



THE GIRARDS

ITALY

Preaching the Good News Of Jesus Christ

Dear Family and Friends,

April 2013

Human Trafficking Awareness Conference and TV Coverage

With one of our flyers in his hand "Stop human trafficking and forced prostitution", the man said to us quite seriously, "So, now you want to take prostitution away from us? With the price of gold going down and no prostitution, we won't have anything left for us in city!" Gold made Arezzo very rich in the 60's and 70's, but the market collapsed in the 80's and 90's and the local economy suffered greatly.

Friday morning, the day of our conference 'Fight Human Trafficking', I woke up with a deep heaviness on me. It was a feeling of indifference and deep darkness. I was almost suffocating. Inside of me a voice said, "no one is coming tonight". I wasn't sure at first why I felt that way but I believe it was preparing me for a no-show event. As the day went on the darkness felt so heavy around me.

Let's go back in time a few weeks. Nicolas and I have literally blasted the city with advertisements for our conference with a shocking picture of a girl in chains, a picture anyone would take a second glance at. We spoke personally with NUMEROUS local unbelievers who said they "wanted to come, wanted to know more, shocked this happens in Arezzo, were changing their schedules to come, etc." Then we decided to advertise it on television. We had favor from God and the TV station gave us an incredible deal since we are non-profit. Everything was set.

Back to Friday, conference day. Our guest speakers have arrived and our few Christians friends came as well as our few church members. But that voice was still speaking to me, not condemning or bringing confusion, just saying "No one will come, but don't be discouraged". By 8:30, time for the conference, so it was true. No one came, not a single person. BUT the television station came to do a live interview to air on TV the next day to be viewed by more than 100,000 viewers (potentially up to 400,000)! They didn't stay for the conference but the interview was incredible and Nicolas' speech was powerful, anointed, and truthful. God was preparing us and showing us the depth of the indifference in hearts. Despite the fact no one came- even more people saw that 2-minute interview and it has planted a seed of truth in hearts.



*Speaking to a journalist
before the event*



*Translating Gregg Montella, a
missionary to Moldova*



*Translating Eric Dye, a blogger
on human trafficking*

Meeting The Police While Reaching Out To Some Prostitutes And Their Pimp

After the conference we wanted to put what we believe into practice, not just say "we are against human trafficking." In a 2-mile radius of our house there would be more than 40 prostitutes on the weekends after 10 pm.

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Nicolas along with our two men guest speakers decided to go out and minister to the local prostitutes and give them words of hope encouragement, and look out for girls who might be trafficked. Gregg Montella, a modern day abolitionist against slavery, met a Hungarian girl who said this in perfect English "I came to Italy because I was told I would learn to do makeup. But in reality there wasn't a job. I was convinced to do prostitution. But this is not my dream, my dream is to open a perfumery." Gregg said "If we pay to put you in school would you go?" The girl, "Yes, it's unimaginable, that is my dream". He gave her our number and told her to call. But she is one of many girls now working for a woman pimp who has coerced her into prostitution, and likely there will be a fight for her life if she tries to leave.

Next, they noticed two young girls at the side of the road, all alone. Nicolas said "Hello". The girls said "30 Euro" (the only Italian she knows) Nicolas said, "No, I don't want to pay for you, I want to pray for you." Then a woman hiding from the bushes shouts out, "What do you want with them?" Nicolas said, "We want to offer you all a life of freedom doing a job you would enjoy". The woman said, "This is the life I want". (Understand this woman is their pimp who is training them, so she watches from the side to teach them prostitution and helps them communicate.) Nicolas said, "Fine, but I want to speak with these girls about the life they want". The woman says very angrily "You cannot talk to them, you need to go through me, because they don't speak Italian, and this is the life they want anyway!!!" Next the police came and she said "Look the police are coming after you!" The police got out of the car and asked to see their identification. They assumed that Nicolas and the guys were soliciting a girl for sex. Calmly Nicolas went to greet them and explained who we were and the non-profit association we run. Nicolas said "I came to pray for these girls, but the woman over there is threatening and controlling, I believe these girls have been trafficked and are being controlled". The police said "We know, let's go speak somewhere else, she is a very dangerous woman". They went down the road and Nicolas honored the police for the hard work they do. They police then opened up with Nicolas and explained that the controlling lady was the street contact for traffickers and smugglers, and she is training the trafficked girls. The police then said to register our organization with them and inform them of what we do to help the ladies, so we can collaborate together.

That night was both a eye-opening, saddening, and a great one, because of the connection we made with the police. The officers also told us they had just arrested to Albanian traffickers and to watch the news these next weeks because they are about to unveil something big. When we asked them what we can do to fight human trafficking, they stressed the point that non-profit organization can convince the girls to speak up and tell the police that they had been trafficked.

Upcoming Move and Travel Plans

We thank all of you for your contributions to put this conference on! Every penny and every prayer was valuable and needed. We did not raise enough to buy a sound system, we had to rent one, but we are still saving and trying to purchase one. More than ever, we need people who've "got our backs". We believe that God is leading us to do all these things, but we need encouragement and funds to keep it going. The material we give these prostitutes and unbelievers costs money. We have the time and heart, but not always the funding. The women are being reached because of your willingness to help!

This month our family is moving. We are moving into a house literally off the main road where the prostitutes work. We do not believe this is a coincidence. The Father wants us to reach these women with the Gospel, with hope, and, for crying out loud, someone who doesn't treat them like meat!!!

I hope this newsletter has helped you understand what the spiritual climate is like for us day in and day out. With that said. We would love to come home to Kansas for a much needed furlough for 6 weeks in July and August. This will cost us about \$7,000. We are starting to raise funds for this trip. If you would like to give to this cause label donations "furlough" when you send them in. It's been 2 1/2 years since I last spent time in my home state and would love to show off Isaiah, whom my family has not even met!

God is ever present and ever loving. Seek Him and all roads for you will be clear. In Jesus name,

Nicolas, Leia, Eva, Elise, Sophie, and Isaiah

**If you wish to support us, please send in your tax-deductible donations to World Outreach Center, PO Box 3478. Fort Mill, SC 29708. Please write your checks out to WOC and write "Girards" in the memo to support the family, or "Zoe Center" to support the ministry in Italy. To donate online, go to www.worldoutreachcommunity.org, access our page under Missionaries and then click on Donate. Our new blog site is: zoecenter.wordpress.com