

In the church

These are three BIG months for the church, and *gratifying* and *exciting* for me. The Rovereto church plant is about to happen! The official steps will take place soon: the Trento church meeting on March 20 to decide to plant the church, the first meeting of the Rovereto church on the 27th to legally start the congregation, and the commissioning service on April 3 to send and pray for the people who will be leaving the Trento church to form the Rovereto church. The actual going, however, will take place in September. This is when the Rovereto church will move from fortnightly to weekly services, and the people there will no longer have a role at Trento on Sundays. There will however still be some participation in the activities that the two churches will do together.

I can remember talking with the then pastor in late 1993, soon after I arrived at Trento, about a vision for the church at Trento. We thought that to best reach all the valleys and towns throughout the province of Trento, it would be best to have a network of autonomous churches, each reaching the community in its own part of the province. The first stage, to get a good coverage of the whole area, would be to plant five new churches – a big ask for 20 people, as the church was then. But we waited for God to work and to give us the opportunities. Now, 18 years later, we thank God that we are in a position to plant the first of these churches. And I thank all of you that have been praying for this vision for the last couple of decades! Naturally, not everything we have done since then has been directly for church planting. But we have kept mentioning it in the church, kept it on the agenda, and made sure we were always looking out as to how we could serve elsewhere, not just looking in to serving ourselves. So all the church leadership is committed to this vision, as are most of the church members. All this is *gratifying*, to see God bring about what I have been hoping for and working towards all this time.

However, it is one thing to say that church planting is a good vision, it is another thing to actually do it. I have heard of church planting visions in other churches run off the tracks when they get to the time of actually planting a church, and the people realise what it means: sending people elsewhere (hopefully some of the most gifted and active people), so there will be less friends and

Points for prayer

- Thanks for God's answers to 18 years of prayers
- For the growth and plans of the church plant at Rovereto
- That the church will have a voice in the society at Trento
- For the growth of ECM ministries in Italy
- For Stefania and Daniele

people to serve them. So although we have been preparing the congregation for the church plant for some time, we are concentrating on this preparation in these months. Last May, when we planned the studies for this church year (September-June), we decided to study Acts in our Bible study groups. This means that the groups are now talking about church planting in Acts, with obvious applications to our situation. In particular, I get to visit various groups to talk about the church planting vision, its reasons and the consequences. This is *exciting* for me, it is a great thing to talk about and inspire people to. As well as that, there was a missionary speaker in mid February, to spur us into thinking more about world mission, and not just planting churches in our own neighbourhood. Then in the first weekend in April the International Director of ECM will come to give training and encouragement in church planting. The commissioning will be during the church service that weekend.

Richard and Pinuccia Wilson
via Zippel, 5
38015 Lavis TN, Italy
Phone: 0461240992
richard@laparola.net
http://richardwilson.interfree.it/
Blog: http://richard.laparola.net/

**For changes to this mailing list
or for financial support, write to:**

European Christian Mission
P.O. Box 15
Croydon NSW 2132
(02) 97475446
ecm.oz@ecmi.org



The social-cultural arm of the church, *Altrimenti*, is also very active in these months. As well as its ongoing activities, there will be a series of public meetings on the theme of "Liberty". There are four public conferences on various aspects of liberty, a showing of the film *Amazing Grace* on the abolition of slavery, and a show by Carlos Martinez, a Spanish evangelical who is one of the foremost mime actors in the world, on human rights. Pray that, through these and other initiatives, the church will have a voice at Trento.

Pinuccia is also busy organising the church children's camp that will be in June. We will actually be in Australia and so not at the camp, but Pinuccia with her experience is helping the people who will be running the camp to do what needs to be done now.

In the mission

In February the ECM missionaries in Italy had a meeting to discuss the future of the mission in our country, amongst

other matters. We wanted to look at how we as a mission could grow in order to serve Italy more, planting more evangelical churches where there are not any. We decided to concentrate on the area around Lake Garda, which is to the south of Trento and just to the north of another couple of church planters. So we feel that we can support an initiative in that area, which contains many towns without an evangelical witness. The hard part is finding missionaries to start a work there. These days there are few people offering themselves for a long term missionary project as pioneer church planters. So pray for that vision and that God will send workers. Not just once, but lots of times. It might take a long time for an answer to come, as was the case for the Rovereto church plant, but the answer will come.

In the family

It's already time to start thinking about school for next year (ie in September)! In January we received the forms for Pinuccia to apply for a relief teaching position, for Daniele to return to preschool, and (the big one) for Stefania to go to infants school. We already have to make some choices for Stefania, as there are a few different possibilities for hours and programs at the two infants school at Lavis (which are about 100m apart, and even closer to home than the preschool is).

We are also starting to think about and prepare for our trip to Australia - we leave on May 31 and return August 19. If you would like me to come to your church or small group, let me know as soon as possible as I am already working on a calendar for this visit.

Upcoming events

February 26: Youth Group

March 10: Public conference on "Freedom"

March 12: Youth Group

March 13: Mime at the theatre

March 20: Church annual general meeting

March 24: Public conference on "Freedom"

March 26: Dinner for the Young Adults at our house - an attempt to get them meeting again, after a year without doing anything together

March 27: Rovereto church annual general meeting

April 1-3: Talks by ECM International Director, and commissioning service

April 7: Public conference on "Freedom"

April 9: Youth Group

April 21: Public conference on "Freedom"

April 28: Film showing on "Freedom"

May 7: Youth Group

May 31: Departure for Australia