:24

Interviewer

It's extraordinary that such a young child should feel so much responsibility, and so much pain. You'd been an incredibly loving, close family and suddenly you were dispersed, as you said. Um, did you see your parents while you were in the orphanage? What contact did you have? And how did you miss them?

11:06:27:02

Cesare Sacerdoti

My mother came to see us once. She had, er, her hair was dyed. She was heavily made up. When she arrived it was very unsettling. I, I did not really appreciate her

visit because her, you, you were trying to, I think it must have been, I don't know, just trying to, seeking stability and you had found some kind of stability with the nuns, I don't know - and she came, and it was quite clear also that she was going to go again. So what's the point somehow. I mean, I, I'm expressing now what I, the memory of my feelings which is, you know, how to, to, and it was not, was not a happy encounter as far as I was concerned. My little brother, I don't know what he felt at that time. I just [*coughs*]. He was always trying to be with me, you know. The moment we were away from our parents, he just wanted to be, he was my shadow. I mean, all the time, so it was, and I wanted him with me - that was it. Once I remember I was 12 and I was in the dormitory because I had a temperature or something, and I was, er, looking for my brother all the time and the nuns kept coming I mean, and telling me, he's alright, don't worry, we'll send him to see you and so on. And, um, but it was - to me - it was to look after him. But I imagine also it was the last little bit of my recent past with me. You know, it was, it's hard to explain, I don't know.

11:08:09:21

Interviewer

You have gone on to become a father of four, and you can only imagine how painful it would have been for your parents to leave you in that orphanage. It was the ultimate sign of love in many ways, wasn't it? To, to give you that sanctuary?

11:08:24:12

Cesare Sacerdoti

Yes, well, I have thought about that but of course at that time you had to think of preserve life and then that was the early so far amount and you knew that, you know, any, whatever they were doing, they were trying to preserve lives. And the event, and the environment, which was outside for many reasons, you know, hunger and cold as well, just-, it's make you, make you feel in a certain way that you just know that it's being done for your good somehow. But when I saw my mother, that sort, when she came to see us, that was something that I did not really like.

11:09:08:08

Interviewer

For her I'm sure it was a great comfort just to at least see that you and your brother were okay.

[cut for sound]

11:10:38:02

Interviewer

Um, [*clears throat*] Liberation. What happened? You'd been through a huge trauma as a very young child and suddenly you had a chance to be reunited with your parents.

11:10:51:11

Cesar Sacerdoti

In the last month I think at the orphanage I came out with a terrible plagues on my head, and, er, you know, they, they couldn't do much at the orphanage. Anyhow, the time had come that Florence was liberated in August 1944. My parents, who were

then by that time reunited in Florence, they were united before the liberation. In fact they joined the partisans together. Er, where my father was just a courier taking orders because time flies which was crazy but, lots of crazy things in those days. Anyhow they managed to organize for the, some soldiers of the Palestine Brigade Water Company - part of the British Army - which had arrived in Florence, to come and pick us up at the orphanage to take us back to Florence. And they came with this lorry, er, full of food which they left at the orphanage, and they took my brother and I and confirming my impression, Elio the other boy that I had identified as a Jewish boy. And we went back to Florence, and we were united, and I wasn't well. My, my plague was not a joke, a serious illness. It's something, I don't know what it's called in English, but it's called tinea, something that cats get, I mean, probably due to malnutrition, I don't know.

