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Greater **Europe** Mission

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## HAPPY EASTER!

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the new has come!  
2 Cor 5:17*

Spring, the season of renewal, is a wonderful time of year. Our Easter holiday reminds us of the new creation that we can become through Christ. This year I am happy to add another blessing to my Easter celebration: I am living in a new country-- ITALY!

**Thank you for helping this new blessing to become my reality for 2006!**



### Let me introduce you to the church of Montefiascone

From left to right...(somewhat by families) Marco, Janet, Matteo and Benjamin Delle Monache, Bernardino Balzi, Adriana, her baby Eleonora, and Vanise Guadagno, Leonardo and his mom to right Dori Abreu, Antonio in the far back, Katia Adami, Daniele, with parents to the right Speranza, Enzo, Rebecca, Sarah, Sherri, Michael, and Elizabeth Carlson

### My First Week In Italy

I departed California on Saturday evening, March 25<sup>th</sup>, but with delayed and overbooked flights, I did not arrive at the Carlsons' home in Ronciglione, Italy until the afternoon of Monday, March 27<sup>th</sup>. Thankfully, my luggage and I arrived safely. With the help of GEM co-worker Michael Carlson, I immediately began the urgent process of applying for my "permesso de soggiorno" or "permission to stay." This application must be submitted within 8 days of arrival in Europe and until I am granted permission to stay, I cannot rent an apartment or buy a car. In the meantime, I will be living in Montefiascone with Janet and Marco Delle Monche and their young sons, Matteo and Benjamin.

The entire week was a whirlwind of activity, going to numerous government offices and completing countless forms and documents. By the end of the week I had:

- a) new, official Italian size ID photos
- b) more copies of all documents used for my original visa
- c) obtained an official Italian ID card (similar to a US Social Security card)
- d) registered with the local police in Montefiascone. My hosts, Janet and Marco had to supply information about their home, including a diagram of where in the house I will sleep, just in case I am a terrorist—I am not kidding!
- e) been fingerprinted and measured for height.
- f) submitted all papers for my "permesso" including copies of all pages in my passport, photos, ID card, visa documents, etc. I was very fortunate to have Michael and Marco helping me through this process. We were told that I should receive my "permesso" in about 20 days. This actually means in about 1 month, and hopefully less than 2 months! Without Marco's help (he has a friend of a friend in the office) my application could take several months or up to a year to be processed.

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Other accomplishments for the week were to buy a cell phone, (my number is 0039-349-731-4662) and to sign up for language school in Viterbo. It is a blessing to be able to get the instruction in Viterbo, rather than going into Rome, and I am able to begin classes **next week!** (yeah!) We also shopped a little for a car, just to see what might be available. Most Italians order and fully pay for their car and then wait 3 months to a year to accept delivery. I really need a car ASAP so I am hoping to find a suitable car available for immediate purchase on a car lot.

When Janet and I were at the bus station to check the schedule for my travel to language school, she introduced me to Dario. He is a bus driver who also serves as the Pastor of a small church in Ronciglione. The church has been struggling, but recently some Romanian Christians have moved to the area and are helping in the church. I felt blessed to learn about this situation and confirmed once again that God has led me to the right country.

I spent Saturday morning cleaning the church building in preparation for Sunday worship. Each week a member of the church takes a turn washing the floors and the bathroom. This week was Janet's turn, so I helped out.

It is a joy to be back in church in Montefiascone. The people have been very gracious and welcoming to me. I went to Bible Study on Wednesday evening and to worship on Sunday morning. They had a small reception to welcome me. It was a blessing to be able to personally thank the people who have been praying for my arrival. Janet and Marco hosted a lunch on Sunday --- a delightful time to enjoy a slow, traditional Italian meal with lots of laughter and lively conversation.

**As I begin my new life in Italy, I have the opportunity to *enjoy*(?) some cultural surprises. Here are a few new things I have learned:**

The Italian week begins on Monday

Most Italians work or go to school on Saturday

20 days means 1 month

16 days means 2 weeks

You **MUST** use and sign your middle name on nearly all documents

Knowing a friend of a friend will help move paperwork through the system more smoothly

Almost everything is still paid in cash, in advance, including full payment for language school

250 Euros is the maximum that can be withdrawn from an ATM at one time

Internet access is not very available

Please join me in praise to God for:

- Safe arrival
- Warm welcome from church members
- Paper work in process
- Language school in Viterbo, beginning immediately!
- My Cell phone number #0039-349-731-4662
- Celebration of Easter 2006 in Italy!!!

Please join me in praying for:

- God's guiding hand on documents for my "permesso de soggiorno"
- Wisdom in selecting the right apartment to rent and the right car to buy
- Continuing adjustment to the Italian culture and language
- Growing friendships with members of the church and community

Thank you for your prayers! Your interest and support has made it possible for me to have a busy, but great first week in my new home. *I thank God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. (Ph 1:3-5)* I pray that you will also have a great week and a joyful Easter celebration as we remember all that Christ has done for us.

*With His peace and joy,*

*Amy Williams*

Matteo and I read in Italian together on his Italian Leap Frog.

