



THE GIRARDS

ITALY

Preaching the Good News Of Jesus Christ

Dear Family and Friends,

January 2013

May God bless you richly in the coming year of 2013! May you hear His voice and be filled with Wisdom and grace to obey His Word. This is our prayer for you and your families.

How were your holidays? We would love to receive an email from you and hear about your families and what season of life you are in. Though we understand sometimes with the speed of life, we go and go and it's hard to keep in personal contact with everyone we'd like.

A prostitute, a cripple, and a homeless at the Christmas table

Christmas day was a real blessing. We had a big meal with some close friends of ours who live in the next town over. We were joined by an ex-alcoholic, homeless man staying with them. Jesus radically changed his life since he is in their home. Also, Stella (the girl working in prostitution who is coming to the Lord) and her sister Mercy (a girl crippled by polio) who also came to the Lord were there with us. For us, it was such an honor to spend the day in the presence of God with them and celebrate His birth. Thanks to your donations, Nicolas and I were able to pay for the Christmas meal for everyone. We were the only ones with money who could afford food, so it blessed everyone to be able to have a nice meal and be together.

2013 and the Changes it will bring about

There will be some changes this year for us, and we'd like to share them with you so you can pray with us. First of all, we are looking for a new place to live. Our house is about 900 sq. ft, and that's just too small for our growing family. We often house guests, and we love being hospitable. We feel that it's important as a Christian and want to continue to make our guests feel welcome and comfy in our home. Let's face it, one bathroom can be a nightmare when you have visitors and little children! Our "secret" dream is to build a simple American-style house since materials cost less and put in solar panels to avoid the high electricity/heating bills. But right now, banks aren't offering mortgages because our economy is in recession, so we will have to keep renting until one day this might be possible. Also, Nicolas might be offered a permanent position in a company that he has been teaching private lessons to. The boss has admired the quality of Nicolas' work, and he knows that he's an honest and hard-working man. This possible job offer would be a dream come true for us because he would work morning hours and get paid better than what he makes now. That would free up our evenings more for ministry to visit families and open the church more often to begin even more activities for the community. We are trusting the Lord that He will lead the way.

Also, we strongly believe that this year will be a year of unity for the churches of Arezzo. Actually, it is time we talked about the Church of Arezzo, using a singular word instead of its plural form. Jesus is coming back to get His bride, not His brides. Nicolas has been praying and meeting with some local believers who have a heart for unity as well. It is sad to realize that nearly all the conflicts between believers or churches are either caused by pride, jealousy, or offense.

This year, we also aim to launch the Zoe Center's spiritual branch of the vision, which includes a healing room and prophetic counseling. These programs will take place in our facilities. We will simply advertise in the city, the days and hours we will be open so that people can come and bring their sick people for prayer or come and receive prayer and guidance for a personal issue.

Visitors and Street evangelism

We had some visitors from America whom we only had a facebook/skype relationship with before they came. Erik and Hannah Kallio had met my brother some months before. They were a tremendous blessing. They feel called to move to Italy as missionaries, and they lived here already in the past. We spent 10 days together, and we held some special services over the weekend for a few local believers. The specific teachings they brought about effective communication, findings God's design for your life, and Jewish traditions went very well. We had invited a few believers from a local group to try and build a bridge between some of the smaller cell groups in town. So, we are very happy to bring some peace between some local believers where there was some strife before.

I (Leia) have been able to go back out on the streets to talk with the local prostitutes again. They are just so blessed when I give them a gift and stay there for a while just to talk. Many of them have tears in their eyes and get emotional when we speak about God. I wish there was more we could do for them. I have invited them to meet any time personally in church or out of church to pray together and build a friendship. Though I rarely get phone calls back, I earnestly hope that these women will call me back and desire to meet Jesus personally in their lonely and desperate lives. So please pray for these women, let's stand in the gap for them to meet their Savior and most of all that doors would open for them to find work that would get them off the streets, which they ALL want. Trust me- no woman is proud to be a prostitute if they had other options.

Our family has been blessed this season. We are spending more time in prayer, asking God for His blessing and direction for our lives. We are growing and are pleased with our relationship with each other and with our children. All 3 girls are talking with the Lord in their own child-like ways, while Isaiah is simply the funnest little boy ever!

With love,

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



At Christmas Dinner



Erik and Hannah at the Zoe Center

****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**