11:12:30:03

And we were united. Our apartment was still, er, was not available for us - to give it back to us - and we were housed in some rooms in the complex of the synagogue, but I was there for a very brief time, a matter of days, because then I was taken into hospital where I was to have my head - the plague on my head - to be seen to. And, er, the hospital was in the old hospital of, um, Santa Maria Nuova which is built in the Medician days so is not a, these huge wards and high ceilings and again not of light though. Rather in spite of the tall windows which are like almost an artist's studio, there was no much light. And I was in a man's ward, there were no children's wards there. After the war everything was so improvised, if you like. And there I was treated for my plague on the head. Again, away from the family, my mother, my father particularly, my mother of course was there as much as she could but was not the same thing. So it was not even like being at the orphanage where it was more of a routine. Another interruption. No stability again. What's happening next? I was, at the end of it, I was only a little boy of six. You know, is not, six and a half I mean, it's not much. And It was a very hard time but somehow the fact that the contact with my mother and the family was there, was a very hard time physically because there were no antibiotics available very easily, it was just the beginning of it. So um, the only thing they could do for me, they decided was application of ultraviolet ray, and the hair should fall, and whatever caused the plagues should die. And they said, you know, most likely he'll be as bald as the palm of your hand, but you know, that was nothing compared to it. Instead my hair grew again, I'm getting bald now though. And the application of the ultraviolet rays were done and then they hair didn't fall, and they had to pull it. It was very, that was very, very painful. And funnily enough, just a few days ago, this memory came back, and I was writing, I'm writing a diary, the memory of these bits of the hospital because it, it sort of came afloat again, how these men, because they were all grown-up men, I was the only child in this ward, were so... not very, er, they were not easy. They found it embarrassing to have this child there, but they were very warm. They tried to comfort me. In fact after a certain period there I was transferred to a women's ward, and I was very unhappy there. I asked to go back to the men, and they moved me back to the men and then finally my treatment, and I don't even remember how long it lasted, and I was back with the family, and we moved back to our old apartment with hardly any furniture, they had stolen everything.

11:15:55:22

And that's where we started to have, to take in with us survivors from the camp. We started with two brothers, er, Israel and [Hillel?], and then er, two other sisters, not related or known to them. The two sisters stayed a very short period of time with us, then they went on [Aliyah?] to Israel. And the two brothers stayed much longer with us. And one of the two brothers - both of them - they tried to see if they could find a member of their family, but they couldn't find any member of the family. They were a big family, but they were all exterminated. They were the only two survivors of that family. And, er, [Hillel?], the older one of the two, managed though to find in Florence, because Florence somehow seems to have been a place where people are passing through or coming. It was during the war when people were escaping, and after the war as well. I don't know why. And he managed to trace a girl who was engaged to him before the war. And he asked if he could bring her as well, and she had a sister. Renia was the girl and, er, er, [coughs] the sister was called Sisle and so he married his, er, fiancée and his brother married the sister. And the wedding took place in, the two weddings, took place in our house. My father was one of the rabbis officiating the, the marriage and, um, they had a, the first couple had a baby, er, her name was, er, [Eustachia?]. Then they got into trouble with the, er, occupation authority, the American authority, because, er, they had managed somehow to preserve a pocket watch. How they did it, going through the camps, they only know. And they sold this watch and then they started to do black market with, er, currencies. You know, there was the occupation currency and all sorts of things. And they were caught, and they were arrested. My father managed to have them released, and they were released, and they gave back their capital on the understanding that they would leave Italy. So they emigrated to Brazil. And here I'll tell you a little thing that happened which, again, with your synchronicity, you'll go mad about it. They went to Brazil and once when I was in the merchant marine, I sailed to Brazil, they came to meet me, then they came to Italy to see my parents many times in the course of the years. But besides that, my oldest son Simon, who is a corporate finance accountant, he was in a transaction and on the other side there was a young solicitor, and this young solicitor asked him, he said, 'Sacerdoti? have you got relations in Florence?' He said, 'oh I don't have relations in Florence, my father is from Florence.' So this young solicitor was the granddaughter of the people we took into our house, the one who was born. So I had photographs of me holding, me as a little child, holding her mother as a baby. So I sent him photographs of that. So you see all this sort of crossing in life. It's, er, just incredible.

11:19:35:16

Er, going back to the liberation, it was, er, it was an incredible time. Er, our house was a meeting point as well for the soldiers of the Palestine Brigade of the Water Company, that used to come, many met Italian girls, Italian Jewish girls, and many got married and they managed to take them back to Palestine - as it still was then. And we kept contacts with them for all the time. Now I've lost contact with the following generation. And, er, my father also, he was, er, a rabbi but he was a cellist as well, and he used to play at the Jewish soldiers' club there, because there was Jewish soldiers, some there in the British Army proper and some were instead of the Palestine Brigade, and I remember he took me in the evening with him sometimes. I remember the first time I ate rice again, something I didn't know what it was. I didn't know about it. I didn't remember. My first piece of chocolate and other things at the school which was reopened - the primary school - by two of the soldiers of the Palestine Brigade, and they were giving us on, er, Friday there was a celebration of

[?], the beginning of Shabbat. And then they would give us like sort of going home presents which were basically soap and things that were of practical use - because you know, soap during the war was quite a rare commodity, just washed with what. You were lucky if you had that. And, um, the other thing I remember at that time, they always gave us porridge, which I couldn't stand, you know, British Army porridge, the Palestinian has, those were real Palestinians, they had adopted it, and I couldn't stand porridge, as much as was filling but, um, by that time I had, I was spoiled again. I could be choosy about my food.

