



NEWS FROM THE GIRARDS IN AREZZO, ITALY



Hello Everyone!

September 2017

We have some NEW developments we'd like to share with you about our Sunday services. Paired with some of our ministry difficulties. We COVET your prayers at this time. As we've been developing Healing for the Nations ministry in Italy on belief systems and strongholds (it involves inner healing and freedom in your mind and heart from guilt and shame), we're beginning to travel more often to churches on weekends. Which makes it very hard to keep momentum in our Sunday services. Even this weekend, Nicolas will be in a church working with a group of 8 Italians. There are two couples in the group who are well known leaders in the ministry. In October, we will be hosting our second, intensive five-day retreat on strongholds near in Florence. Churches from around the country are asking us to come and help their members. This country has gone too long living in the shadows of shame and approval, and many who've attended our weekends have said 'Healing for the nations' is an answer to prayer for many who didn't know how to get out of these mental traps. God is continually showing us that this is our main ministry calling that we need to pursue. Freedom to the captives! Our Sunday services have always struggled, we've had many people come and go for the last years. Part of the problem is also that we're not part of a larger denomination within Italy, and we've seen that many people in our area like to be a part of larger denominational churches with a larger network of believers than what we have.

That said, we are currently in the process of asking a church in town if we could join our ministries together. There are many details which I cannot share yet, not until we meet with the main leaders this next week. Please be praying for us for wisdom from God as we will be going through a transition with our Sunday services. Don't be surprised if our next newsletter comes earlier than expected we would like to share the outcome of the meetings. We have visited their church several times and they are truly wonderful people. They never treated us as competition just because we also have a church in town and they have an excellent reputation. Our family is at a place now in our spiritual walk we desperately need to be connected to other believers in town. The burden has been on us to financially support the Zoe Center building and lead the services each Sunday without much help, and it's been exhausting, to be honest.

All that said we are still planning on keeping the Zoe Center association up and running. But shifting our focus to only these three ministry branches:

1. Healing for the nations, full 5-day retreats both in Tuscany and anywhere we're invited to do weekend retreat. This also involves weekly counseling appointments by phone with attendees!
2. Human Trafficking ministry within Arezzo. (Which Leia leads with short term missionaries and Locals)
3. English Kids Club. Every Thursday Leia teaches four hours of English classes to kids ages 4-12. This has been an incredible opportunity to share with the kids and parents about God's love and what knowing Jesus really means. Most of the parents are nominal Catholics and most have never read the Bible. I'm often challenged by the kids that Jesus is a made up story and we come from apes! So I love to take the opportunity to share with them about what I believe to be true.

You are a VERY IMPORTANT PART to all that we can accomplish here. Without God's grace, His leading, your prayers and donations, we wouldn't be able to live here and do this work. We thank God for you daily.

