

Martin and Fran Russell working with



15th October 2020

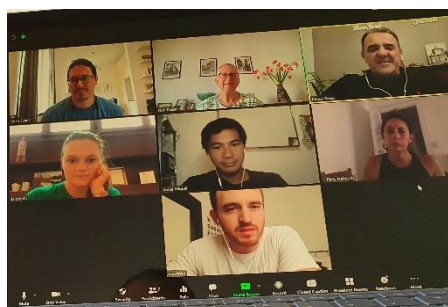
Philippians 4:6-7 NLT

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

Dear friends at HFC

Last week Fran began our National Leadership Team meeting, a Zoom meeting on the internet, with a devotion based on this verse. All in Italian. Her desire was that all of us would pray for Agape Italia, our roles and the things on our hearts. It was a fab time of prayer together, with Martin finishing off by reading, in Italian Matthew 6:34. *"So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today.* These verses are very apt for today with Coronavirus numbers rising worldwide. We are praying that as you read these promises from the Lord Jesus, you too will have peace.

Agape Italia National Conference February 2021



Two weeks ago, during a Zoom call the conference team met with Franco and Brian who explained the theme and objectives for 2021. Now we can start making plans.

The conference is strategic for Agape Italia for the part it plays in growing the ministry, encouraging others, and recruiting new staff and volunteers, ultimately to grow God's kingdom here in Italy.

Please give thanks and pray for Elizabeth, Amos, Tiffany, and Brandon as they begin work for 2021. Also pray for Fran, that she will lead them with enthusiasm, wisdom and humility.

Martin, work and budgets.

Over the last few weeks Martin has been working with a small international team some from Australia, Holland, Switzerland and the USA. They are setting up a new communications management system to help with communicating with ministry partners, churches, and others in our countries. Italy was chosen as a model because we are one of the smaller national ministries but have good staff and systems in place to make it work. One of his responsibilities is to keep everyone focussed on the most crucial parts of the system and to remember that not every country has enough capacity to do everything we would like to do! Daryl one of the US staff that are part of his virtual team is helping him. The meetings occur at various strange times of the day in order they can all meet (online of course).

Please keep Martin in your prayers: as he helps with this "online" project. Also, this time of year is very busy for him as he is overseeing the national budgets and the teams' planning process for 2021.



Friends



Since March Fran has been communicating regularly with friends from AILO, the international women's group she is part of. In June she began hosting weekly coffee mornings with Guadalupe, a dear friend, at an outdoor café. In conversations both on the phone or face to face she has been able to pray for many of these friends. This has led to openings for spiritual conversations. Please pray for wisdom for Fran about who to spend time with. Guadalupe is above right, smiling with long hair.

Update from the Rome Campus team

Because of COVID-19 the student ministry has been focussing on using the internet to communicate with students. Here is an extract from the Rome team written by Brandon one of the staff there:

"Last month we launched our digital campaign for the new year. We've worked hard to create exceptional online content, and with the use of targeted online advertising we are hoping to have AgapeStudenti content on the phones or computers of at least 70,000 young people. "Vita da matricola" (First Year Life) is our primary campaign and through advertising (Instagram, Facebook, and Google) will provide new students with a helpful packet of information ranging from advice for where to get a coffee, to helpful tips from older students. Included in the welcome packet are ways for students to receive additional information and even to contact AgapeStudenti for a free coffee. Through online advertising and posters near the university, students will be directed to our website to download a free welcome pack and give us the opportunity to contact them!

Since it is impossible for us to enter university campuses under Covid-19 restrictions, it has been incredibly encouraging to see these digital efforts bear fruit. In the first two weeks of advertising we received 12 contacts of students wanting to hear more about our activities".

This is happening on campus in Florence, Bologna and Rome, plus is available (because it is the internet) everywhere. Give thanks to the Lord for the work of the student ministry teams who put this programme together. Please pray for open hearts and changed lives.

And Finally,.....

Fran has a small operation on her wrist on Monday 19th October under local anaesthetic. Give thanks for the tax rebate from the UK that is paying for this operation and pray for Fran and Martin as their nurse and patient roles are reversed!!! That they show grace and love to one another.

Martin + Fran xx

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