11:21:40:18

And we had a very happy time with, um, they were singing and, er, with them all the time, it was like the early living part of your life like in a kibbutz of that time. And my father and my uncle, they were back ministers in the congregation, unfortunately the rabbi that was before the war had been killed during the war. And um, we tried, my mother very actively tried to see whether we could go to Israel on a British certificate, and she would have been even prepared to go on the clandestine, but my father felt that, you know, he had to be there as a minister to reconstruct the community. And in fact he always had an, an adoration for his teachers. And Rabbi Prato, who was a chief rabbi in Rome said, you know, there are now enough Jews in Viareggio, and they need a rabbi you should go there. So he went there. I didn't follow them straightaway. I was left to finish the, er, my primary school at the Jewish school. And I resented it because getting split from the family again, But I think it was the right thing, cause it helped me to reconsolidate my identity really. Er, er, it was good.

11:23:13:07

Interviewer

Um, thank you for telling me all of that 'cause that's answered the next few questions I had but I just want to just, um, pick up on some notes that I had about when your family was reunited. You've said in the past it was like a new world, it was like an, a euphoria, that time had stopped still.

11:23:29:16

Cesar Sacerdoti

When, er, when my, even when I, before I went into hospital, the atmosphere was an atmosphere of joy, er, of liberation, literally, you know. It was not just a way to describe what had happened. The allied forces had arrived. But was a liberation from all sorts of things and you can breathe it in the air really. And the, [coughs] in the ground of the synagogue, because there were other, other families which had been housed in what were the offices, the offices had to do without the offices if you like. Er, it was children playing there and so on. One of my cousins unfortunately was killed, run over by a lorry there and this was a cousin whose father was, er, taken to the camp and died, and my auntie had these two daughters left then after he died. But they, let's talk about the happy side of it. This sense of liberation, and there was, the call, the belief that now it's over and everything is going to be good. We're going to build a wonderful world. And, er, people were more trusting. There was generosity that was expressed in, in all sorts of ways. People had little or nothing because there was nothing there at that time. We took in at one stage, when the, er, two brothers with the wives - the Polish survivors - left us, we took in, there were Rabbi [Mashier?] with his family. One was, er, his mother who was an old lady, Nonna Gigia we called her. She was there always sewing up the poor clothes we had, mending them up.

And I remember one day my father came, 'oh I managed to get [*coughs*] a whole bale of chestnut flours'. So for the period it lasted we lived on that. Because there was a shortage of everything. And we shared with the family, we shared with the family [*Mashier?*] And when there was something like that to eat, other people would be invited. People were, were like I have never seen them after that. They, it was a people had seen evil, and you knew what it was, and now this was, they knew that goodness was what mattered, and the world had to be constructed and built over with that. And during that time that we were there, my father used to take me to Monsignor [*Menigello*] because they had become friends for life and every time we'd go and see him, he says, well, you know, this man is a real angel. Without him, us and many other Jews wouldn't be alive. I found records from wartime in my research that I have found out, he helped about 400 Jews and then some probably of their dependents. So we say, we say who saves, who saves a life saves a universe. Well, I think he has saved a few galaxies really. It's incredible what he and his cardinal and his colleagues, I mean the whole thing, and that's what I wish that would be more come to the fore. You see, now you only hear about the Catholic church when there is something bad about it, but they still do a lot of good. I can see that. I'm not condoning the bad, but for goodness sake, look at the good. Glorify that. That's what has to come out. With all the media there is today, now the media and social media are already used for evil purposes. I'm not being to say you shouldn't have it. No. It's wonderful. This technology is giving us the possibility - like these testimonies going to be done in 3D, 50D, whatever it is - so that future generations, not just mine, but others, can see it - and more important one - but no, it's not applied to that. All the symptoms are that unfortunately like radio was mastered by Goebbels and Mussolini. Now it's being used the wrong way.

