

MARCH 2022



Dear faithful prayer supporters,

‘And when they brought those kings out to Joshua, Joshua summoned all the men of Israel and said to the chiefs of the men of war who had gone with him, “Come near; put your feet on the necks of these kings.” Then they came near and put their feet on their necks. And Joshua said to them, “Do not be afraid or dismayed; be strong and courageous. For thus the LORD will do to all your enemies against whom you fight.”’ Joshua 10:24-25

Who is our Joshua? Is it not Jesus, the Captain of the army of the LORD who one day will crush Satan under his feet? As Joshua humbled and destroyed those Amorite kings who rose up to defy the Lord’s name, how wonderful to think Jesus will be perfectly good, powerful and just in his treatment of arrogant powers and enemies of his people! With the instability in Europe fresh in our minds, we press on knowing that all things will finally be under the Son. His Church, including Forte Torre in Bologna, marches towards the eternal land the Lord has promised. This month we write to you of various ‘army’ exploits.

Marching and praying

We have just finished studying Leviticus in our midweek groups and have been struck again at the importance of the whole community stopping for their Sabbaths and festivals, to seek the Lord communally in confession and intercession. Having inaugurated an **annual prayer day for Italy** a few years ago, post-COVID we found it was time to re-establish this habit of praying for the good of the nation. We had a wonderful day praying for city, nation and world. Here are some things to pray:



- Please pray for all in authority, giving thanks for the re-election of Sergio Mattarella (President of Republic) this month. Pray also for Mario Draghi (Prime Minister), Elisabetta Casellati (President of House) and Roberto Fico (President of Senate) – that they will be wise counsellors and have fear of the Lord. Pray for our politicians, courts and legislators to govern with a sense of duty and integrity, that we may lead an ordered life in all godliness.
- Please pray for the Italian government as they tackle some of the longstanding issues in the nation, which include slowness of the courts, huge national debt (153% of GDP), widespread corruption, marked social inequalities between north and south, organised criminal organisations, prejudice towards immigrants and 30% unemployment amongst young people.
- Pray for further steps forward to see Evangelical churches in Italy recognised by law, including Italian Evangelical Alliance’s consultation with the government. Pray for churches to know how best to operate with the change of legislation for Associations like Forte Torre. Pray for a

recognition and simplification of a process to legally employ pastors and for greater religious freedom to grant us access to prisons, schools and hospitals.

Marching but hobbling

One of Sue's 'tent poles' snapped quite seriously mid-February when she slipped on some ice on a walk (triple fractured right ankle)! Not wanting 'to do things by halves', the result is complicated surgery 😬 and high levels of pain. Sue will likely remain almost immobile for two months.

- Give thanks for wonderful hospital care, a complicated operation completed, daily painkillers and – we trust – slow but real healing.
- Give thanks that Forte Torre has showered us with practical help in providing meals, cleaning and flowers.
- Give thanks that there were plenty of opportunities to speak of Jesus and Forte Torre in hospital, not least with roomie M (in photo).
- Pray for Sue to 'walk' in the works God has prepared in these next few months, as school, clubs and travelling to one-to-ones come to a halt.
- Pray for JP as he continues to be a day and night carer, and for the Lord to grant restful sleep to us both. Pray for fruit in conversations, particularly with folks visiting our home.



Marching and writing

Sue had the great privilege of her parents teaching her the Scriptures from infancy. She now has a particular passion to see a new generation understand that Jesus is at the heart of the Old Testament. In Italy, Roman Catholic catechism teaches something of the Gospels but the rest of the Bible remains a completely closed book. Therefore, at our afterschool clubs and camps we often teach the call to faith in Jesus through Old Testament

narrative. A couple of years ago, Sue started to write during August (a quiet time in church life). The project **All About Jesus** is a series of books serving seven to nine year olds and their parents. The five books (*The Third Day*, *The Substitute*, *The Nations*, *The Son of David* and *The Day to Come*) all aim to present Christ in the Law, Prophets and Writings. Each book includes five distinct narratives, closely connected to Jesus, ending with an invitation to answer some questions and pray a prayer.

- Give thanks for a wonderful team: E (who drew the beautiful illustrations – see example above), E (who helped translate into Italian), P (who worked on the layout) and A and E (the publishers).
- Please pray for the means to make this project happen. Each book's design and printing costs about £7,000 of personal funding, as evangelical publishing houses do not have financial means.
- Please pray that Italian children will love and trust Christ, through understanding the breadth of the Scriptures written all about him.

Sending our love and prayers that you are marching towards the finish line, rejoicing in the soldiers that the Lord has put next to you, passionate about lifting the banner of Jesus high.

JP and Sue xx

Prayer points

- Pray that the **Forte Torre Day of Prayer** will be established in our annual calendar for the good of city, nation and world.
- Pray for fruit from the opportunities associated with **Sue's accident**.
- Pray for Italian children to learn that the Scriptures are **All about Jesus** through this new book series.

JP and Sue Aranzulla, Via Guidotti 14, Bologna, 40134 Italia
aranzulla@crosslinks.org

Crosslinks, 251 Lewisham Way, London SE4 1XF | 32 Montgomery Road,
Belfast BT6 9HL | +44 (0)20 8691 6111 | pletters@crosslinks.org

