

Ministry Update from Reggio Calabria, Italy

Nicolo Carlo, Kati, Anna Chiara, Giosue Samuel & Sofia Lea

Summer and autumn 2016

Dear Family of God,

Writing the newsletter to you requires me to give you an account of course of all that has happened recently in our ministry and family life. I usually make an outline first of the most important events and then start to unfold it story-by-story. As I set down to write to you today, I realized that I have to start with praise. Everything that happens points to a perfect plan from our loving and perfect creator. In every person we meet, and in every event that happens in our ministry, we have the privilege to see God's grace and love at work.

The LORD is good, abounding in mercy and grace over us. Without Him, we wouldn't have a purpose in Calabria. Without Him, we wouldn't have love and patience to minister to the people around us. Without Him, we wouldn't have the wisdom to respond to the questions we get. Without Him, we couldn't persevere in tribulation. Our steps are ordered by God.

The LORD is faithful, providing for us everything. He does not only meet our needs, but He gives in abundance so we would share. Even when we are worried about how are we going to get things done, He is faithful because with His guidance we end up getting the things done on time. He is faithful in continually protecting us from sicknesses, from accidents on the road, from bad influence. He is faithful responding to our prayer requests. He is faithful standing by, encouraging us. He is faithful and steady, the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. He is there in our smallest gray every day and our biggest brightest blessings and surprises. He is faithful to show Himself to us to keep us on the straight and narrow. Praise the LORD!

...

Rocco and Giulia, and their three children are farmers in Gioia Tauro. They have a great herd of sheep and much land to cultivate. He is Italian, she is Bulgarian. Giulia attends a Bulgarian fellowship in Rosarno. There was a time when the whole family used to go, but lately only Giulia goes. We love to meet them occasionally and encourage them to live a God-pleasing life. They receive the word of God and agree. We have a lot in common, as we are both farmers. They love to come to visit us in the mountain in the summer.



They invited us in June for their annual shearing, when they cut the fur of the sheep. This is usually a big day of work and a celebration as well. The whole family, lots of friends and neighboring shepherds come to help. The men do the job, the children watch and help, and the women cook. It was a blessing for us to help, and be a part of this feast.

...

Jake Shively came to stay with us for a month. Carlo kept it a secret, so his arrival was a big surprise for us. When he came last time with the outreach team, we tried to jam all kinds of programs for their 10 day-stay. This time we just lived our normal lives. We worked and ministered to all as usual, and we invited Jake to all of our daily activities. Jake came along when our animals were grazing. He came to help when we went to clean



gardens and villas for work. We baked bread together at our neighbor's house. We surprised an other neighbor with a cake on his birthday. We visited the sick and prayed over them. For a time of relaxation, we went to the beach together. We encouraged each other in the Word, shared our worldviews, visions and ideas. We prayed for each other's struggles and difficulties both in our private lives and in ministry.



While his visit, he taught from the book of Galatians on Sundays. He enjoyed playing soccer with our kids and the kids of San Roberto and Melia. He



taught us some new English words. ☺ He gave basic guitar and piano lessons to our kids.

During Jake's one-month-stay, we had other guests in the house as well. An old Hungarian friend of mine, Attila came to visit with his fiancée. They too got to see, help and taste how the Calabrese bake bread. They enjoyed the authentic food and the beauty of the area.



Attila is like a brother to me. We had time to talk and share why we are here, and what we are doing. We loved answering their curious questions about our marriage, and about raising our kids. They saw how we serve God and how He provides for us. God gave me

opportunity to speak boldly about their position before God, and encourage them to set things right and get married.

Daniel, Jake's friend came a week after Attila left. Daniel is from California. He is an aerospace engineer and a believer who set out a plan to travel the world for a couple of months. On his way from Rome to Sicily and Germany, he stopped by and spent a couple of days at ours. His presence was a blessing for different reasons. He shared about how he grew up homeschooled, and what his experience was in ministry. We discussed what God's plan is for us, believers. We read the Word and prayed, then went out together and ministered to our neighbors and friends.



...

The Vita Vera church organized a 3-day camp for children in their nearby mountain villa. They asked us to help. The theme was how different we are on the outside and yet the same on the inside. We heard stories of children from different countries, and different backgrounds. I had a morning session, teaching and praying with the children. In my story a little Chinese girl - pushed by her society, culture, political and religious influence - wished, she was a boy. With a help of her uncle she met Jesus, and learned that she was precious. Receiving Jesus, she than accepted her position in the family as a daughter. I also prepared craft for everyone as a reminder, that God loves us just as we are.



