

# deFelice Italy Ministry Update

November 17, 2009

## ---- Ministry is People ----

For more information, visit [www.marcodefelice.org](http://www.marcodefelice.org).

Greetings in the mighty name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who is returning to judge all of the earth! What immense joy it will be to see him appear in his glory. May we long for and hasten that day!

It's been about a month since I've written. Our days are extremely full, and yet by God's grace I can report we are generally very relaxed and peaceful. God continues his good work in us, at times painful, always perfect, in the other believers here, and in a number of contacts we have locally, and in people around Italy with whom we are ministering.

In fact, to share about our ministry, I must share about people, for ministry is not programs, but people. Programs can be used to minister, but the ministry is about people! Certainly, time wise, a big part of ministry is preparing sermons, for God's Word is key for that growth of God's people.

So, let me share about some of the people in our lives. The precious local believers make up a big part of our life, and we both give and receive much from them. What a blessing to be a part of this body.

### Local people

Let me share specifically about some local people to whom we are ministering.

### Mustafa

You will probably remember what I wrote about a month ago that we asked Mustafa to leave Daniele and Petra's home. At that point, he shared that he knew that Christianity is the truth, but that he cannot live it, thus revealing a lack of understanding that salvation is by grace alone. In the past month, a number of us have had contact with him by telephone, and it has often been Mustafa who has done the calling. He obviously missed us.

On Saturday, he accepted an invitation from Adriano to spend Saturday evening and night in their home,

and so he came to church on Sunday for the first time in a month. In addition, he willingly accepted to take his Bible with him, which he had refused to take when he left a month ago.

So, we rejoice for this renewed contact, and we ask you to pray with us that God would open his eyes to fully grasp grace, and trust in Jesus Christ for salvation which he cannot ever earn on his own.

### Nicole:

Nicole continues to come faithfully, and is reading her Bible. We had a study with her the other day, and she shared that she feels that it is impossible for her to be saved, as she is not worthy. So once again, we looked at passage after passage which talks about salvation being by grace alone. What an extremely clear example that only God can open the eyes of the blind and grant faith. Pray with us that God would open her eyes.

### Marco P:

Marco continues to diligently attend our Wednesday night Bible study, and is reading his Bible. He also meets frequently with Adriano for a Bible study together. (Adriano and Roberta are such a key part of the ministry). Marco seems to be understanding more of the truth, pray with us that God would open his eyes to saving faith.

### Daniele Petra and Manuel:

We would ask you to continue to pray for Daniele and Petra. Daniele's chemotherapy is weakening him and making him extremely tired. He had applied to be able to take early retirement for medical reasons, but in order to be eligible he must continue working until that permission is granted. In spite of the significant financial cost of not continuing to work, for the last several weeks he has taken off on sick leave, because he just does not have the strength to continue. They have continued to struggle to know how to deal with Manuel,

but we rejoice that there have been some very positive changes in the last couple of weeks. On Saturday night we spent the evening with them, and modeled a number of practical ways of better dealing with Manuel, as well as sharing some very clear and simple principles with them after he went to bed. What joy to hear that there have already been some very significant changes in their parenting style, and in Manuel, the very next day!

Pray with us that God would sustain them in a difficult period. As it looks now, Daniele is simply not going to be well enough to return to work to be able to qualify for medical retirement. This will reduce their income very significantly. Pray for God's peace, and wisdom as to what means they should take, especially Petra, to seek to increase their income. Their living standard is already very basic.

### **Adriano and Roberta**

Let me briefly mention a local need for prayer. Adriano's unsaved father had been diagnosed with a very fast-growing tumor. It is spreading so fast that the doctors have said there is no use giving him any treatment, and expect him to die next month or so. In spite of this, he is still closed to hearing the gospel. So, most days after work Adriano drives 30 minutes to where his father is in the hospital, visits with him, and then arrives home for supper about 9 PM.

Obviously, this is a painful trial, as he sees his father dying and realizes that barring a miracle he is on his way to eternal torment. Adriano is seeking to use this time to help their two older children, 13 and 9, understand more of death and eternal judgment. Pray that God's grace would sustain him and Roberta in this trial, as they continue to minister in many other ways as well as ministering to the family.

### **Sebastiano and Anna:**

We're in the midst of our family life course, and a young couple in their mid-30s, Sebastiano and Anna, with a three-year-old son have been coming regularly. Sebastiano, repairs furnaces as a job, and God worked it out for him to need to come to our house when the other repairman botched the job. I was able to invite him to the course. He showed great interest, and I even dropped an invitation off at his workplace, but they did not come the first couple of weeks. Then, Fabio's furnace had a problem, and God providentially

arranged for Sebastiano to be the one to answer the call. With Fabio also urging them to attend, they began coming the very next week. They greatly appreciate the teaching, which has included much of the Gospel, as well as good practical advice regarding relationships in the home. The course should continue for at least another two or three months. Pray that God would draw them to himself.

