



The Roterts in Italy

A monthly look at the ministry, life, and culture of Ancona, Italy

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I'm a black and white kind of guy. I like rules and order (though you wouldn't know it by looking at my desk). I hardly ever speed, and I pay the parking meter even if I'm only going somewhere for five minutes. It drives me crazy that a fluctuating exchange rate often means my monthly expenses are off by a few pennies from what my receipt says.



And so being a missionary can be a frustrating experience for me. Very few things are black and white here. Things that would have seemed obvious to me in my home culture suddenly seem vague when I place it in the new culture in which we live.

One example of this is how I schedule my time. It is a huge blessing to have a flexible "job." If I need to spend extra time with the family for any number of reasons, it's usually possible. The flip side is also true: if ministry responsibilities increase, I can usu-

ally shuffle things at home to get things done.

But what is hard for me is the gray areas between work and home. Am I really "off" if I send an e-mail reply to a supporter during the evening? Am I really working if I'm helping the kids with their homework as I write my sermon?

At first the grayness bothered me. I felt like my family would sacrifice by not getting my full attention, and ministry would suffer if I checked out for a while.

I've learned to be a little religious about time off, and try to make sure I'm giving 100% during work time. If ministry responsibilities take me away from what would normally be family time, I make up for it later in the week by taking time off. I'm a minister *first* to my family, and *second* to my church.

But I've been thinking about this grayness. I tend to go overboard with trying to divide the secular and the sacred; the pastor Brian and the dad and husband Brian. I suppose the tension I've felt in making sure I was devoting the right amount of time to each may

have actually been the tension of trying to separate two things that should be left together in one big heap.

Italy, and Europe in general, don't just need missionaries. They don't *only* need more full-time workers. They need more full-time Christians – average, everyday Joes and Janes – who are willing to let God's love invade every part of their lives. People who let the "sacredness" of God living in us take over the public and private parts of their lives.

Gray is a tough color for me to deal with. But I think the ability to combine ministry and mundane is one key to planting a church.

Until next month...

Want to get in touch? Here's how...

E-mail: brotert@teamexpansion.org

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In April I was honored to speak at a youth convention in Southern Italy. There are quite a few small churches in the south that have youth that are passionate about building God's Kingdom. Who knows what God will do with this group someday? (Apparently, it was also a convention for dogs.)



Please Pray...

There's a really good chance that by the time you read the next newsletter, it will be filled with pictures of our new arrival! Heidi's due date is around the middle of June. *Mamma e bambina* are doing fine. Please pray for a safe delivery.

Massi, our church member who was fighting a bone marrow disease, passed away just before this newsletter was printed. Our church had already started working on ways to help his fiancée and his mom. More details next month...

Summertime is approaching, which means Italians go on vacation. It can be a discouraging time as the city empties and attendance falls. Pray for us to stick to it and not get too down. We've made some changes to our church schedule to better accommodate the rhythm of an Italian summer.

A Word from the Pres...

One of my team members shared a great story with me today. He told me about how there were two angels talking about the numbers on the other side of the pearly gates. These angels knew there was some kind of inconsistency, so one of them went in to find out. When he came back, he reported that he had discovered the source. "Jesus is on the outside of the wall, boosting people over the top as fast as he can." [grin] I thought the story did a good job explaining why many of us are involved in this work: We're trying to help Jesus boost people over the wall -- as quickly as we can. Your support toward the work of your favorite Team Expansion missionary aids in this process immensely... and we *all*, the world over, appreciate it. Thank you!

Doug Lucas
President, Team Expansion

Financial Statement as of
April 30, 2008

Balance	\$4,202.30
Income	\$7,365.04
Individuals	\$4,101.00
Adventure CC (McMinnville, OR)	\$250.00
Central CC (Rockford, IL)	\$1,040.00
First CC (Gravette, AR)	\$50.00
Harmony CC (Georgetown, KY)	\$200.00
Iron Gates CC (Joplin, MO)	\$200.00
Newberg CC (Newberg, OR)	\$450.00
Oswego CC (Oswego, KS)	\$355.00
Shively CC (Shively, KY)	\$500.00
Willamina CC (Willamina, OR)	\$219.04
Expenses	\$6,031.69
Benefits - Salary	\$1,554.57
Benefits - Special Medical Expense	\$35.64
Benefits - Life Insurance	\$268.00
Benefits - Social Security	\$621.00
Benefits - Retirement	\$100.00
Benefits - Housing Allowance	\$1,310.50
Benefits - Utilities	\$61.18
Benefits - Education for Children	\$10.99
Education - Language Acquisition	\$13.82
Education - Conferences/Classes	\$34.08
Education - Team Building	\$38.17
Christian Education - Printed Material	\$7.85
Christian Education - Hospitality	\$146.70
Christian Education - Other	\$201.39
Evangelism - Short-term Projects	\$53.87
Evangelism - Hospitality	\$21.29
Postage - In the States	\$213.87
Office - Facility/Utilities	\$158.49
Office - Mission Phone	\$156.85
Promo./Rep. - Newsletters	\$70.00
Promo./Rep. - Representation	\$100.00
Travel - Car	\$169.69
Travel - Maint./Ins.	\$470.53
Travel - Fees/Tolls	\$21.51
Travel - Legal	\$183.70
Misc. - Banking Fees	\$8.00
Ending Balance	\$5,535.65