11:27:45:18

Interviewer

Thank you very much. Um, a few more questions. Your father. Every time you talk about him, you are emotional. He sounded like an amazing man.

11:27:57:13

Cesar Sacerdoti

He was. My mother as well, but, well, a great couple because my mother, my father was not a very practical man. You know, when [*coughs*] from Viareggio then later on his teacher, one of his teacher in Livorno said I need help. So he went for the interview. When he came back to Viareggio he said to my mother, 'I have accepted the job my, you know, Rabbi [?]. She said, 'Yes? How much are they going to pay? 'Oh, I didn't ask.' That was my father. So my mother had her feet on the ground. She had to. She had, somebody had to. She was a very sweet woman, but my father was a, you know, I, I do feel emotional about him as I-, my mother relationship is more private. My father was, um, more public because he was a very open, er, man, about his feelings as well. My, my mother was more reserved in that respect. Not with us. Then she was, with us she was very warm. [*Coughs*]

[Cut for card change]

11:29:04:00

Interviewer

We're going to fast forward now because of your voice and because you've spoken

so beautifully about so many things and just a few general questions and about Judith. You met her in Florence?

11:29:18:11

Cesare Sacerdoti

In Florence. She was at a school studying Italian and Art and Art History and then my sister-in-law, my brother's wife, she was teaching Italian there and there was a ball at the end of the year and my brother said, "Well," he said, "you must come to the ball there". I said, "Why do you want me to come? They are kids. They are 16. I mean it's not really," She's 10 years younger than I. And he say, "No, come on otherwise I'll be bored". I said, "Alright, I'll come along". So I went, we met, so we started going out and then she went back to, she came back to England, and we wrote to each other for a while but never making up our mind about anything [*Laughs*]. Then, er, three years later - or two and a half years later - I said, "well, I'm coming to London, we'll decide". So I came and after a fortnight I was here I said "Alright, let's get married." So went back to Italy and then one thing and another so anyway we got married and came to live here.

11:30:32:14

Interviewer

How many years have you been married?

11:30:34:23

Cesare Sacerdoti

1967, so a few years.

11:30:38:04

Interviewer

A long time. That's amazing. It's a beautiful story. Um your father's principles, his passion, his warmth has clearly filtered through to your life, and family has become extremely important to you. You've got a large family: four children, eight grandchildren so far. That in a way is compensation for your split family earlier on in your life. Do you see it like that?

11:31:06:20

Cesare Sacerdoti

No I don't see it like that. You can't replace anything. Something like that you missed and that's it. You can't replace it.

11:31:15:01

Interviewer

But do you think family has become important to you because it was so difficult earlier on?

11:31:20:01

Cesare Sacerdoti

No, I don't think. I think it would have been important all the same. My, we were important to my parents without my parents having gone through anything like that. No, no, no,.. I think that is a separate. I think if you have got it it transmits it to you and it's a question of values. If you can manage to pass values from one generation

to the other that's basically, and then life of course. But I don't think that's what frankly, I think that if anything was more likely to have distorted it.

11:31:56:21

Interviewer

At the beginning of our interview you talked about the fact that you didn't talk for about 60 years?

11:32:02:11

Cesare Sacerdoti

Yes, it's not that I was, I say what would you do. I would mention but not talking extensively about it, no.

11:32:08:11

Interviewer

So now that you have started to talk, how much of your experience do you share with your grandchildren for instance? I know some of them are very, very young but do you plan to tell them about what happened to you?

11:32:19:20

Cesare Sacerdoti

Yes, with the older one has been more than that. I have been telling 'cos they ask me. Cos they hear about it. They are told what, they are told what they can grasp now, according to his and I went to talk first to the school of one of them when she was nine. So they were young. Then I've been to South Hampstead High. They must have been 12 or thereabouts at the schools in their class. So, and of course one talks about it at home. No, now it's something important.

11:32:55:09

One has to talk about it. It's not a question of the personal aspect of it is finished. It's a question of trying to transmit and learn, and to transmit the values. Values is what's important. That's what is being lost now in, in Europe not just, being lost completely. There is not identifying with it.

