

## The Dedication of Young Italy

The French Revolution and the subsequent reign of Napoleon Bonaparte also created a rise in nationalism and unity in Italy. Several small revolutionary groups had formed in Italy but they lacked good leadership. Previous attempts at revolution failed and many involved were executed by the government.

In 1831, **Giuseppe Mazzini** who was previously involved in various underground movements, founded The Italian Nationalist Movement called **Risorgimento** (resurgence) and a new secret society called **Young Italy**.



Many Italians saw Mazzini as a prophet. His organization of Young Italy had high ethical ideals. It was a combination of revolutionary ideals and religious beliefs. Devotion to duty and self-sacrifice for their country were key components for bringing about national unity.

Despite being a “secret” society, the majority of the population knew who the members were. Mazzini’s ideas quickly spread across Italy and it would be the first stage in the Unification of Italy.

***Love your country. Your country is the land where your parents sleep, where is spoken that language in which the chosen of your heart, blushing, whispered the first word of love; it is the home that God has given you that by striving to perfect yourselves therein you may prepare to ascend to him.***

*Giuseppe Mazzini (1850). “Royalty and Republicanism in Italy: Or, Notes and Documents Relating to the Lombard Insurrection, and to the Royal War of 1848”, p.118, London, C. Gilpin*

The following page is the oath that had to be taken by every member of the “secret” society of Young Italy. As you read the oath, look for the links to Italian tradition, family, history and religion that are key components to their society.

**Each member will, upon his initiation into the association of Young Italy, pronounce the following form of oath, in the presence of the initiator:**

**In the name of God and of Italy –**

**In the name of all the martyrs of the holy Italian cause who have fallen beneath foreign and domestic tyranny –**

**By the duties which bind me to the land wherein God has placed me and to the brothers whom God has given me –**

**By the love, innate in all men, I bear to the country that gave my mother birth and will be the home of my children –**

**By the hatred, innate in all men, I bear to evil, injustice, usurpation, and arbitrary rule –**

**By the blush that rises to my brow when I stand before the citizens of other lands, to know that I have no rights of citizenship, no country, and no national flag –**

**By the aspiration that thrills my soul toward that liberty for which it was created and is important to exert; toward the good it was created to strive after and is important to achieve in the silence and isolation of slavery –**

**By the memory of our former greatness and sense of our present degradation –**

**By the tears of Italian mothers for their sons dead on the scaffold, in prison, or in exile –**

**By the suffering of the millions –**

**I, \_\_\_\_\_, believing in the mission entrusted by God to Italy and the duty of every Italian to strive to attempt its fulfilment –**

**Convinced that where God has ordained that a national shall be; he has given the requisite power to create it; that the people are the depositories of that power, and that in its right direction for the people and by the people lies the secret of victory –**

**Convinced that virtue consists in action and sacrifice, and strength in union and constancy of purpose –**

**I give my name to Young Italy, an association of men holding the same faith, and swear to dedicate myself wholly and forever to endeavor with them to constitute Italy one free, independence, republican nation.**

Source: Joseph Mazzini, *The Life and Writings of Joseph Mazzini*, London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1891, Vol. I, pp. 110-12.