



Hermínio Sarli, canvassing in the rural countryside

Photo courtesy of Brazilian White Center - UNASP.

Sarli, Hermínio (1903–1977)

THE BRAZILIAN WHITE CENTER – UNASP

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Hermínio Sarli, canvasser and pastor, was born on June 5, 1903, in the city of Itapuí, São Paulo State, Brazil. Son of Giuseppe Antônio Sarli and Adelaide Sarli, Hermínio had five siblings: Elisa, Osvaldo, Alberto, Jodat, and Magid.¹ At the age of six, his father unfortunately left home.² While young, Hermínio searched for his father, but without success.³

As he was the first-born, in the absence of his father, he started helping his mother support the family. His first job was delivering meals to families affected by yellow fever that spread throughout the countryside of São Paulo State. He also worked as a shoeshine boy, a newspaper seller, as well as delivering lunch boxes to families in the city.⁴ Sarli attended school until the third grade. He did not have the financial resources to continue his studies; however, he always stood out as a good student. From childhood, he loved to read and this enabled him to acquire a great general knowledge.⁵

Around 1926, while still a member of the Presbyterian Church, Hermínio had his first contact with the Adventist message through the book *Our Day in the Light of Prophecy* that his mother had acquired from two canvassers. In addition to this book, which aroused his interest in studying the Adventist message, the missionary Abraão Carlos Ennis also influenced his conversion when he started Bible studies with Hermínio and his mother. It didn't take long for a group of people interested in studying the Bible to form in the city of Jaú, state of São Paulo.⁶

In early 1927, at the age of 24, Hermínio met Eulália Minguili (1906-1986), whom he married on May 12 of the same year.⁷ For almost fifty years, his wife was a faithful and dedicated companion alongside her husband, both in services for church work and the family. From this union seven children were born: Wilson, Ruth, Tercio, Esther, Joel, Paulo, and Eunice.⁸

Hermínio was baptized on May 4, 1931, in the city of Jaú, together with his mother and wife, after a series of Bible studies conducted by Pastor Luís Braun. The decision to be baptized was difficult for Hermínio, as he was addicted to cigarettes having smoked for 18 years. For Eulália, there was great pressure from her family that was Catholic. Alongside Adelaide, his mother, and a few others, they were the first converts in the city of Jaú.⁹ Upon joining the Adventist Church, he became a regular reader of the Bible and the writings of Ellen White, in addition to becoming a great appreciator of biblical prophecies and sacred music.¹⁰

As Hermínio had known the Adventist message through a canvasser, he decided to devote himself to canvassing work as well.¹¹ While living with his family in Jaú, Hermínio worked both in nearby and distant cities. However, he noticed his children were experiencing bad influences in the city from other young people; so, he decided to move to a rural place. He acquired a small farm and established his home there for some time while visiting the surrounding cities selling books. When they reached the appropriate age while studying at Adventist boarding schools, his children also learned to canvass in order to help with school fees.¹²

Hermínio stood out as one of the top canvassers in sales in the rural areas of São Paulo State. His means of transportation were a bicycle and a horse. In 1944, he was called to assist students in canvassing.¹³ The following year, he became assistant director of the publishing department in the São Paulo Conference.¹⁴ In 1949, he moved with his family to the city of São Paulo and enrolled his children in Brazil College (now Central Adventist University of São Paulo).¹⁵ The following year, he became director of the publishing department of the São Paulo Conference.¹⁶

Hermínio canvassed for 25 years uninterrupted, making him one of the pioneers in canvassing in the state of São Paulo. At the time, São Paulo Conference covered the entire State of São Paulo and belonged to the South Brazil Union Conference.¹⁷

In January of 1956, Hermínio was ordained to the pastoral ministry and asked to serve as a district pastor. His first district was in the region of Taubaté, which covered a good part of the Central Railway of Brazil, reaching the border of Rio de Janeiro. After four years of pastoral work in Taubaté, he was transferred to a district in the city of Lucélia, São Paulo State. Later, he was a pastor in Bragança Paulista, his last district. Hermínio served approximately ten years in pastoral ministry, making many visits to church members, groups, and also excelled in constructing churches. Wherever he went, if there was no church building, he would build one. Thus, Hermínio ended his official career in 1963.¹⁸

Even after retirement, he never stopped helping churches where he was a member, performing baptisms, preaching, with Ingathering, visiting members,¹⁹ and encouraging new workers.²⁰ On February 17, 1977, while walking he was hit by a car in the city of São Paulo. Herminio was helped by the boy who drove the car, but despite all his efforts, five days later, on February 22, 1977, he died at the age of 74. The funeral service was held at the Capão Redondo Adventist Church, of which he was an active member. The sermon was presented by Pastor Alcides Campolongo, who was a friend of the family.²¹

In all, Pastor Hermínio Sarli dedicated 35 years of service to the Seventh-day Adventist Church.²² As a canvasser, he made a great contribution to the advancement of the Adventist message through publishing work in Brazil. He was a very solicitous canvasser and never rested without completing the work assigned to him. Then, as an ordained pastor, he helped build many churches in the state of São Paulo.

"Noticiário: Divisão Sul-Americana Comunicação," *Revista Adventista*, April 1977.

"Noticiário: Pastor Hermínio Sarli Descansa no Senhor," *Revista Adventista*, April, 1977.

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Waldvogel, Luiz. "Associação Paulista." *Revista Adventista*, April 1950.

NOTES

1. Esther Sarli, *Hermínio Sarli: Memórias de Um Pioneiro* (Campinas, SP: Certeza Editorial, 2014), 23, 28.
2. *Ibid.*, 30.
3. *Ibid.*, 34.
4. *Ibid.*, 47, 48.
5. *Ibid.*, 48.
6. *Ibid.*, 76.
7. *Ibid.*, 69, 71, 73.
8. *Ibid.*, 76-79.
9. *Ibid.*, 76-79.
10. *Ibid.*, 49.
11. *Ibid.*, 95.
12. *Ibid.*, 155.
13. "Noticiário: Pastor Hermínio Sarli Descansa no Senhor," *Revista Adventista*, April 1977, 18.
14. *Ibid.*
15. Sarli, 116.
16. Luiz Waldvogel, "Associação Paulista," *Revista Adventista*, April 1950, 11.

17. Ibid., 140, 141.

18. Ibid.; "Noticiário: Pastor Hermínio Sarli Descansa no Senhor," 18.

19. "Noticiário: Pastor Hermínio Sarli Descansa no Senhor," 18.

20. "Noticiário: Divisão Sul-Americana Comunicação," *Revista Adventista*, April 1977, 30.

21. Sarli, 158, 159.

22. Ibid., 269.

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