We learned new children's praise songs. We cooked and cleaned together. We enjoyed a drama played by the adults. We went on adventure hiking and collecting mushroom. We came home only to sleep. We had much fun. We pray that both children and adults were strengthened in their faith.

...

Ferro Agosto, the 15th of August is a big holiday in Italy. Every year we prepare a lots of food, knowing that not only those invited but also surprise visitors come to join us for a meal. Right after the children's camp we organized a picnic with friends. Believers and non believers, Italians and other nationalities came and ate together, shared opinions and played soccer. We ended this fun day with worship and prayer, involving our non believer friends as well. They all enjoyed it.



...

In September, we had guests stay with us almost every weekend. First Julius and Sara from Bolzano blessed us for a couple of days. They celebrated their first wedding anniversary with a trip to Calabria. Carlo met Julius about 6 years ago at the castle in Austria. Back then, he was a theology student living in Vienna, desperate to know God's plan for his future. This time he was happily married living in the city of his origin. As newlyweds, we encouraged them to read the Word and pray together daily. Sara grew up catholic, so she had questions about how could she share the Gospel to her religious family. We read the Bible every morning together and had great discussions on how to live out our faith in the practical everyday life. Their desire is to form a home-bible-study, and their prayer request is to have a baby.



Then came Anthony and Darlene. They serve in the Montebelluna church using their musical talents. They organize concerts and outreaches. They updated us on how the fellowship is doing. We prayed for their upcoming concerts with the bible college students and an outreach at a nursing home.



Then we had Peter and Eliza. Peter has a Czech-Jewish background. He was born in Mozambique, and grew up in an English colony there. Eliza is from Russia. They are both widows and planning to get married soon. They have served for a short time in a small fellowship in Salerno. Peter got our phone number from a common acquaintance of ours. We had three days to get to know each other and pray for God's will in serving together. Seeing the area, they decided to move here. We continue to keep in touch and pray that God will open doors for us to serve Him together.

...

In the midst of hosting people, school started. Big change came for Anna Chiara by starting middle school. While for the elementary classes, the government provides the books, in the middle school we have to buy them. Newness is that she has French in her weekly schedule beside English, and instead of going to school from Monday to Friday, she has to go on Saturday too. Giosue is in the 4th, and Sofia in the 2nd grade with their routine schedule.



...

The church in Bagnara Calabria is doing better. Through the verse-by-verse study, the brothers get more understanding in the Word, as they mature in their faith. Michelangelo's health is getting worse. Giuseppe is not doing well either, but stable. Elena and Carmela have health issues too. Michelangelo's daughter, Nancy is expecting twins. She has a high-risk pregnancy, so she had to stay in bed for the first couple of months. We visited her every Sunday while Jake was here, and prayed for protection. Carmelo and Evelina went on vacation for the month of August. Therefore, there was no Sunday school, and I could just sit in to the teaching in English by Jake. What a special blessing!

Even the Moms-in-prayer meeting was on hold for a month. In September, we picked up where we left off.

...

This season for our produce was really bad. Since there was not much to do in the garden due to bad weather, we had more time for serving others. United, as a family we went and cleaned vacation homes, and proclaimed the good news. It was surprising to the villa owners to see the whole family work together. So our testimony and sharing the word of God left a great impression, and made them reflect. Thanks to God, we got to bond with many new families, such as the Piazza family, the Marchetti family, the Canale family, the Idone family, and our immediate neighbors. We continue to keep in contact with them, and pray for their salvation.

...

Please continue to keep us in your prayers, lifting up the Brethren fellowship in Bagnara Calabria, the Sunday school, our personal one-on-one relationships and our family. We pray for healing for the sick, and for salvation for all.

We appreciate and thank for your prayers and support. It means a lot to us to know that you back us up. We are thankful to be co-laborer with you in the Gospel on this side of the world. You are welcome to visit us or be a part of this ministry. May God's Spirit strengthen us all in these last times to finish well.

With love,

The Nicolos

To contact us, please write to carlo_nicolo@yahoo.com or kati_nicolo@yahoo.com.