11:33:18:23

Interviewer

Can you tell me a little bit about your career, and do you think your career was impacted by your early experiences?

11:33:27:12

Cesare Sacerdoti

I mean the jobs I have done in my life?

11:33:28:13

Interviewer

Yeah.

11:33:29:07

Cesare Sacerdoti

I've done a lot of things [*Laughs*] Er, I started to be in the merchant marine and, er, once I finished my studies and I went to sea, after one year at sea, I realized that it wasn't for me. I love the sea, but you can't take your family with you, you see. That's where it came. And I saw there, I was the youngest officer of course, the fourth mate really, and the one that people would come if they had a problem because they are less embarrassed. And also I was in charge of the infirmary for poor things, they didn't need it's just luck. And people had worried, the wife was pregnant, going to have a child and they were not there so I realized wasn't for me. So I went er, I say fine. So I went back to university, I went to university to study Economics and at the same time I worked at Alitalia just as a job to keep myself going and then out of that, then I stayed quite a few years in the airline. I worked for El Al then in Milan and so on. Then after that I said well I had to do my national service which had been postponed, you could do. So I went into the Navy this time. So I became an officer in the Navy. I was there two years and, er, after that I just started working in, in industry – clothing industry - and then after that I, when I came to England I first work in Bata - with Russia. After that in retailing, jewellery retailing and I opened about 100 shops - not for me, for a company; and after that I did not really like it. I left and we'll see what I'll do, and my wife said, "you must do something about books. That's where you spend all your spare time." So I thought, "Well nice book, it is happy with my friend who was my solicitor as well at that time and he said, "Oh strange I know but before you do anything you must speak with a friend of mine who's a bookseller that was Harry Karnac . So he arranged for us to meet, and I went to see him in the shop in South Kensington across the road. I went there, we go in the back of this weeny shop, a little room full of smoke cos he was smoking like a chimney. I join him, I was a terrible smoker as well. The whole place was like the fog, and we talked, we talked, we talked. And then at one point I said, "Well, we must go and eat some lunch". I said, "but we haven't talked about book selling." He said, "We haven't talked about anything else, we talked about books". I saw there he had some books in his office. He had some books some special edition on Joyce, so I said, "Oh, that's fantastic," I said, "where did you get that?". And [*coughs*] he said, "Joyce is one of my passion" - and so it is of mine. So we stopped going out eat and we starting talking about Joyce and *Ulysses* and that's how-, then he told me that he had this specialization in the shop which was psychoanalysis. And that was in the basement, so we went there, and I saw it. I was in heaven and another thing. So we had immediately we had so many things in common and I said to him, just when we are saying goodbye, I said, "What a shame you're not selling your business". He said, "Well I am selling my business but I've already agreed a deal with Blackwell." I said, "You can't sell to Blackwell, you have to sell to me." So he said, "Oh, it's all agreed now, I can't do it." So I said, "Well let's keep in touch". So anyhow we had become, in those hours, we really had a tune. And one day he said, "You still want my business?" I said, "You know I want it!". He said, "They have pissed me off." [*Laughs*]. Harry was very blunt speaking. "They had a board meeting, one thing and another," he says, "I had enough". He says, "If you want let's go to the solicitor and do it." So of course, the solicitor who performed the marriage was my friend who had, er, suggested a meeting. And everybody in the book trade thought we would be at each other's throat in no time because he was - they reckon - a difficult character. But they hadn't basically reckoned with me. We became very good friends and he had done a few repeats of all psychoanalytic texts. I said to him, "I want to publish originals". So I said, "You stay with me," he says "OK if you want me". And I said if we must open

another shop in the heart of shrink land. We must open around Swiss Cottage, and we opened a shop there which again, er, was a dentist equipment showroom. As it happens the owner of that company was a fellow that when we were going on holiday in Rimini was always at The Grand Hotel, so I knew him. So I managed to get the lease from him, and he moved out and we opened there. And I started publishing. The first book was a book by Francis [*Stasisonofis?*] and er and I managed to sell the American rights to Yale. Second book by Freeman, I sell the American rights to Yale. I thought publishing is a piece of cake. It wasn't quite like that after that, but I had perhaps a different approach. I had no experience. Harry said, "I don't know anything about publishing", he says, "I'm a book seller" but he was a heck of a bookseller. He was a member of the bookman club. There's only a 100 members at any time. And from there on we published over 300,000. And I enjoyed every minute of it and even now I get authors sending me manuscripts, or what do you think of that or the other. And I have, I still am involved, just as an interest but I withdrew a little bit from everything, but they were kind enough to make me an Associate Member of the British Psychological Society.

