

In the church

This was a week for thinking through the direction of the church for the next year. One important change that was decided was the continued push in the **church planting efforts at Rovereto**. After the summer break we will move from monthly to fortnightly services. And then the following year, weekly services, which will mean a group (of the people from Rovereto, as well as some of those from Trento) detaching itself from the church at Trento, to be sent as missionaries to form the church at Rovereto. At the same time there will be further strengthening of the small group that meets at Rovereto, and further evangelistic activities. It is exciting to see this project go ahead. But I will no longer be a direct part of it. With Suzanne Bikker (the missionary who moved to Rovereto last summer) ready to take over the Bible studies, and others in the church committed to serving there, I am no longer needed. I do feel a bit of a loss, after investing about five years of ministry at Rovereto starting and leading the small group there. But it also gives me a great joy to me able to leave it. Leaving the group is what I have been working towards for these last five years. In fact, of the seven cell groups in the church, I will now have started and left four of them, and I am looking to leaving another next year.

This of course means I will have more time next year. Which has quickly been filled up. There has been a slight change in the direction of both the church and of me personally. The church is looking at setting up a series of **courses**, that cater for people in particular stages of the Christian life (examining Christianity, new Christians, starting to serve, mature Christians), as well as continuing the cell groups that are mixed. So I will be starting to run some of these courses, naturally along with somebody else each time that I will be training to do it next time. The other change is my desire to be not only doing ministry with groups, but also **discipling some individuals**. There are a few people that I have thought of that would be good to meet regularly with, although since the biggest need of

the church is to have more leaders for the multiplying groups I will probably concentrate on some possible future leaders. Of course, ending one ministry and starting two others does not work out mathematically, when I already have all my evenings busy. So I will have to actually see how it all works out in practice when these things start happening in September.

At the end of May there was the **end of year presentation by the Sunday School**. That, along with organising the third church children's camp, kept Pinuccia and I busy, and slightly stressed, for the last week (and more). But it went well, to show the rest of the church what happens when all these children leave the service each week. My class showed a video about the life of Saul (which we had studied this year) that we shot a couple of weeks ago, as they acted out the words to a song that I had written and they sang. It came out fairly well, too. There was also over €500 raised for a Christian school in India, mostly through the children donating some of their own toys, which were then sold. This is a great way of getting them to understand sacrificial giving, since they had to give up something of their own, rather than only raising money or relying on their parents to give them something to give.

Points for prayer

- For the church plant at Rovereto.
- For the courses and discipleship that I will be starting after the summer.
- For the children's camp.
- That more people would meet God reading the Bible through my site
- That Stefania and Daniele would grow as faithful servants of God.



The children of the Sunday School

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On the computer

A bit of feedback from my **Italian bible site**. Three years ago a lady wrote to me saying:

What you do is great and I need to thank you because I have used the site which has helped me. I have lots of Bibles at home, but the commentary of Enrico Bosio [an evangelical commentary written about 100 years ago, which is on my site] was very important for me, because it is very good, deep but written in a simple style. It is true that I can not accept all of it, given that I am Catholic, however it has helped me a lot and I will continue to consult it.

Last month she wrote again:

A few years have passed since I last wrote to you. Then I was Catholic, but now I have passed to the evangelical faith. I am telling you this because you have had a part in my spiritual work, that you had through the site <http://www.laparola.net/>, and I thank you again.

Since then I have found out a bit more about her, how she has changed her beliefs (and not just her church), and that the main help she has had in this change was from another evangelical site, where she has had a few debates on line and where her questions have been answered. I also found out that she is 74 years old. She is certainly not

in my usual demographic audience for an Internet ministry, but it was good to hear how the Word of God has been electronically working in her life as well!

In the mission

To see what the *European Christian Mission* is doing in Europe, and would like to do in the future, see its web site <http://www.ecmi.org/>, and especially the video in the middle of the page.

In the family

One of my favourite regular church activities is the monthly lunch after the service. The reality however for us has been that for the past three years, these lunches have not been as enjoyable, since we have always had to look after Stefania and Daniele,



Stefania and Daniele growing up

keeping them fed, amused, and out of trouble. But now that they are older we can give them their food and they eat it by themselves, and then we can let them run wild in the park. Well, almost wild: they play with the older children who take good care of them. So this month Pinuccia and I were free to talk normally with the adults.

One little highlight has been that Daniele has started **learning to pray**. Mostly incomprehensible prayers, since he does not talk too clearly yet, but one prayer was, "Thank you for sticky tape and the fridge" (since Pinuccia had just stuck one of his pictures to the fridge door).

Upcoming events

6 June: Evangelistic meeting for teenagers at Rovereto, organised by the young adults of the church (so I was told not to come!).

6 June: Picnic with non church friends for the Saturday afternoon Valsugana group. It is a good sign when the church can organise two completely different evangelistic meetings at the same time.

12 June: Singing and worship evening for the church.

13 June: Baptism service for seven people – I think it is the record for the most people in one year, although not all were converted in the past 12 months.

16-19 June: Church children's camp: at least 16 children from 6 to 15 years old.

20 June: Monthly service at Rovereto.

A few weeks in July-August: holidays with Pinuccia's family in Sicily.