



The Girards

ITALY

Preaching the Good News Of Jesus Christ

Dear Friends,

February 2014

God is adding skills to our ministry with a new project to help the community:

Marriages struggle behind the scenes (all of us married know that!), and in Italy divorce is rapidly rising despite the strong warnings of divorce from the Pope. So we decided we wanted to be more equipped to help struggling couples (of all faiths, not closed to our own). So we enrolled in a marriage class called The Marriage Course. The Marriage Course was written by some British believers who are part of the Evangelical Alpha Course. The Roman Catholic church liked the teachings so much that they decided to translate it in Italian and integrate the course within the Catholic church. They are running a nice website explaining the need for help/counsel within marriage and the brutal divorce rate and unhappily married couples within Italy. Now some Evangelical circles within Italy wanted to jump on board (us too!) So we went through the course as a couple (and were very impressed) and in March we will do a weekend training on how to teach the course. Their vision is very similar to the Alpha Course. It takes place in a low key atmosphere once a week in the home, where the 3-4 couples meet for dinner, watch a DVD teaching, and then break off in different areas of the house to talk through issues they may have regarding that particular subject. Couples in crisis or who just want to work through some issues can sign up through the Catholic or Evangelical website to seek help- we are very impressed by the organization of the course and how many people are interested already confessing the need for help. We already have two couples in our church who want to go through the course with us. We are excited about the chance to encourage and strengthen other marriages just as the Lord has shaped our lives and changed us through out our marriage. We pray through our endeavors that we may also be able to minister to non-believers and share the hope we have in Jesus too.

When the Holy Spirit Stirs our Hearts...

Things are going well in our services, the Holy Spirit has been directing each service and each week is different from the next. One family that comes wants to do more outreach with us this spring and we are even considering adding a weekly prayer meeting to our services. This pleases us tremendously to see a family hungry for the Lord and wanting to seek Him in prayer as we do to see His love and power shine in Tuscany. In the next week we will see how our weekly prayer meeting develops and who wants to be involved.

Christmas Outreach

Last month, we didn't give much detail about our last Christmas outreach to the prostitutes. We were able to buy some make-up sets, nail polish, and perfume sets and give them out to some women on the streets. Why do we take a prostitute a gift? #1 to break the ice in the conversation and show them we are not there to take but to give. #2 because gifts can make people feel loved and cherished and since these prostitutes feel far from cherished by anybody and don't make much money it makes them feel special to get something (We know because they tell us this!)

The outreach was a success! Most of the girls listened without interrupting to the Gospel message that God does actually care about them. That He has a deep love for them and wants to see them free from giving away their bodies to people. A few of them had to fight tears, they all VERY willfully accepted the Mary Magdalena DVD and Bibles. One Romanian woman wanted a Bible but refused to touch it because she was sinning. She had me put it in a plastic bag then she willfully accepted it and said she would read it to know more.

Thank You!!

Thank you for your monthly donations, really thank you! We would not be able to pay our church rent or bills each month without your help. Every family in our church right now is either unemployed, laid off, or working part time. Our offerings each week rarely go over \$10! Without your donations we would not be able to run this ministry, just to show you how important they are. Thank you for your generosity and financial sacrifices you make to see God's Kingdom come in Italy- it means a lot to us and you are touching so many lives!

No matter what you are facing today, God is with you, through the good and the bad.

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