


Seeking Sheep ...

April 2007 update on the ministry of Scott & Sharon MacLean serving in Italy with  CrossWorld

The poultry salesman stepped down out of his truck/booth and lit up a cigarette. "You know" he said "when you get to be my age, everything is pretty boring. When you are young you look forward to things, but then you get tired of them. There is just nothing new." As he moved on in the discussion I was struck by the similarity of his words to the book of Ecclesiastes. When I later asked if he had a Bible he said no. I had already packed up the book table at that point, so I told him would bring a Bible for him the next week. I told him that a very wise king once made the same observations that he did. He said he would be interested in reading the Bible. Could he be one of the sheep?

I had just about finished my shift at the ambulance house when one of the other workers started complaining to me how the priest was always so judgmental. "He always says to me 'Well if you were good Christian people you would not ...'". As the conversation went on I was able to share the grace of God and how He accepts those who can't live right and then does the work of changing their hearts for them. Could this co-worker be one of the sheep?

The ladies that greet Sharon at the park, the kids who remember the Bible Club we had last summer, the two folks that bought books at the book table last week – Could they be some of the sheep?

As I was preparing a message for our small church a few weeks ago, a verse leaped off the page at me. "And I HAVE other sheep, which are also not of this fold; I MUST bring them also, and they shall hear MY voice; and they shall become one flock with one Shepherd." Jesus is speaking about us – Gentile believers. And that includes these indifferent Italians we work with. Jesus already HAS His sheep here. They are the ones that will hear His voice and come to Him, to be part of His great flock.

What an encouragement verses like this are! The sheep are there, and it is even Christ's work to bring them in. (And a good thing too because I'm not sure I could convince any of them.) We just have to echo His voice so that His sheep hear it and come. It is His work and we are privileged to get to have a part in it. It also reminds us as we meet people here in the Ossola valleys to look at each person and ask ourselves: "Could this be one of His sheep?"

Well, as we go about the business of seeking sheep, we have some busy times ahead. In June a team from West Rockport Baptist Church will be coming to help in the work here. We hope to have a Bible & English club in the park the week they are here. This will let them help with the work without knowing much Italian, as well as the English language being a drawing card for the kids and their parents. We hope to have Bible stories, songs and games in English and in Italian. The team will also, Lord willing, put lots of tracts in mailboxes, help with open air evangelism and perhaps even have a booth at the town fair. Please be in prayer for the preparations for this exciting outreach.

Later this month, we will have to submit our residency permits for renewal. The government recently changed the procedure for this making it more complicated AND more expensive. Since all the paperwork now must go through an office in Rome, there is a massive backlog. Please pray that our paperwork will get processed before we need to leave on home ministry in October. Pray also for other missionaries who are facing similar problems.

ITALIAN INFO

Ring! Ring! Italians love their cell phones. What is the ratio of cell phones to population in Italy?

- A) 1.03 cell phones per person
- B) 1.17 cell phones per person
- C) 1.34 cell phones per person
- D) 1.52 cell phones per person

Answer to last letter's question:

The maximum speed limit on Italian highways is (C) 130 km/h (81mph), although that limit is often ignored!

"And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they shall hear My voice; and they shall become one flock with one shepherd." John 10:16 (NASB)

It is critical for us, and other missionaries, to be able to renew these permits, as failure to do so would force us to reapply for visas. Getting new visas at this point would be almost impossible.

In August we are looking forward to being a part of the “Macedonian Project”, a three week seminar held near Geneva. The seminar brings in veteran church planters from across Europe so that we can listen, discuss and learn from their vast combined experience. As the director of the project said “There’s no point in repeating the same mistakes that others have made.” We are hoping that our lay coworkers, Filippo and Sandra, will be able to attend with us. Currently there is not enough space, but they are seeking additional lodging so that they can attend. Please pray that the Lord would provide the needed funds for us (and our co-workers) to attend this seminar.

And believe it or not, it will then be time for another time of home ministry. We plan to be back in the US visiting with our supporters from October 2007 through April 2008. We look forward to meeting with many of you during this time and thanking you for your prayers for the work here as we seek His sheep.

His Servants,






Scott, Sharon & Karis MacLean

QUICKLY NOTED ...

- € **Dollar Doldrums!** – In a little over a year the value of the US Dollar has plunged 12.5%! And it was already at a very low level back then. This weak dollar can be a real financial challenge to all missionaries in Europe. Please pray for the Lord’s provision.
- 🌐 **On our web-site (www.snsMacLean.net)** – In our “Life in Italy” section – Driving in Italy (Yikes!), of course new pictures, and more about the dollar versus the Euro. And don’t forget that we try to update this page monthly.
- ➔ **And now a wedding ...** – After our visit to the US in January, we were not really planning on coming back again until home ministry began in October. But on Valentine’s Day Sharon’s brother Steve got engaged and so we will be back again for their wedding on May 12.

Prayer & Praise

- ✓ Pray for a mighty working of God in the Ossola Valley. Pray that the Holy Spirit would convict of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:8-11)
- ✓ Praise for the friendships we have developed and pray that we might have opportunities to reflect the light and love of God through our lives and words.
- ✓ Praise for the short term team who will be here June 14-27.
- ✓ Pray for all the preparations (both by the team and by us) as we prepare for this exciting time of ministry.
- ✓ Pray for good weather, good turnout, effective ministry and for God to be glorified through the teams visit.
- ✓ Praise for excellent conversations at the market and at the ambulance house!
- ✓ Pray for those we have talked with, and those who have bought books or taken tracts. Pray that the Lord would use what they have heard (or read) to draw them to Himself.
- ✓ Pray that we would do a good job of “echoing the voice of Christ” as we seek to find His sheep here in the Ossola Valleys.

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