



The Gravino Family

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The things which you have heard in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. 2 Tim. 2:2

June - July 2009

Dear Friends,

One Final Move . . .

Our time in Rome is quickly coming to an end. As I write, Alexandra and I are busy about all the preparations involved with another major move. This is our final destination for which we have been preparing - Sicily!!!

Looking back on the past six months, my thoughts go to the enormous privileges we have received. The Lord has given us a great start to our ministry (perhaps a honeymoon period). We have had the blessing of serving in a mature Italian church. This opportunity alone has been a wonderful training ground. It has allowed us time to observe and slowly begin ministry life in Italy without being thrown into it and forced to swim. For this we are grateful and thank the wise counsel coming from our elders in Rome and Aurora Mission. Clearly, our sovereign Lord takes all the credit.

While in Rome . . .



My main responsibility while in Rome was to participate in the customary elders meetings of the church. These have been rich times of learning for me and of deep fellowship. The men present in leadership today are for the most part the same godly men who witnessed my coming to Christ, baptism, spiritual growth, wedding, and my sending off to seminary.

The elders almost immediately plugged me into a regular preaching and teaching ministry in the church. The climax came in May when the leadership allowed me the opportunity to preach the whole month on Sunday mornings and lead the adult Sunday school afterwards.

The best part however has been shepherding a small discipleship group that has met weekly in our home. It consisted of young men from the church, ranging in age from their late teens to mid-twenties. Ever since we returned to the church my heart was burdened for this younger group. On the brink of adulthood and before critical life-decisions, my desire was to come alongside them with the hope of providing some needed spiritual insight and guidance. These have been memorable meetings, perhaps more so for Alexandra's great cooking and feeding of "the boys" than my own teaching!



Off to ITA . . .

Early on the 14th of July we will be leaving Rome and driving down to Sicily where our official ministry awaits. After a period of unpacking and settling into the new home which the Lord has provided for us in the city of Acireale, the work will begin.

Starting in early August the Academy will hold three classes almost back-to-back: Old Testament Survey, Expository Teaching, and Biblical Counseling, all of which will demand my involvement in various degrees. During this time we will also join our new church home in Acireale.



The main task from here on, of which I humbly look to the Lord for wisdom and leading, will be to provide leadership to both the local church and the training center. In this I am of course not alone but surrounded by a godly and seasoned team of fellow Aurora missionaries along with the sound direction coming from Aurora Mission director David Standridge.

Ministry Highlights, Family News and Prayer. . .



During the week of June 8th to the 12th I had the privilege of teaching my first course at ITA. The class consisted of theological readings in English. The goal is to assist the students to broaden their exposure to English theological vocabulary so as to access the many English theological resources for sermon preparation and preaching otherwise unavailable to them in Italian.

Alexandra is pregnant! We praise the Lord for another gift and addition to our family. The baby will be due sometime in January of next year. He or she will be... Sicilian!!!

We ask for your prayers for the news shared in this letter. Please pray particularly for the move. Just imagine: a Sicilian mover going to Austria - talk about culture clash!!!

I also ask prayer for some dear missionary friends of ours - the Stanisci and the Mollica families - who are in the process of making their way to Italy to begin a new church in Rome. We look forward to working together for the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in Italy.

We thank you for your continued love and support.

Compelled by the Master's Love,

Johnny and Alexandra Gravino, Samuele & Maddalena

2 Cor. 5:9