

# Ann and David MacFarlane

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## Prayer Letter

### April 2010

*My dear friends,*

It's hard to believe but we are now here at Reggio just about six months and we are loving every minute of it. God is good and we are experiencing many good things. We had our five baptisms and the church was bulging at the seams. We have on average around 90 people at our Sunday morning services. Our Sunday school, youth group and nursery are all up and running well. The Youth group took the morning service last week and were great. They also organised a conference on Love, Courtship and Marriage on St Valentine's day and it went really well. We had around 50 people attending. We had as our main speakers Huw and Alex Anderson, our BMS colleagues who are working in Sicily.



We have also been accepted for a food distribution programme, the one we were talking about in our last newsletter. It entails weekly packs of food for around 20 families in and connected to the church. There is such a lot of unemployment and poverty down here in the south. Even these food programmes are infiltrated by the mafia and a lot of people in need cannot get the assistance they rightfully should. The presence of the mafia is so much more obvious here and there is very little you can do without feeling and seeing the effects of it.

David is still waiting for my resident permit. It should take a couple of weeks to transfer from our last place but



unless you pay somebody or you know somebody you get put to the back of the waiting lists. You will have heard I am sure (as it was broadcast nationally) of how our work in Rosarno with the African illegal immigrants has been halted officially. They come every year for the harvest of the oranges and tangerines. Rosarno is about 80 kilometres from Reggio and there were many people without homes or work sleeping rough and obviously in great need. As we said in our last newsletter, we have been going out there with food clothing, mattresses and bedding and holding some meetings for the boys who are Christians although all of them come to the meeting. We had been concentrating on one group who were staying in an old farmhouse (now burnt out). There were another two camps with over 2,000 young men all looking to work and send money back



home. As far as the local authorities and the government were concerned they did not exist. The local farmers treated them as slaves and sometimes didn't even pay them for their work which could be up to 16 hours a day. There were 19 young men in the group we were working with and their conditions were terrible: no toilets, no water and no electricity. Some of the young men went into the town on a peaceful protest and were shot at and beat up. Nine were hospitalised with serious injuries. The government then started to bus them out of Rosarno taking them to Naples, Bari and many of them fled to other parts of the country and even abroad. We got word from one of the boys who with some others had got themselves into Holland. They were calling us to let us know they were all right and to thank us for all our efforts to help them. They had found shelter in a Baptist church. We want to thank all of you who have been praying for us here and there were many answers to prayer from our last newsletter. We got all the people we needed for the Sunday school, nursery and youth work. The two churches are working and worshipping well together and we feel that a lot of the problems they had been finding were disappearing. Praise God. We are planning to have a summer mission in September and in preparation David will be preparing the church with some personal evangelism teaching. Some of you will already know about the mission and we know that you have already got in touch with Trevor Rowe who will be co-ordinating the mission from GB. Trevor has been coming over with teams for a number of years now and we are looking forward to the team coming. Trev's e-mail if you want any info of the trip is [revtrevrowe@hotmail.com](mailto:revtrevrowe@hotmail.com)

We will be coming home in May for our home assignment programme and will be visiting our link groups at Cambridge, Leeds, Bolton and the Borders. Of course all the things we are hoping to do depends on the problem being solved that David has regarding his knee. The infection is still in the knee but it appears that his body is fighting back. We are keeping a close watch on the knee and will be getting a final dose of antibiotics if the infection is getting the upper hand.

If the infection prevails then we will have to come back to Britain for treatment. ***Please pray*** that this would not be the case as we don't want to miss any of what God is doing here in Reggio.

We take this opportunity to wish all of you a very happy Easter

*Ann and David*

### Prayer points

- ◆ Thanksgiving for the people who came forward for service in the Sunday school, Youth group, Nursery, worship group which now has 20 members.
- ◆ Thanksgiving for getting the go ahead for our food bank programme.
- ◆ For continued unity between the two churches.
- ◆ For the immigrants from Rosarna who have been scattered and a few who have stayed and are in hiding..
- ◆ For David's knee. That the infection will clear up.