### **Matteo:**

We met Matteo, late 20's, evangelizing a few months ago, he contacted us but never came. He called about 10 days ago, came for a visit, then came one Wednesday night, and came back yesterday for another visit. He is a young man with an apparently extremely domineering father. At this point, Matteo seems to be seeking answers to his family problems. Pray that God would open his eyes to recognize his most serious problem, his sin before a holy God, and to see Jesus Christ as the only Savior.

### **Evangelistic contacts**

Yesterday, Sherrie and I went to Rovigo to evangelize after my visit with Matteo. I was feeling under the weather, and was extremely tired, but we prayed for strength and God would be glorified and went anyway. We had a wonderful conversation with two young mothers, each with a five year old: Mara, single mother, with Giovanni, MariaTeresa, with Eleonora. They both repeatedly said they'd like to come, bring the children, and visit us. Maria Teresa remembered Laura, because she and Laura were in the same room when they both gave birth to children five years ago. Pray that Mara and MariaTeresa will come, and will be drawn to Christ.

We also had a very in-depth conversation about God for about 45 minutes with two couples, probably in their late 40's, early 50's, very likely all from broken former marriages. They asked tons of solid questions about God. Pray they'll accept our invitation for a meal to hear more about God, and call us to organize it.

### **\*\*\* MIMMO MINISTRY \*\*\*\***

Let me share with you about a few people with whom we have contact in our Mimmo Ministry. Mimmo Ministry is our ministry to others throughout Italy, some of them current or probable future church leaders, some people who God is calling to himself, others

who are already saved but are without a church. The vast majority of them are contacts from our Italian website which contains my sermons.

**Alfredo** and his wife Anna, from southern Italy, came to visit us in June. He has been active in ministry for more than 10 years. He has asked me for help in growing. So, I am seeking to come alongside and disciple him in his walk and his ministry. They have a very difficult situation in church, and indeed, it may be that sometime down the road they would be used of God to plant a new church.

**Marco L.** from central Italy, has been listening to my sermons for about two years, and recently contacted me. In telephone conversations with him, it seems that he is truly come to understand salvation by faith and is trusting in Jesus Christ. There is no church for him to attend in his town, so we are looking for something in nearby towns for him. In addition, I am providing personalized teaching and help for him to get established. Pray that God would establish him.

**Pam** a very dear sister whom we actually met in person two or three years ago on a trip to Sicily. She is an American married to an Italian for more than 20 years, and God saved her few years ago. So, she has the burden of a mixed marriage. She is without a church in her area, but recently made contact with the church we suggested to her which is not too far. Pray that God will sustain her and provide for her to have local fellowship.

Thank God with us for the joy of seeing God at work in lives throughout Italy and throughout the world.

### **Giuseppe and Rosella:**

I shared over a month ago about Giuseppe and Rosella. She has been a JW for more than 20 years, he has been mostly agnostic. About a year and a half ago seek to strengthen their marriage by "becoming religious". He read through the entire Bible, and became thoroughly convinced that the doctrine of the JW organization are not biblical, and in fact it is a cult. Moreover, he became convinced that Jesus Christ is truly God, and that salvation in Christ is the most important thing in life. At a certain point in his search for God, he found our website and found that his heart resonated with the teachings which he read in sermon after sermon. We started corresponding by e-mail, and then one month ago, we went and visited them. God

willing, they are due to visit us this coming Saturday and Sunday. Their 24 and 15-year-old daughters are both very open, and are due to be with them. We anticipate a very intensive weekend over the open Bible, please pray that God would direct the time that it would be useful in their search for salvation.

### **Others**

Actually, there are a number of other people with whom we are in touch, mostly by e-mail or telephone. God has encouraged us in the last month or so by allowing us to hear from a number of people throughout Italy who have come to salvation through reading or listening to the sermons. We are seeking to encourage them and help them to grow, and where possible to find churches for them in their areas.

### **\*\*\*\* About us \*\*\***

We are well, and we profoundly thank God for his overwhelming grace and mercy which He is pouring out upon us. These are rich days, and it is a very great blessing to be able to rejoice in God's grace with one another, and to be united in being poured out for his glory.

In fact, if you would join us in prayer, we pray for wisdom and discernment to know how to best be spent for the glory of God to the advancing his kingdom. There are many ministry opportunities, we pray for wisdom to know those which are best for us to invest in. Oh that we be spent for the kingdom!

### **--- closing**

thank you for taking the time to read this, and thank you for praying. We pray that what we have shared will encourage you in your own walks, and will cause you to give thanks to God for what he is doing here in the midst of us. It is always an encouragement to us to hear what he is doing elsewhere, and so for free to write to us if you would like to share. We live by grace, and find our strength in God. Our prayer is that he will be glorified in us and through us, as we await the appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Rejoicing as we work and wait,

Marco and Sherrie (Serena) deFelice