

Reformation Christian Ministries

Italy Report

~ ~ ~ October ~ November ~ December 2006 ~ ~ ~

December 22, 2006

Dear Prayer and Financial Supporters of Dr. Franco Maggiotto:

Beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ who love Franco and Aurora Maggiotto and the work God has called them to in Italy. Attached you will find two newsletters from Franco, one from late October and November, and the other which just came in while we were preparing to send the other.

The second newsletter was written by a colleague of Franco's on his behalf following Franco's general instructions. As you will learn, Franco has had some relapses and has been in and out of the hospital. The doctors are still optimistic, but we did receive a request for some additional funding to help cover Franco's increased cost of medications. We sent an extra \$1200 to help in this regard beyond his normal amount.

At present, we are planning to go to Italy sometime in the Spring for a strategy conference with Franco and the Fede Viva board on which I serve. Please pray for this trip and for the Lord's will to be revealed in our meetings. May God grant you a blessed time of fellowship in the Spirit as you keep Franco and his ministry before the Lord and while Franco so often remembers you all in his prayers.

On Franco's behalf, I thank you for your faithfulness in the Lord.

Geoffrey W. Donnan, Director

To be added to our mailing list, or to make a donation, please cut and send to:

Reformation Christian Ministries. FOR: ITALY PROJECT (Ministry of Rev. Franco Maggiotto)

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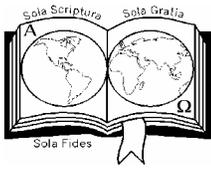
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- I/We will support *Italy* with a one-time gift: of \$_____. Please send a picture prayer card of Rev. & Mrs. Maggiotto
 I/We will support *Italy* regularly (monthly/quarterly/annually) with \$_____.

Email: gwd@reformation.edu Website: www.reformation.ws

(NOTE: Please make check payable to "Reformation Christian Ministries" and designate it to "ITALY PROJECT")

(All donations are tax exempt in both Canada and the U.S.)



Reformation Christian Ministries

**Letter from Alpignano, Italy
October-November, 2006**

My dearest Brethren in the Lord,

My first thought is to ask you to please excuse me for the long silence. This silence was a very fruitful time, however. I visited many churches and communities like ours and I was welcomed with deep affection everywhere. There was a joy shared that comes from the hearing of the Word of God. In some cases I met with people into the wee hours of the night. Another Franco who came to see me recently to update me on certain issues related to our work, told me that at times he also had meetings that lasted well into the late hours. The Lord protected me and encouraged me in this travel, and I often returned home very tired, and sometimes with a fever. After the last trip I had to be hospitalized for about ten days due to a high fever. I think it was because at one point, during a meeting, my car was washed away in a flash flood and I was drenched in the rain while trying to respond to the situation.

I thank the Lord for all the people He allowed me to meet and with whom I shared the Good News. At times I smiled; at other times I have suffered, for instance when I receive news from an English brother who has never met me, who says that I do nothing here in Italy. What makes me suffer even now is to realize that people who say these things are totally disconnected from the proclamation of the Gospel in Europe. One thing is certain: before condemning someone it is necessary to meet them at least once. I understand that our work is difficult, but the accusations toward someone you do not know, especially from those who place themselves in dead end situations that marginalize them from the culture, does not seem to be a response to the Word (Philippians 3:1-ff).

There are ups and downs with my sickness, but it has not stopped me from working and spreading my booklets even in the hospitals where I have been hospitalized. This has helped even in a very practical way in that I was assigned to the only private suite in the hospital, and I have continued to receive thanks from the doctors and nurses that read the written things I leave for them. They continue to read them and pass them around among their colleagues! The day I was released I counted twelve doctors in my room who wanted to thank me and wish me well.

Since I returned home from my trips I have had dozens of e-mails to respond to and this has also caused some delay in writing to you. Many people want to get in touch with me and leave their contact information, etc.

One great joy for which I thank the Lord and cry out to Him my thankfulness was the visit of the Ross family from Scotland, mother and two sons, from Blythewood. I wanted to be able to spend more time with them and I waited for them in the afternoon to show them some of the work that the Lord has been doing through us, but perhaps we misunderstood one another and after the afternoon meal with the church in Alpignano they departed. I felt very badly about this.

I would love to have more time to be able to tell you about the very interesting meetings we have had, some very moving, especially those with poor farmers with no education but full of true faith and free of fanaticism. But the urgency of the Good News and the fatigue that comes with my sickness impedes me. I am sending you, as I always do, a short thought that allows me to feel close to you in the Word of God.

With great affection, esteem and gratitude I thank each of you, asking you for your continued prayer. Lord, I believe, help my unbelief.

Franco, Aurora, Tabitha, and Alberto

Patience in Waiting

"But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with patience."

Romans 8:25

To hope, not see, to wait with patience. These words of the apostle are a challenge to our reason and our indignation for the evil that acts in the world. The terrorism, violence, injustice and suffering dominate the scene of human history. The beautiful and good realities of the kingdom of God are hidden from our eyes. Evil makes itself master of creatures and moves them rapidly toward conflict and affliction. Why hope? Many consider hope an illusion; we do not see what we wait for, but we see that which we would prefer not exist. Are Christian men and women naïve, closed in their unreal world that is unseen and that gives no signs of life? The final redemption of humanity and the creation is long in coming. The time that separates us from the coming of the kingdom of God seems endless to us, at least as long as our existence/life. We seem overwhelmed by the evil events of history. It is as if an opposing wind were blowing constantly, prohibiting us from moving forward. This wall of suffering surrounds us and suffocates us. Whoever is closed within a prison from which he cannot realistically escape can do nothing else but wait.

Therefore does this mean resignation? Is the person who believes someone who is resigned to endure history? This is not the meaning of Paul's words. Hope waits for the promise of God to come to pass, notwithstanding the long periods of waiting and the contradictions we find ourselves immersed in. We are, in fact, waiting for this very reality that today we do not see. We wait for it in patience. Patience is constant, the ability to withstand despite the innumerable difficulties that impede us from seeing with clarity the content of the promise of God. Patience is

strong because it is not founded upon our personal equilibrium, but draws its force from the truth of the promise of the Lord. The Holy Spirit who illumines His Word gives us the ability to hope, to wait and to stand firm.

How I long to see humanity break down walls and barriers, to see children play, learn, delight, while safe and happy. I long to see humans seek one another out and love one another with tenderness, passion, and responsibility. I long to see my neighbor work and peacefully enjoy the fruit of his endeavors. I long to see the sick cured, always with care and sympathy; I long to see our cities transformed into places which would be pleasant to spend one's life. I long for each of us to learn to live in candor and trust, to see people share bread and joy. I long to see what I wait for. Unfortunately, we know all too well that we do not always see what we are waiting for.

However, what we do not see, if we really desire it, we can await with persevering passion, sharing with the world our desires for peace, justice and happiness. To give our expectation, our hope, one that is patient and active, this is the task that awaits us. We will give our hope to the hopeless, our joy to whoever is sad, our passion to whoever has resigned himself to a life of resignation. To wait with perseverance, with patience, means entering into conflict, into the sadness and the defeats of the human race. The promise of the Lord accompanies us in our journey of faith and allows us to see, beyond the horizon of sadness, the light of His reign that comes, and we also will say, "Even so come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20).

Franco Maggiotto