

## In the family

The big change in the family since last I wrote is that I have become an Italian! More than three years after applying (plus another six months beforehand collecting documents), on June 25 I went to the Lord Mayor and swore to uphold the constitution and to observe the laws. It does not make a lot of difference, since Australia allows dual citizenship now, but I will be able to vote, and travelling around Europe will be slightly easier. In one way, the timing was not great, as it was the day after Italy was eliminated from the World Cup. Perhaps if I had been waving the flag that I was given at



Celebrating my Italian citizenship.

The other change is that pre-school ended at the end of June, so Pinuccia and Stefania are on holidays until September 1 (when Daniele as well will start going to pre-school). So we have a lot of time together as a family. On the 13th will be going to Sicily to spend time with Pinuccia's family. In the meantime, we are going to the lake and to the pool, on walks in the mountains, bike rides, inviting Stefania's friends to play, as well as spending time at home.

## In the church

With the summer break, pretty much all of the activities of the church (apart from the Sunday services) are having a pause. So I get a lot more time. I will be using this to prepare as many Bible studies (on the book of Acts) as I can. I will then start using them in September. I will also need to prepare some notes for the studies for the other group leaders. As well as this, I have a few projects for my Bible study material on the computer (Internet site and computer program) that I want to work on.

### Points for prayer

- For our time together as a family, both at home and in Sicily (with extended family).
- That I will be able to prepare good studies in Acts, and useful material for the computer.
- For the children in the church,
- For those who were baptised, that they will continue to grow in the Lord.

Even though the break did not really commence until July 1, some activities started winding up in the middle of June. This did give me some more time. But on the other hand, there were a lot of end of year activities that more than made up for this, both for me and Pinuccia. We spent a lot of that period totally exhausted. Daniele waking us up early almost every morning did not help.

What we were both especially involved in was the closing of the Sunday School year.

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This meant planning a presentation in one of the services of what the children had done, the final Sunday School meeting for the children, and a camp for the children. The camp was for four days, with 17 children from 7 to 16 years old. It went well, although it was a bit frustrating for me. Even though I was only officially half a teacher there (Pinuccia being a half as well, and we took turns looking after our children when we weren't "on duty" at the camp), there was always the desire to do more and spend more time with the participants at the camp because we were there, even though we were not expected to do as much. There were the usual problems (of discipline and relationships) that you would expect from any such camp, but nothing bad, and good opportunities to teach the children about relating to others, and about repentance and forgiveness.

The church is big enough now that I can not be involved in everything, and neither can anyone else. And it happens that sometimes things happen simultaneously. This is a big step from when everybody in the church would be a part of



At the Sunday School camp.

everything in the church life, and it is something that we are still getting used to. For example last month there was a trip to the lake for the Saturday cell group, which was a pleasant time with others in a similar situation to us (that is, all with small children). It was also an evangelistic event, as other friends were invited as well. At the same time, the young adults organised an evangelistic meeting at Rovereto, to which I, being too old, was told not to go! Although only one person from outside the church went to the meeting, it was good seeing the young adults working together to serve others in and outside the church, and not just having activities for themselves.

Another important event in June was the baptismal service for seven people. I think that this is the most we have ever had in one year. There were four of the young adults (two from Christian families, two converted recently), and three older people, including the mother of the 10 year old boy I mentioned two newsletters ago. I knew all of them and their stories as they have got to know God, and have had a small part in most of their lives. For example, four of them are or have been in one of the small groups I lead. So it was a joy to be able to witness this step in their Christian life.



Sandra, Fosca, Francesca, Luca, Gianni, Carolina and Calin at their baptism.