

## **In Italy**

We have arrived back in Italy now, and are enjoying our 12 days of summer this year, and of rest between our deputation time in Australia and the beginning of school for Stefania and Pinuccia, and of church activities for Richard. Pinuccia will find out on the 29th if she will have work from the beginning of the school year on September 1, and what that job will be.

In the meantime, whilst we were away, after the many activities in the church in June (baptisms, two camps), not much has happened in the last couple of months due to the summer break and a lot of people going away. There have been some new people who have started to come, but there will probably be others once September arrives.

One change for us now is that we will not be running the Youth Group for the next year. We thought that it would be best if the three teenagers went to the older group, and it will be another year before the next generation of children are old enough. So instead there will be a third



All together.

Sunday School class this year, which Pinuccia, Gloria (who helped us with the Youth Group for the last three years) and I will lead. This will be the first time that I have taught in the Sunday School, and it is not an age (10-12 years) that I know or relate to very well, but it will be good to get to know in this way the people who will be in the Youth Group next year. And it will be a good way to learn to be reliant on God, doing something I am not confident about doing.

## **In Australia**

In one sense, our two and a half months were very busy. In fact, instead of preparing 10 Bible studies for the church to use this year, I managed to prepare only five. Although we did not do any more than we did on previous visits, taking the two children everywhere with us did make the many trips and visits a lot more time consuming. I am still adjusting to parenting! Next time, due in 2011, I will think a bit more carefully about how much we can do as a family. We all arrived at the end of the deputation time tired out and looking forward to returning to our own home, especially Pinuccia. Apart from language problems, she did not have the pleasure of catching up on old friends, which was something that made the many visits more enjoyable for me. But I thank God that I have a wife whose commitment to me and to mission in Italy meant that she cheerfully contributed to our ministry together in Australia in these months. She went out of her way to speak with all the people she met, and although she never complained, I appreciated all that she put up with for us.

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On the other hand, doing all this as a family meant that I spent more time with the children than I usually do when we are at home. Not having Internet in our house certainly helped! And I enjoyed being able to watch them grow and learn, and experience many new things in a different culture.

A number of times (especially it seemed during periods when we were most tired out or under pressure of busyness) we came out of meetings encouraged by the reminder of the care and concern of people in Australia for us. I know this care was there before, but this time I (and Pinuccia) felt it a lot more, and it did bring a tear to my eye occasionally as I thought about it. Maybe it was seeing Pinuccia experience these things that helped me to experience them, or maybe it is just the new sensitive Richard since I have been married.

An important part of the trip this time was to obtain more financial support, since for the first time in my 16 years in Italy I had gone into negative. We thank God that not only were we able to get our balance back to zero, but that there were enough new and increased supporters to ensure enough support again, and we pray it will be sufficient for the next three years. We are also thankful for quite a number who decided to support Jury Cocuzzi (who will start working for the church very soon,) and for those who promised to pray for us and for the various aspects of the Trentino Church Planting Project.

Like all of my deputation visits, there were some moments that I did not plan or expect, which made the time more interesting, more encouraging, or more productive in finding help in new places.



Some of these this time were:

- \* speaking at the Anglican cathedral in Sydney during the World Youth Day
- \* during our visit to Newcastle, unexpectedly seeing friends from my Sydney and Canberra days that I had not had any contact with for years
- \* meeting up with the people from the *Ministry Training Strategy*, and getting the apprenticeships that the church is offering at Trento listed as one of their training possibilities
- \* visiting Moore College for the first time in my life - and then twice in two days. There was quite a bit of interest in serving at Trento amongst the people I met there
- \* the engagement of my only niece

## Upcoming events

*1 September:* Stefania starts pre-school - and also Pinuccia, if she is offered a job from the beginning of the school year

*14 September:* First church service at Rovereto (in the afternoon)

*23-25 September:* At Madrid for an ECM leaders' meeting