

'Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all you who wait for the LORD!' Psalm 31:24

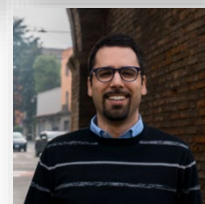
This month we write to you of **SMALL BUT REAL BEGINNINGS** seen in various church initiatives in recent times.

September at Forte Torre saw the membership appoint **two new deacons**, proposed by JP. GL and G, both involved in many ministries across church life, were welcomed warmly into this role. They join S, who has remained a solid support over the years.

- Give thanks for their appointment, and pray these men continue to 'hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience', proving to be faithful ongoing servants of the work, on many fronts.
- Give thanks for the new monthly meeting taking place, in which JP can share and pray with these three men.



*The three
deacons of
Forte Torre*



Corsi Applicazione, our in-house theological training course

(www.corsiapplicazione.it), began the year exploring issues of Pastoral Theology

(<https://www.corsiapplicazione.it/corsi/teologia-pastorale/tp1/> and

<https://www.corsiapplicazione.it/corsi/teologia-pastorale/tp2/>). From November we focus on a new Mark's Gospel course, following the Greek text (taught by **GL**). Every year we present Applicazione, both to Forte Torre and others in Italy (about 250 people). An encouraging beginning sees a small class of around 10 students: a good start!

- Give thanks for some new Forte Torre students this year, and pray others in Italy will feed into the new course on Mark in Greek.
- Pray for **GL** as he prepares the material, and for greater national visibility of the new updated website.

Torricine doposcuola, our weekly children's club, seemed unlikely to restart this year, which was tough news. But wonderfully we prayed earnestly in daily prayer times, and three Italian families have recently returned, giving us ongoing contact with their nine-year-old girls **C, S, V**. With some interest also from others, Sue is now able to present the Lord Jesus weekly from John's gospel.

- Praise God for the club continuing; pray for more children to be hearing of Jesus weekly from John and pray the children to believe Jesus is the Christ and to have life in his name.

Lego Party: our second Lego party, held Saturday 26 October, was a morning spent with new families, praise God! The event saw various parents for the first time in church, hearing a clear talk on Jesus' parable of the wise and foolish builders (Matthew 7). Good first conversations with parents make us hopeful of ongoing contact, with the possibility of new children being added to the afterschool club.

- Praise God for 30 children that day with the majority there as guests. Give thanks for warm conversations held, and a good collective church witness.
- Pray for more ongoing contact with these new families, including Doposcuola and Christmas events.

Young people's baptism class: what joy to find three young people of Forte Torre, **J**, **E**, and **M**. keen to explore baptism! They are 15-18 yrs old, grown up with us in recent years, displaying clear evidence of God's work in their lives, with a real faith in Christ. We will meet for four studies over these months, to explore carefully together the meaning of baptism (and the Lord's Supper). Small beginnings, but wonderful potential!

- Give thanks for signs of real spiritual life in these three youngsters.
- Pray for our studies to be clarifying, inspiring them to trust deeply, and live wholeheartedly for Christ.
- Pray they would not be ashamed to own Christ's name at school, amongst their friends.

Bologna Ovest: Forte Torre has recently seen some meaningful encouragements. A few newcomers are feeding in, including students. Two new Italian Christian couples are settling in with us. Through 2024 we've embarked on a first phase church initiative, holding a service once a month in West Bologna, run by **S** (sustained financially one day/week). In January, the church membership will assess and review this work, according to principles set out and agreed. A small core group is forming around **S**'s leadership. The unreached area of town is very different from central Bologna. We are praying, as we explore the possibility of a small church plant taking shape during 2025.

- Give thanks for Bologna Ovest, in its present early form. Praise God for those committed to the work.
- Pray for wise and godly decision-making as Forte Torre membership in January – that God would give a united voice in deciding how to build on this beginning (in the way we best deploy our limited resources).

Whether in times of encouragement or hardship, progress or setbacks, may you – along with us – *be strong and let your hearts take courage, all you who wait for the LORD!*

JP and Sue



Lego party