[cut for card change]

11:40:10:13

Interviewer

We are approaching the end of this time. I feel that we could talk to you for hours because you have so many memories to share and you're so open with your feelings. Um, but I wanted to ask you now about how you feel, having given your testimony in this way?

11:40:30:03

Cesare Sacerdoti

Well, I did not talk about my experience for many years but since we started to talk about it I don't go, I don't put myself out to talk about it but when I'm caught in talking about it I could carry on forever because it's this obsession with remembering and not forgetting. So I am happy I did it. What will be the use of it, I don't know. I am very sceptical about humankind. Having seen what happened after the war and the way it looked and the way it is now, I'm not an optimist. I think humankind is not a, in that I have the same pessimism as Freud had, about the human condition. It's not, yeah, I don't think we improve very much. When it looks to improve somewhere, somewhere else we do horrible things that you can't believe. And it's all very well to put it to some mental problem of the individual or individuals but today, you have people that are chopping heads and sort of parade it like this woman that has done it recently. It's not really, what are we doing about it? Where is the human being? Is he better than he was in the homo sapiens? I doubt. I don't really think so, but I hope that at least this testimony and the one from all the other survivors will help at least to remember something that for a few people - the good people, - which would always exist. In that respect I know that goodness is there all the time. It's just that to prevail always need to be taken to the extreme and that is bad. Why should it be like that. Man has managed with technology to do incredible things. The means of communication today are infinite, but we don't communicate anymore. What's going on? Something is wrong somewhere; and so I'm happy I'm doing things and I hope that basically some good will come out of it.

11:43:01:04

There are people in my life that have made not a lot of impression on the way I feel and the way I am perhaps. My parents certainly had a lot to do with the way I am. And I have often a dialogue still with them. What would my father have said, or what have my mother said, about it and sometimes I laugh with them. It's normal as I do with a particular friend Vittorio [*Lampronti* ?] He was, is my oldest friend. We became friends soon after the war. He died, unfortunately early sixty of cancer and often I think he had a great sense of humour. And often when I'm in a situation I think what you have said about that. So, he was a very good man. He was a doctor who forgot to charge patients all the time. I mean he was incredible man. So there are people that are exceptional, and I had the good fortune to meet them and some of them to be more than just meeting them along. I was touched as I told you. I was exposed to some of them coming very close to me. Of course my parents, brother Vittorio - the one who's now dead - we had a very special relationship. The sort of non-verbalised bond that was forming to us over years you can't repeat it. There is not a born thing that can simulate that. It just happens or it doesn't. My other brother, we are very close. Of course then in my other life my wife has been and is, she's unique - to me of course. And the children are very important to me and the grandchildren. The grandchildren are now showing me things that when I was young I was too much in a rush to know this. Now I have the time and they are teaching me a lot. It's incredible what you can learn from a toddler. They are absolutely amazing.

[cut for camera]

11:45:13:08

Interviewer

And my last question is about thanks apart from, my last question is about thanks. Obviously I'm incredibly grateful to you for the time that you've spent with us today, but it strikes me in your older life you have done what you can to thank the people whether it's in Yad Vashem or in person by going back and visiting places. The people who saved your life along the way, and that of your family. But there are people who will never have a chance to thank; who are lost and how important it might be now to say something about them and what they did in your life?

11:45:54:14

Cesare Sacerdoti

It is important. I am happy to have the opportunity to remember. People, some of them that I don't even know their name, I never will. When my father stopped at that house, he tried, after the war to find these two women. He could never find them again. He just wondered if they existed. I don't know, there's some certain things in life that are like that. Some of the nuns that were in the orphanage and the priest that I didn't know the name. They are people that I want to thank now, and I want to say it quite firmly. I still remember them. I'm grateful still and I remember them. There is hardly a period of more than a few days that I don't think of these people. All of them. The one I've mentioned and the one that I can't mention 'cos I don't know their name.

