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## **Thousands Celebrate New Scientology Church in Renowned Historic Villa**

More than 7,000 Scientologists and their guests gathered from across Italy and Europe to celebrate the grand opening of the Church of Scientology Ideal Organization (Ideal Org) of Padova on Saturday, October 27. Church officials presided over the opening joined by national, provincial and city dignitaries.

The Church's new home is the historic Villa Francesconi-Lanza in Padova's northern district of Arcella. Originally constructed circa 1744 for the noble Francesconi family, the villa was expanded upon by heirs and successive owners. In the possession of attorney Carlo Lanza in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, the arcaded veranda served as a gathering place for the entire community. However, by the early 21st century, the estate had stood vacant for several decades, its glory long faded.

The Church of Scientology acquired and meticulously restored Villa Francesconi-Lanza as a symbol of Venetian culture and landmark for all residents of Padova. Working with a team of regional artisans, detailed reliefs, cornices and frescoes were faithfully returned to their 18th century splendor. The extensive work on the villa's interior further included detailed preservation of original stone paving, terrazzo, and wood-beamed ceilings throughout.

Villa Francesconi-Lanza will now provide Scientology services and once again serve as a community meeting place, open to members of all faiths to collaborate on humanitarian initiatives for the benefit of Veneto.

In testament to the significance of the new Church, Mr. David Miscavige, Chairman of the Board Religious Technology Center and ecclesiastical leader of the Scientology religion, led the dedication ceremony. In his address, he told Padova Church of Scientology staff and parishioners: "We come to a new inscription on the tablet of Italian history. For today we engrave your pledge to Padova in marble and stone—a pledge to bring our help and the infinite wisdom of L. Ron Hubbard's technology to this region. It's an inscription that will never suffer the ravages of time nor turn to dust with the winds of change. For in the same spirit with which you restored this landmark to glory and so built this Church, it is now within your power to restore the glory of life to every community and individual therein."

Among those on hand to welcome Padova's new Church were Senator of the Republic of Italy for Veneto, the Honorable Maurizio Saia; Alderman for Security, Immigration and Volunteer Activities for the Province of Padova, Mr. Enrico Pavanetto; and Mayor of Grantorto, Mr. Luciano Gavin.

In his salutatory address, Senator of the Republic of Italy for Veneto, the Honorable Maurizio Saia, said: "Through my 40 years in politics, the world hasn't always changed as I wanted. Here in front of me I see thousands of people that are still actively cherishing their dream to see a better world. I look forward to this Church being a place where the doors are forever opened wide, allowing people to come together and meet freely, think freely, and act freely, no matter their religious belief."

Province of Padova Alderman for Security, Immigration and Volunteer Activities, Mr. Enrico Pavanetto, acknowledged the Church's drug prevention work in the province: "I have found that your anti-drug campaign is effective in helping young people to think about why it's better to have a sane life. I am proud that Padova is the province

that promotes the anti-drug message, and I want to thank your initiative with all my heart."

Grantorto Mayor Luciano Gavin welcomed the Church's volunteer initiatives to Veneto and particularly their effective disaster response, including to recent earthquakes: "It is emblematic to see the Scientology Volunteer Ministers and the civil protection team from the Scientology community springing to aid. You don't just sit back watching the news about calamities, commenting how horrible it is, but you demonstrate the will to help. That help is priceless. No matter a person's political or religious beliefs, I want your initiatives to be done by everyone."

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The 45,000-square-foot Church of Scientology Padova is open to all who wish an introduction to Dianetics and Scientology. Visitors are invited to take a self-guided tour of the expansive Public Information Center, presenting informational and documentary films on the beliefs and practices of Dianetics and Scientology, as well as the life and legacy of Founder L. Ron Hubbard. The Information Center also provides an overview of the many Scientology-sponsored humanitarian programs, including a worldwide human rights initiative; an equally far-ranging drug education, prevention and rehabilitation program; a global network of literacy and learning centers; and the Scientology Volunteer Minister program now comprising the world's largest independent relief force. In full, the Center's multimedia displays present more than 500 films, available at the touch of a button. The Church is open morning to night and visitors are welcome to return as often as they wish.

In addition to congregational services conducted in the chapel, the new Church further includes numerous seminar rooms and classrooms for study, as well as dozens of rooms for Scientology *auditing* (spiritual counseling).

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The opening of the Church of Scientology Padova follows the opening of a series of Ideal Orgs in 2012, including the new Center of Scientology in Tel Aviv-Jaffa (August 21); the Churches of Scientology of Los Gatos, California (July 28); Buffalo, New York (June 30); Phoenix, Arizona (June 23); Denver, Colorado (June 16); Stevens Creek in San Jose, California (June 9); Orange County, California (June 2); Greater Cincinnati, Ohio (February 25); Sacramento, California (January 28); and Hamburg, Germany (January 21).

Ideal Orgs reflect the fulfillment of Founder L. Ron Hubbard's vision for the religion. They not only provide the ideal facilities to service Scientologists on their ascent to greater states of spiritual awareness and freedom, they are also designed to serve as a home for the entire community and a meeting ground of cooperative effort to uplift citizens of all denominations.

Other new Ideal Orgs opened in recent years include London, Moscow, Brussels, Berlin, Madrid and Rome in Europe; Melbourne, Australia; Johannesburg, South Africa; New York, New York; Washington, D.C.; Los Angeles, Inglewood, Pasadena and San Francisco, California; Tampa, Florida; Nashville, Tennessee; Seattle, Washington; Dallas, Texas; Quebec City, Canada; and Mexico City, Mexico. For a complete list of new Ideal Orgs of Scientology, visit [Scientology.org](http://Scientology.org).

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The Scientology religion was founded by L. Ron Hubbard. The first Church of Scientology was formed in Los Angeles in 1954 and the religion has expanded to more than 11,000 Churches, Missions and affiliated groups, with millions of members in 167 countries.