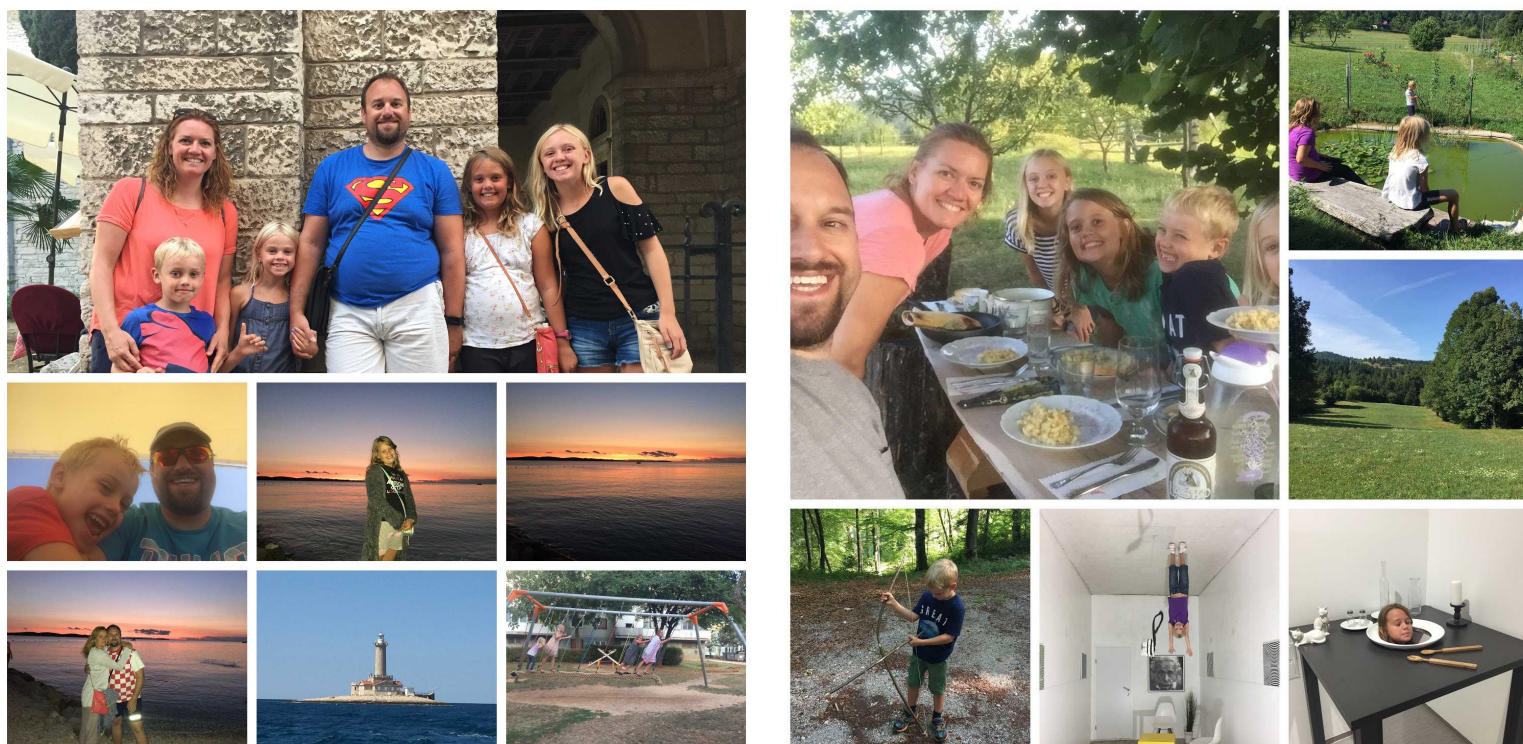
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Our Vacation in Croatia was wonderful! Thank you for a few extra donations that helped pay our apartment while there. Our host was wonderful! She greeted our kids with a big kiss and plates full of homemade pastries! Visiting the beach once a year, unplugging from ministry and the daily demands of life really recharges our souls. I attached a few vacation pictures.

Our greatest financial need right now is to change the timing belt on the car. It's about \$700. (we've gone over 70,000 miles!) We would also like to ask something we've never asked before. The kids would like to take music classes and we're wondering if anyone would sponsor them to take private violin (Elise) and piano (Eva and Sophie) lessons. The cost would be about \$100 a month to get all three girls into private music classes and we just cannot squeeze that in the budget. They already started classes on Youtube, but that only goes so far. In Italy, Public schools don't provide gym, sports or band like American public schools do. ALL sports and music are paid for by parents outside of the school system. So even if the kids would be enrolled in public school it's always on the parents' dime.

Thanks everyone for standing with us in all those transitions!!! God is with us and it is all good!!

Nicolas, Leía, Eva, Elise, Sophie, and Isaiah



**If you wish to support us, please send in your tax-deductible donations to World Outreach Center, PO Box 34. Fort Mill, SC 29716. 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