11:46:54:19

And other people that I have met even in ordinary life, in other life. Even people like Harry Karnac that I mentioned, quite an extraordinary human being. And many

others who had certainly an effect in the way I have felt about the past, and consequently the way that I have behaved in the future, and I do now. But when you get old you start to reflect too much, and you become - or at least in my case - a little bit sceptical about yourself. If not about other people. Other people you can see, and you certainly try to see the virtues or the [best?] characteristics if they are there. But about yourself you feel just that, you're at the end of it, I mean you know, approaching it. What has been all about? And the only thing that puts me back is the curiosity. Curiosity for certain things, and the curiosity is stimulated by values. Values are what keeps human being going and if the values are good, what I find today it is extremely important to me, it's the value of Judaism. And, in a peculiar way, said with my foreign accent the value of Britishness. They are great, irrational as much as the world of Judaism, but they are great, and they must be preserved. Preserving in an alive way, not in a dead way. To be proud of them. I have adopted them, and I can't really see how can be rejected and how people try to basically be so understanding in a mistaken way so that they forget their own Britishness, or their Jewishness. Be yourself. And if you adopt something it's just to grow but don't reject your past. To take something and to try to be so clever to say, "Well that kind of culture is different, I have to behave differently." No be yourself all the time. The people that saved me and my family, they basically were themselves. They didn't play anything. They were very rooted in their belief, in their principle, in their values and they lead by them.

11:49:31:21

Interviewer

Is there anything that you would like to say to me about this process at the end of this. We are at the end of the interview; we just need to authentic your testimony and look at a few documents that you've brought but this is the end of our interview. Is there anything that you would like to say about this experience?

11:49:49:14

Cesare Sacerdoti

Experience of being in this interview has been, not from the moment I think, kept people in touch and then came with Paul and Lucille to our house, I have found it very pleasant. In fact I was telling Catherine – joking - you should all being open an old peoples home. You have got wonderful bedside manner. But there is a genuineness in what you're all doing here which one can feel and you couldn't fool me, believe me [Laughs] of that. It is a very pleasant experience and if I can, and that will come through In what you're doing I'm sure. So let's hope it will get the right exposure so that you will be touching somebody like I've been touched. Because the fact that you are involved in this project I don't think it just a job. Something that you must feel.

11:50:47:19

Interviewer

Absolutely.

ARTEFACTS

ARTEFACT 1: scan of a photograph of Cesare Sacerdoti's parents' wedding in Florence

11:50:54:01

Cesare Sacerdoti

This is a photograph of my parents' wedding [...] just outside the great synagogue in Florence and you can see here one particularly [...] on the right of my mother, in full fascist gear with a fez, which was a whole uniform, and there, there is another fez you can see in the background and a few black shirts because to dress like a – a fascist uniform was like putting on a morning coat, or a dinner jacket. In those days - it was nineteen thirty-six - there was no problem with the Jews and if there was something that started to simmer, well it was not people – the Jews had lived in there forever. You know, the racial law stated that the beginning they excuse they said since the Lombard invasion there has been a stabilising of the Italian race, well I'm sorry to disturb but my family arrived there in the days of Pompey the Great before Christ so what do you want from me? Now all of a sudden I'm not an Italian anymore?

ARTEFACT 2: Cesare Sacerdoti's birth certificate

11:52:03:11

Cesare Sacerdoti o/o/v

Well this is my birth certificate clearly describing er here: 'Sacerdoti Cesare di Simone appartiene alta razza Ebraica come de partecipazione del Comune d'Firenze' and so and so on [...] all the Jews were obliged to go to the town hall and register as Jews and it was marked in all their documents [...] You couldn't have a passport, you couldn't anything it was marked in there and that is a copy that until, er, a few years ago you could get because it was something that you had then the bureaucracy to present to apply for a pension or something if you had been persecuted.

Cesare Sacerdoti iv

Now they don't request it anymore. It has taken seventy years before they eliminated that it doesn't need to be stated, but like er in other things, I mean, the fascist fear has left some impression that will take still another generation to wipe out. And is starting again.

