

Stevanus News

*Corato, Italy
Summer, 2023*



Dear Praying Friends,

About a year and a half ago, we started helping out with a new or better **innovative church plant** back in the city of Bari where we originally ministered over 20 years ago. The pastor we work with in Corato was contacted by a few older couples to come and encourage them because their home church was having leadership changes and shifting visions and they were about to become casualties of a growing group, aka the **de-churched**, young and old in Bari. Most of them are between 55 and 70 and we have known them for many years through shared camp meetings, ministries, etc.



Fast forward about 14 months, our group is growing and some younger couples and singles have joined us. The present goal is to bring encouragement to these precious ones after some woundedness or misunderstandings. We have not solicited anyone and all who come through the doors are welcomed. Some stay for awhile, then move on, but a **growing nucleus** has remained. It is a joy to share in this ministry and we feel honored that God is using us to encourage these special believers, as well as take part in a new church plant in the heart of the city.



On the last Sunday morning in June, we had three of our Life Group leaders share their testimonies along with three respective attendees of how cell ministry was a blessing to them during these past 9 months. All three of our home groups

followed the same study based on Dennis Rouse's book, translated into Italian, "*10 Qualities That Move You from a Believer to a Disciple*." Each group met bimonthly and discussed topics such as having a passionate love for Christ and *all* others, the heart of a servant and respect for the authority of God's word.

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

John 13:34-35



The unique challenge this year is that we had a few regular members who were first time visitors, so we were constantly cognizant of interweaving the Gospel message. New members were comfortable about coming, praying with their peers and even visiting church on a special occasion. They are the ultimate goal of this type of ministry, but we are also so grateful for our leaders who under our supervision and occasional visits, are experiencing ministry to the body—hands on.

To sum, we covet your prayers as we discern our continued leadership involvement in the city church of Bari. On national and international levels, we will again be participating a five day retreat with *Healing for the Nations* in October, preceded by a conference for European missionaries in Switzerland.

We remain grateful to the Lord for your involvement in our Italian ministry. Thank you again for your prayers and financial support which enable us to bring the Gospel message to many by effective disciple making and personal counseling.

In Christ, Mark & Denise



**World Outreach Center
PO Box 34
Fort Mill, SC 29716**

[Donate](#)