

JANUARY 2008



## A LOOK BACK AND A LOOK AHEAD UPDATES FROM ACIREALE SICILY Giuseppe & Pennie Collesano

Dear Praying Friends and Family,

God is good and we want to give all the glory to Him. I am humbled at how He has blessed our lives this past year and would like to share a bit of what has happened and what we are praying God will help to happen in Sicily this new year.

### A LOOK BACK -

"Steady and slow, one step at a time, one day at a time," has been our motto for the outreach in Aci. A year ago, not very many people knew about our church, but what a difference a year makes! Giuseppe set a goal to visit all the shops and their owners within a 2-mile radius of the church, and he accomplished that. Now the people who work in the district of the church can't say that they haven't heard about us. He has had some very good contacts and has been able to have quite a few in-depth conversations about our beliefs versus the Catholic beliefs. Pray for the pet shop owners, the coffee bar owners, the custom made doors owners, the lady who runs the gift shop, the couple who makes fresh bread every morning, the pizza maker, the dollar store owner, the web-designer, the international gift shop owners, the chicken and potato rotisserie owners, the fruit vendors.... you get the picture. They are all around where the church is, and Giuseppe makes sure that he visits them every couple of weeks and continues to invite them to come to church and hear for themselves Who and what we preach.

We've done a few major outreaches throughout the year to get people's attention. Giuseppe started going to our city's weekly market with our van and a tract holder attached to it. The law says that as long as your products don't touch the ground you don't need a permit to display them. A missionary gave him an old tract holder that lays on top of the hood, so he gets to the market area every Saturday morning around 6 a.m. and parks in a legal parking space, and stays there until 1 p.m. distributing tracts, Bibles, pamphlets, etc., and talks with the people as they come and go from the market.



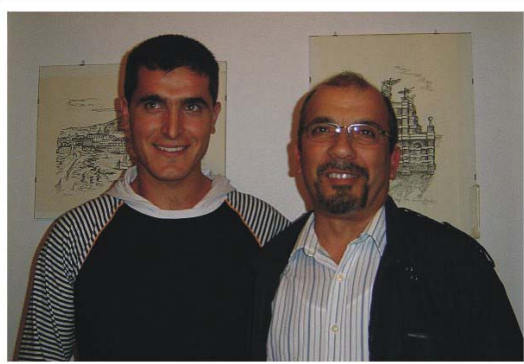
We still have our monthly church luncheons the first Sunday of every month, and we have used this as an outreach to invite our neighbors to come to our church service. Most folks that live in the immediate area of our house have come out at least once. Pizza and a movie has been a big success. We pop the popcorn and provide the coca cola and invite people to come and watch a movie for free, and eat some pizza afterwards. We've seen 20-30 people come out to enjoy the fun with us. Our goal is to gather people in the community together for fun and fellowship but our scope is to use movies to bring them to a better understanding of who Christ is and what he wants to do in their lives. Amy J. Stephens came in November to bless us with an evening of songs, praises, and life testimonies; 80+ came out for that event...we guessed around 30 in attendance were non-Christians.

Walloon Community Church sent a team for 10 days to run a VBS program for us. We saw 35+ kids come out every morning at 9 a.m. to learn to play American sports and hear the gospel through song, drama and fun

crafts. Teaching Sunday school, babysitting on Thursday evening Bible study nights, and teaching ladies Bible studies has kept Pennie busy this past year. We are presently involved in studying the book of Mark with a couple from our church, Carmelo and Maria. God has used the ladies studies and this couples study to bless us both personally and as couples as we learn from God's Word together and as brothers and sisters in the Lord.

## A LOOK AHEAD -

In order for us to look ahead, we have to take one more quick look back. In the past month the Lord has brought two more lost sheep into His fold. Edy and Teti. Edy accepted the Lord one Sunday evening after we had shared lunch together and then watched the "Heaven's Gates, Hell's Fire" DVD. We were taking he and his wife home and Giuseppe asked him if he enjoyed the film and if there was anything that could be holding him back from making a decision for the Lord. Edy replied that the only thing holding him back was that he didn't know how to pray and ask God into his heart. So once we arrived at their apartment, he and Giuseppe spent some time in the Word so that Edy could understand what he needed to do to ask for forgiveness of his sins. He prayed to accept Jesus as his Savior, and in his words "is now a new person". Last week, Edy and Vaslicca left to return to Greece because there was a job waiting for him there. Pray for them, that they will find a church that will fulfill their need to worship and grow.



Giuseppe & Edy

Teti started coming to our church services a couple months ago. She told me that she found peace in her heart, happiness in her life, and started reading her Bible more once she began attending. The Sunday after we had the concert at church, she and I were talking and she told me that she knew she believed what she was hearing preached and reading in her Bible and that she knew she had to make a decision...right here...with her hand over her heart. PTL she made that decision a couple of weeks ago. And the Lord used Maria to help her find her way to Him. Teti is in a new believers Bible study with our co-workers, and is coming to the bi-monthly ladies Bible study at the church.

We are still in contact with the kids from the VBS program that we ran this past summer. Plans are in the works to have a monthly outreach strictly for them.... we want to bring the fun to them because they most likely won't come to us. Hamburgers and hotdogs on the grill, movies under the big tent, soccer games, hanging out and talking.... that type of thing is what we are planning.

At the end of June, Marc and Julie Eckel and their boys will be here for a couple of weeks with Splat Ministry. We are in contact with Amy J. Stephens to bring her back here for another night of worship and praise. We are also in contact with an Italian singer who is willing to come and share a few nights in concert, too.

This Tuesday is our kickoff for the PWOC (Protestant Women of the Chapel) Bible studies. Pray that God will bring new ladies to our group for fellowship and growth in their faith. We have a March ladies retreat planned and we are praying for 50 women to come and share a weekend together -studying God's Word. Many of the women have expressed their desire to get more involved with the women from our church in Aci. We are in the beginning stages of planning an outreach event for this to happen.

Awesome Father, Almighty and Merciful God, may we cheerfully accomplish those things which you would have us do this day. Amen.

*Giuseppe & Pennie*