

In the family

It is always a bit annoying when I send out a newsletter, and something happens soon after that makes it out of date. So it was last time, when I sent out a newsletter on the first day of preschool for Pinuccia, Stefania and Daniele, and I mentioned where Pinuccia would be working this year, and the slight difficulties that would create. That evening, Pinuccia got a phone call from another preschool with not one, but two job offers. Not just for a short time, but for the whole year, which is what she prefers. And not from just any school, but from the school here at Lavis where the children go, and that she can walk to. And it was for 2.5 hours a day, which is just what we wanted. And it was not the after school care, which is usually the most that she can expect, but in the normal class time, which is personally more rewarding (being more like teaching and less like babysitting). And it finishes exactly at the end of the school day, so that she can bring Stefania and Daniele home with her, saving me an trip (and almost an hour) in the afternoon. All in all, there is nothing that could be improved in that job. It means that I have more than 6 hours free (without the children) and with the car available each day. This gives me a lot more possibilities for work and ministry in the church. For Pinuccia it means a lot more time at home as well, time with the children and for her preparation. She also enjoys getting to meet people at Lavis. She is recognised a lot more as she walks around, and sees people she knows from school. We also get romantic lunches every day with just the two of us, although the house does seem a bit quiet. We really thank God a lot for this job!

Daniele has fitted in well to the pre-school, going full-time now after having had a gradual insertion of a few hours per day. The first few days, he cried a couple of times when he had to come home, rather than when he was dropped off at school. When we went to school, he would instead push us away because he could not get into the

classroom fast enough. Like Stefania before him, he has not slept during the day for a long time, but at school enjoys having a little siesta in the afternoon. And naturally he has no intention of having a nap on the weekend whilst he is at home. He is also starting to learn that he will have to vary his diet, because if he does not want to eat what the school provides (which is often the case), he does not eat anything. But gradually he is getting more varied tastes, just like Stefania did when she started eating at school.

Points for prayer

- Lots of thanks for the job!
- For the witness of Pinuccia, Stefania and Daniele at school
- Preparation for our time in Australia next year
- The growth of ECM in Italy
- The youth group and teenagers

Now we are getting ready for our 3 yearly trip to Australia. Or at least, I have the tickets now. It is still more than 7 months to go, but I wanted to make sure I got the cheapest fare. It costs enough as it is... So we will be back in Australia next year on June 2, leaving again on August 18. It is still a long time away, but we are accepting bookings already, if you would like to have us visit you.



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In the mission

Earlier this month I was at Madrid, for one of my twice yearly meetings for ECM leaders. But this time it was a bit different, because as well as the usual 2 day planning meeting, there were five days of leadership training. The meetings were hard going - 11 hours a day including only 3 hours of breaks. I had a headache for three of the days, and there were quite a few participants who were feeling worse than me. But it certainly was worthwhile. Although I have done some similar training on leadership and teams in the past, it was good to go over it again and think about it in my current contexts, where I am leading in teams now. And we could certainly see the difference when we came to our two days of planning. We worked a lot better together that we have in the past, as we put into practice what we had learnt and, knowing each other better, could use our different gifts and personalities better. It was though a bit sad to miss Stefania's birthday and first dancing lesson, and a few other important things that happened whilst I was away. It was the longest I have ever

been away from the family, and did create difficulties for Pinuccia to manage everything by herself. Thanks to God that she got the perfect job at Lavis this year, otherwise it would have been almost impossible!

In the church

As is usual for this period of the year, it has been group starting time. This meant for me organising in general the seven Bible study groups in the church, and in particular the two that I lead. Pinuccia was very busy getting the three Sunday School classes going again. One pleasant change at church for us is that occasionally we get to listen to the sermon now! With both Stefania and Daniele going out to Sunday School when the sermon starts, we can listen to the sermon and participate in the prayer time in peace. Although since each of Pinuccia and I teach a Sunday School class once every three weeks, and sometimes I have to lead a service, or have to translate for someone, or am away, I have not actually been able to listen without distractions too often yet.

My general goal is to start up a new group each year. And train somebody else to lead it, then leave it after some number of years so as to be free to start another group. This year we

have started up the youth group again, after a pause of a couple of years in which there were not enough teenagers. (We kept them in the Sunday School instead.) So there will be up to eight teenagers meeting once a month on a Saturday afternoon at our house. One of the young adults (Daniela) will be leading with us, and we will be training her in Christian ministry, and another couple of ladies (Enrica and Gloria) will be helping as well. My trip to Spain meant however that I missed the introductory meeting last Saturday, and that Pinuccia could not be involved either. So it was at Enrica's house, and she and Daniela looked after it. The reports I have got back say it went better than I was expecting. There will be the first meeting with a study next month. So pray for these meetings, and especially for these teenagers as they pass through an important stage in their life, making many decisions that will have an effect for the rest of their life.

Upcoming events

October 30-31: Praise evening and special service for Reformation Sunday

November 4: Pinuccia leads a Sunday School teachers' meeting

November 6: Youth Group meeting