

ITALY

Preaching the Good News of Jesus Christ

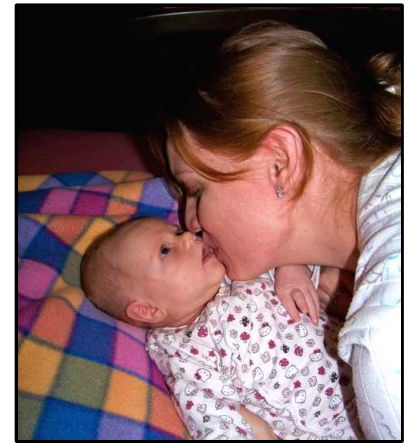


THE GIRARDS

Dear Friends and Ministry Partners,

June 2010

For the few of you who do not use Facebook and may not know it yet, here is the big news: Sophie Anne was born on May 8th at 6:10am. Although she was almost two weeks late, it was an amazing birth that lasted 2 ½ hours, and as Leia desired, she was born in water! She weighed 8lbs 9oz and measured 20.5 inches. Only 3 weeks have gone by since then, but she has already gained about 2 pounds. She is a good baby, and we are very grateful. Eva and Elise are still adjusting to life with a baby sister, and they are doing well. We decided to name her Sophie, because it means “wisdom” and Anne means “grace and favor”. We believe this is what God is giving to us in this season of our lives; she is a blessing from Heaven and a reminder to us of God’s promises.



Sophie Anne Girard



Elise and Sophie



Proud Father with Eva and Sophie



Barbara Ciccone, Eva, Elise, and Sophie

Tuscany

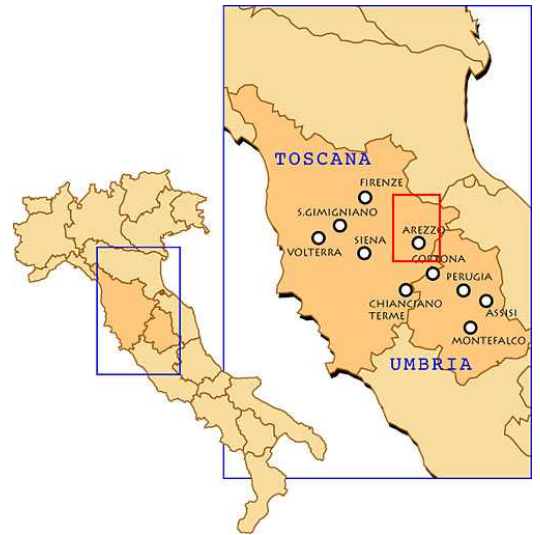
As we mentioned in our last newsletter, we have been in Tuscany for Sophie's birth. This is the area where we are moving to this summer. Spending a month there was very enlightening. We were able to meet with few believers and scout the area some more. We are still praying about a specific location around Arezzo or in a smaller town between Florence and Arezzo.

The spiritual state of Tuscany is absolutely heartbreaking!!! There is no evangelical church in Arezzo- not one. There are 3 good churches in Florence, which represents around 400 born-again believers for a population of about 1 million people. This is worse than even some Asian and middle eastern countries! Buddhism, atheism, and humanism are rising along with any other religion and philosophies that try to “make you feel good inside without any life-changing experience”. Unlike Southern Italy, Tuscans are not devout Catholics. Many Tuscan’s are actually very critical against the Church. Homosexuality is also widely accepted. Due to humanism and Tuscany’s economic resources, freemasonry is huge and very influential. While we don’t hear much about it, freemasonry is often compared to the mafia, because of its connections with the government and the economy.

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Arezzo

Some interesting facts about the area: Arezzo's population is about 100,000 and the whole province (which is like a county) is about 350,000. Founded by a few farmers around 1000 BC, the city grew and prospered quickly. Its central location (Arezzo connects 4 different valleys) and its proximity to Florence, largely contributed to Arezzo's success and growth. Throughout history, Arezzo went from being independent to being under the dominion of different rulers. It eventually joined the Kingdom of Italy in 1960 when Victor Emmanuel II was king. Arezzo is the birthplace of many significant artists, musicians, and scientists. Guido of Arezzo was the inventor of modern musical notation. The famous explorer Amerigo Vespucci's mother was from the province of Arezzo. The actor and film director Roberto Benigni (*Life is Beautiful*) was also from Arezzo. Today, Arezzo and its province still play a significant role in central Italy. Arezzo and Florence are still very important cities for art, tourism, fashion, and its cuisine. Famous brand names such as Prada are based in Tuscany.



Location of Arezzo

What amazed us was the number of foreigners (mainly Asians and Africans) living in Tuscany - it is very high. While the melting pot of culture may be interesting, there is also a strong spiritual influence coming from those parts of the world. We will have an incredible possibility to preach the Gospel of Truth to many of them who come from closed countries and have never heard of or seen The living and powerful Almighty!

All this to give you a "taste" of the real Tuscany, which you don't see in travel magazines or movies. Please join us in prayer, because the spiritual battle for Tuscany is roaring. We are determined to win, for Jesus has already won for us. We are also convinced that the right weapons are love, humility, compassion, dedication, anointing, signs and miracles. Strategies and plans are useful, yet they are pointless if we do not clothe ourselves with a strong prayer life and a love for the people we are called to serve.

Upcoming Events

Before we move in August, we still have a few events to prepare. We are helping organize a camp in a city nearby. John Cava and a group of about 15 Americans are coming. Some Italians are going to join the American team to be trained in evangelism with many opportunities to practice during different outreaches in Southern Italy. While I will help coordinate the event and translate, Leia will resume her puppet and clown ministry. We urge you all to pray for this event from July 1-12. The goal is to "invade" the cities we evangelize and turn it over to Jesus!

Thank you again for all your notes, prayers, and support in this very special season of our lives. We dearly appreciate what you all do for us and the Lord's work here in Italy.

God bless!

Nicolas, Leia, Eva, Elise, and Sophie

Note from WOC: To make a tax-deductible donation, please write your checks to "WOC" or "World Outreach Center" with Girard on the memo line or a separate note. You can also donate on-line through PayPal on the WOC website www.worldoutreachcommunity.org under the Missionary link.