

Whew!

An update on the ministry of Scott & Sharon MacLean – Christmas 2002

Whew! That's what we were saying a few weeks ago as we collapsed for a Sunday afternoon nap. November was one of the busiest months we have had here so far. It was exciting to be that involved in the work of the ministry here. For us, it was a sign of the progress we have made. But it also wore us out! It was, to borrow a phrase from a prayer letter several years ago, a good tired. Let us describe for you what the month was like.

The last weekend of October was the annual missions conference. This was a wonderful time of learning what the Lord is doing in the world and a challenge to be a part of His work. In addition to the missionary couple that the church supports, we also had a couple come from southern Italy who run a children's home. It was exciting to hear of how the Lord was using their ministry, not only in the lives of the children, but also in the community.

The first weekend of November was spent on a retreat with the youth group. Our group joined a group from another church and spent the holiday weekend at a house in France. It was a wonderful opportunity for them to get to know other Christian youth (our group is about ½ unsaved teens) and have a fun time. The last Sunday morning the speaker gave a clear and convincing presentation of the Gospel, mentioning the fact that if someone does not trust in Christ for salvation, they face an eternity

in hell. It was a good challenge for our group who has heard the Gospel several times but has not yet made a commitment. While none of them made a profession of faith, we know that they are seriously thinking about Spiritual things.

The next week we both had colds that wiped us out, but Scott was already busy preparing for the following two weeks in which he led a home Bible study, led and gave the lesson for the youth group, and preached on two consecutive Sundays. Considering that it was all in Italian, it was quite a challenge! It also was a sign of progress in our language abilities that we were able to get it all completed.

The youth meeting went well. We talked about creation and the fall. We also considered briefly some of the unmentioned problems that there are with the theory of evolution. The youth were attentive and responsive during the lesson. One of the unsaved guys had expressed just before the lesson that one of his doubts about Christianity was that it went against the "science" that he had been taught. Hopefully the lesson opened his thinking a bit in this regard.

We did not have the Thanksgiving outreach that we were planning. The team that was supposed to come from Colorado had to postpone the trip until another year. Although we were disappointed, it was a blessing in disguise as about half the team was sick the week that they were supposed to come and we were all running on empty!

The fall English classes went well, including a new set of English classes on Saturday mornings. There were seven new students in those classes, most of whom were anxious to come again. We ate lunch together after the final class and answered several questions about what we believe.

Coming up this Saturday (12/14) is both the Christmas party for the youth group and the church Christmas program. Please keep these in prayer as both will be outreach events.

Italian Info

What is the main crop which is grown in the countryside around Milan?

- A) Corn B) Soybeans C) Rice
D) Oats E) Wheat

Answer to last letter's question:

Incredibly, 70% (D) of unmarried Italian men over the age of 35 still live at home with their mother!

In other news, we now have a church office. Dan Standridge (one of our co-workers) turned his home office into a bedroom for his oldest daughter (a much needed change), and needed to find an office outside the home for his counseling ministry. Scott joined with him in order to have some dedicated office space (as opposed to a corner of the bedroom) and to help with the expenses.

Perhaps the best part of the office is that it gives the church a visible street presence. Our meeting hall is in the basement of an apartment building with an entrance inside the courtyard. Although there is a sign for the church at the top of the stairs, it can not be seen from the street, so no one knows we are there. Our new office is a storefront with a display window just a few doors down the street. We will be able to place a sign for the church in the window (which will mention the location of our meeting hall). The display window will also be able to be used for creative displays to invite people to outreach events, or simply to make people think. Please pray that the Lord would provide for the set-up costs of this new office.


Whew! Already out of space! Thanks again for taking the time to read this letter and for your prayers for us and the work here.

His Servants,




Scott & Sharon MacLean

Quickly Noted ...




 **WWW.MACLEAN.8M.COM** – As usual there will be a new “Life in Italy” section as well as new pictures. Sometime soon we hope to get up pictures of our new office.

\$ Support Update – We are at 100% prayer support (Please keep praying!) Our practical financial support (% of monthly expenses) is at 93.8%. We are at 81.5% of full financial support. We do keep an updated support chart on our web site.

 **Merry Christmas and Happy New Year !!** – May you be filled with wonder and joy as you remember the miracle of the incarnation!

Prayer & Praise

- ✓ Pray for our Christmas Program outreach.
- ✓ Praise for progress in our language abilities and increased opportunities to be a part of the ministry here.
- ✓ Praise for a fun and challenging youth retreat and continued good attendance at the meetings.
- ✓ Pray for our youth meetings (next ones 12/14, 1/18, 2/1) as we continue to study what we believe.
- ✓ Praise for good English classes and a new group of contacts who have already expressed some interest in what we believe.
- ✓ Pray for open doors to speak with friends and neighbors of the Gospel, and for wisdom and boldness to take the opportunities when they come.
- ✓ Pray for wisdom as we continue to seek ways to increase national ownership of the church and its ministries.

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