

Richard, Pinuccia, Stefania, Daniele, Luca, Mattia

Helping a church to plant new churches and start new ministries in Trento, Italy

In the church

The preparations have begun for the summer children's ministry, with some changes this year. We will be running not one camp, but two. After 7 years, the group that started in the first children's camp is quite consolidated, but are now teenagers or almost. Rather than excluding them, or creating too big an age range, we are going to start again. The existing group will keep going with the same leaders, whereas I have been given the role of starting again. I will be organising a camp for 7-11 year olds. We will be starting small, as we did 7 years ago, with just a weekend and about ten children from the church. Then over the years the plan is to grow, as the children get older and more independent and the leaders gain experience, going for longer (eventually getting to a week) and inviting friends and children from other churches. What excites me about this role is creating the new group of leaders, recruiting people from those who have come to the church in the last few years. They probably do not need much help from me, as I have seen some of them serving well in the Kids Club evangelistic program (Ovidiu and Alina), and others have run children's camps in other churches (Giuseppe and Ingrid). But if I can get them going and help them for a few years, before leaving them so I can start other ministries, I will be happy.

**In the family**

Luca and Mattia are growing well, in fact the paediatrician almost reproached us because they were putting on too much weight too quickly. They are very calm, and enjoy playing "pass the parcel" when we are with family or friends. Last week they began sleeping through the whole night, which created a big improvement in their parents' general well-being. It makes a big difference to waking up two times for each baby every night!

Over Christmas we were in Sicily for 11 days, plus two days of travel each way (1500 kilometres plus a ferry crossing). The trip went surprising well, with the twins sleeping all the time whilst in the car, and Stefania and Daniele keeping themselves amused in the back. Staying there was a bit more difficult, having to make do with what we could find to look after the family. But my in-laws were a great help doing all our housework and giving cuddles to their grandchildren so that we could take care of the family, two at a time. We were expecting to suffer the cold of non heated houses, but were not expecting it to be often colder outside that in Trento – in fact, while we were there, it snowed in Pinuccia's home town for the first time on record! Anyway, the trip was worthwhile, as otherwise it would have been 3 years between trips to see our Sicilian family, and everyone there was very happy to meet the twins. We were also able to attend the wedding of our niece, who spent most of last year living with us and now lives a few hundred metres from us – our first call babysitter.

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Last week a long awaited exam for sixty permanent positions in the pre-schools of the province of Trento was finally announced. Given that there will likely be thousands of applicants from all around Italy, Pinuccia does not have much chance of obtaining one of these positions. But she needs to do the exam anyway, and do



Points for prayer and thanksgiving

- For the preparation of both children's camps, and for the new leaders Ovidiu, Alina, Giuseppe e Ingrid.
- The Luca and Mattia's growth.
- For my Sicilian family, that is always welcoming and helpful.
- For Pinuccia's study for her exam.

as well as possible, because the results will influence her position in the waiting list for relief and non permanent positions for several years. At least she is on maternity leave this year rather than teaching and so has more time for studying, although the family does of course take up a lot of this free time. The pre-selection exam (to cut the applicants down to 150) will be in March or April. The final written and oral exams will have to be before the summer, but the exact period has not been announced yet. This could have a bearing on our planned trip to Australia this year (from June to August), which has already been postponed from last year, but we are just waiting at the moment to see what happens.