ARTEFACT 3: Cesare Sacerdoti with his mother at the age of 'about two or so'

11:53:15:08

Cesare Sacerdoti o/o/v

This is me with my mother not long er before the war so I must have been about, I don't know, about two or so. I had long hair.

ARTEFACT 4: scan of a photograph of Cesare Sacerdoti, his mother and younger brother on 27 June 1942

11:53:27:24

Cesare Sacerdoti o/o/v

In my mother's handwriting here said 'Tonfano, twenty-seventh of June nineteen four – nineteen hundred and forty-two' and here is my mother with my little brother on her right and me on her left er on the seaside. This was the one morning that we could go to the beach, [...] the late afternoon of that day we were told we were not allowed to be on the seaside because we were Jews and we-, says either we go voluntarily for Florence or we'll take you this was done by a very kind carabinieri because he could of just come and taken us, instead he came go otherwise I have to do it.

ARTEFACT 5: scan of a photograph of children playing in the grounds of a

villa

11:54:08:24

Cesare Sacerdoti o/o/v

this photograph [...] can see some youngsters erm playing, erm, in some ground, the grounds are the ground of a villa which were near Florence which er is called La Pietra and, er, with the racial law we couldn't go anywhere on seaside resort or anywhere. Really y-you couldn't go. You could try theoretically to apply for an [?] visa but they always refuse it, so I didn't. So like for the schools children were gradually precluded from going to a state school. First thing they that one special class for the Jewish children then they kick out of university all the professors, and they let some er of the students finish their course, then all the teachers from Jewish schools, then the children. So the Jews organise their own schools. In fact, they were very good schools because many of them had university lecturers to teach children [*laughs*] and this was a summer camp, that was held in this villa in those periods where you couldn't go anywhere else.

ARTEFACT 6: scan of the orphanage where Cesare Sacerdoti and his brother were hidden

11:55:20:22

Cesare Sacerdoti

That is a photograph of the orphanage. The man in the middle is a Wehrmacht chaplain who had taken [...] a liking to the er orphanage he was looking, sort of tried to make our life a bit easier. I am the right on the top, on the right-hand side, and my brother is on the left-hand of the chaplain eating something because he – this chapel [*sic.*] - has brought something special for him.

ARTEFACT 7: scan of a photo of Cesare Sacerdoti's father playing his cello

11:55:50:08

Cesare Sacerdoti iv

This is my father playing cello, but it was just posing for a photograph obviously, with er the Jewish er soldiers club which was somewhere from Palestine others from England and he's here with a, there is a Palestine soldier [...] and a girl soldier. The woman at the piano was just a musician that came there to play.

ARTEFACT 8: scan of a photo of Cesare Sacerdoti and his brother, "47 I think"

11:56:17:01

Cesare Sacerdoti o/o/v

This is my brother and I after the war [...] I was already still in Florence so it can't be more than forty-seven I think. My hair [...] had grown again and we are – this is taken, I can see, in the garden of the, the synagogue. Well were much kids. If you compare this to the one at the orphanage you can see we have been fatten up a bit.

ARTEFACT 9: scan of a photograph of Cardinal Leo de la Hosta

11:56:43:21

Cesare Sacerdoti

These are two of our saviours: the cardinal Leo de la Hosta was an incredible leader of the clergy [...] in his diocese, the other is Monsignore [*Mirigello?*] who was his secretary who became a very good friend of my father, very close friend. This is taken of course after the war - well it's a bit after the war - doesn't say the year but Monsignore [*Mirigello?*] was relatively young still during the war. Yes they are really

saints.

[cut to black and fade up]

ARTEFACT 10: scan of a photograph of a young priest

No commentary

ARTEFACT 11: scan of a photograph of Jewish children standing on the steps of a synagogue

No commentary

ARTEFACT 12: scan of a photograph of his father with his cello

No commentary

ARTEFACT 13: scan of a photograph of rabbis, one possibly his father

No commentary

ARTEFACT 14: scan of a photograph of Monsignore [*Mugello?*] And his secretary

No commentary

ARTEFACT 15: scan of a photograph of three children sitting beneath a war memorial

No commentary

ARTEFACT 16: scan of a colour photograph of 3 children and a man [Cesare's brother?] sitting under the same war memorial

No commentary

ARTEFACT 17: scan of a photograph of Cesare shaking hands with a prelate

No commentary