

## July 2017 Italy, Gospel News magazine

The *Bible Companion* readings for this Sunday include Matthew 1 and 2 and there is an MP3 file about this at <http://www.christadelphia.net/audio/mt1and2.mp3>

You can see the archives of our MP3 files at <http://christadelphia.net/audio.htm> and on iTunes at <https://itunes.apple.com/ca/podcast/christadelphian-bible-talks/id987163468>

Download the *NEV Bible* with commentary and *Bible Companion* bookmarks at <http://n-e-v.info/NEVBIBLE.pdf>

### ITALY

In combination with the **Sicily** trip reported last week, we also visited mainland Italy to connect with various contacts and to prepare for the major feeding scheme we're planning later in the Summer, God willing. Brother Joseph continues to work amazingly hard distributing *Bible Basics* and *NEV Bibles* to the migrants, teaching them in his home, and running his growing house group. Many of the migrant brethren have been moved out of the 'camps' they are in and left to fend for themselves, and several are now in Germany seeking acceptance. The migrant crisis gets worse and worse, as reported last week, there are hundreds and at times in the thousands of migrants arriving on the beaches every day. Public opinion is strongly against them, and the care of them is left to the local councils, whose sympathy varies.

The Lord has raised up a great co-worker for Joseph in TONY who we were able to baptize. He has a terrifying story, typical of so many. He left Nigeria with the promise of a good job, and was trafficked across the Sahara on the back of a truck. He describes how those whose muscles were weaker couldn't hold on and simply fell off into the Sahara desert, breaking legs on falling, and were left to die. In Libya, the smuggling gangs tortured them until they screamed and begged for mercy and revealed the phone numbers of their relatives; whilst they were in torture they were forced to speak to their relatives and beg them to send money to the smuggling gangs. And then another gang would come and kidnap them from the first gang, and do the same to them, torturing them until they begged their relatives to send them money. The smugglers would randomly kill some of the kidnapped group to scare the others. Tony describes how he was beaten on his skull with an iron pipe whilst another smuggler held the cell phone near his mouth, having called his relatives, and made him beg them to send money to the traffickers:



And then there was the crossing on the Mediterranean in inflatable 'balloon boats', being rescued by the coastguards and brought to Sicily; again, witnessing others dying by drowning, and the boat [which was just a large inflatable rubber dinghy] being fired into by other smugglers so that it sunk.

Tony has described all this, breaking down in tears as he remembers it, impersonating the smugglers and re-living the situation, in our video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5YrcjAlvmxo>



But the conclusion really is that we all have to be humbled, all the way down, before we can be

exalted in due time; and we have to be stripped of everything and be utterly alone before we totally turn to and fall upon the Lord Jesus. And that's what Tony did. His baptism was therefore the acme of humility, as it were; you can see him here with the band from his camp around his wrist:



Now you can see Tony and brother Joseph on the streets of their town, wearing the *Carelinks* 'Free Bibles' visibility vests and distributing literature to folks:



You can imagine what it's like for the few women who attempt the journey. We baptized BLESSING, who was first contacted through street distribution of the *NEV New Testaments*. She very much wanted to share her story publicly, we didn't ask her to do this, she wanted to. She described how her husband had multiple other women in their home and she had to leave, having to leave their child with him. She returned to her parental home, and there her uncle, her father's brother, pressured her to marry him [he already had several wives] or at least have children with him. Her father pressured her to agree, and so she ran away and joined the exodus to Italy. She was kidnapped at gunpoint in Libya by the traffickers, and kept for 2 months as a sex slave and raped most days. Like brother Tony, she was pressured to call her family and ask them to send money for her release, but she is thrown out of her family and they wouldn't, so eventually the traffickers released her as she was not going to be a source of income for them. She then got to Sicily, having witnessed some of her group drowning on the way. Here's a still from our video posted last week at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=10iqTvfr9eo&t=76s>



Like Tony, like us all, she had to be brought down and to total loneliness with God to find Jesus in spirit and truth. She speaks of how she has forgiven these people, because we too are all terrible sinners before God; and of how God's grace is so great that she sees Him as a kind and loving God, despite what she went through. She speaks quietly and from the heart, with sweat breaking out on her, and only once wiping tears away; she has absolute credibility. This is a profound message absolutely worth listening to, a real inspiration to focus on the positive, to believe God is the God of love despite the existence of evil in our lives; to not get bitter, and achieve forgiveness of our abusers. Do watch

it: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xC\\_YIVR5ulg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xC_YIVR5ulg)



Blessing doesn't do email and is very restricted where she is in the woman's camp. She has a simple phone and any sister interested in giving her a call can contact us for her number. We hope to provide clothing and more support to her and other such women over the Summer.

We went on to the coastal town of Ceriale, beyond Genoa, near the French border. There we baptized HENRY and COLLINS, who likewise had similar testimonies to what they had endured: The video of their simple baptisms is at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XzYh89\\_yEVc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XzYh89_yEVc)



Their camp is in a village up the mountain with no transport to it, so they have to walk about two hours up a very steep lane to get back to it. We are providing Bibles to all in their camp.

There is huge potential here in Italy to spread the good news of the Gospel to these dear folks who have lost all and are looking to throw themselves upon the Lord Jesus. "*Of such is the Kingdom of God*".

We are posting out support materials and more Bibles and *Bible Basics*; the postage costs are high, this pile of boxes mailed to Italy costs around 200 pounds to post. Please do continue donating:



### **GOSPEL NEWS MAGAZINE**

Readers may or may not be aware that we produce a magazine called Gospel News every quarter, which includes news and articles from those baptized worldwide. It's been going for over 25 years.

You can read it online at <http://carelinks.net/bin/view.php?a=-1049648191>

However, many of our readers who need the print version can't pay for it, and we mail it to converts worldwide. It would help to receive donations towards this; subscription costs including postage are around 15 Pounds / year; we mail to over 2000 addresses each issue. Please consider donating towards this, and also take out a print subscription yourself, so you can help us achieve an overall cheaper printing cost by keeping a viable print run.

### **BROTHER CHARLIE FRENCH**

We're so sad to report the falling asleep in Christ of our beloved brother, co-worker and enthusiast Charlie, of Gosford Australia. His immense work of spreading the Gospel needs no eulogy.

We recently published a stimulating article by him in Gospel News, titled "Tell it to the world!"; urging us towards far greater missionary outreach-

see <http://carelinks.net/doc/gn201701-en/20> ; read it and respond to it in memory of a true brother of whom it can be said "I knew a man in Christ".

### **PRAYER POINTS:**

- For those recently baptized
- For wisdom in the spreading of the Gospel in Italy
- For the likes of br Tony and sis Blessing, that they will be allowed to remain in Europe and not deported

- For the spiritual and psychological strengthening of sister Blessing and others like her in the post traumatic stress which may affect her all her life

**With love from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks**