



Mr. Dan Kaiser shares about ministering in Italy...

On Friday November 18, 2011, my class experienced a rare opportunity to meet Mr. Dan Kaiser, a missionary currently serving in Trieste, Italy, located in the upper northeast corner of the country. He has been stateside for the past six weeks to meet with some of his support churches. Dan and I have been good friends for years and he graciously agreed to come in and talk to our twenty three students in grades (5-8).

Dan talked about what it's like ministering in a country that is heavily Roman Catholic and becoming more and more post-Christian /secular every year. He said about .5% (one half of one percent) of the citizens of Trieste (a city of 230,000) are followers of Christ. His middle

daughter, Sarah, goes to a high school of five hundred students, and she is the ONLY believer.

However, he and his wife (Suzanne) and their three daughters (Sabrina, Sarah and Claire) are not discouraged. The Lord is beginning to break up the hardened ground of the Italian heart and the people of Trieste are coming around. God is adding souls to His kingdom ...even in Europe. During this last year or so, the Kaisers have seen more conversions to Christ than in any of their previous eleven years laboring in Italy. Prior to Trieste, the Kaisers were ministering in Perugia, more in the central part of the country.

Mr. Kaiser was an Army Paratrooper when he first visited Italy many years ago. It didn't take long for him to develop a strong love for the Italian people and desire to see them receive the saving power of the Gospel. He waited and prayed for years before the Lord gave him and his family the opportunity to return to Italy. Today he makes the analogy that similar to the days when paratroopers would jump - from a perfectly fine airplane - into enemy territory, they as missionaries are behind (spiritual) enemy lines as well. Only this time, the stakes have eternal consequences and the light of Christ can shine through them to reach the people of Italy. He emphasized how important it was to have the prayer support and financial backing of the church back home in order for them to serve on the front lines.

Mr. Kaiser not only talked about the spiritual dimension, but the cultural as well. He said every major town has an art museum and an open square where Italian people assemble for outdoor concerts and other cultural events. Dan talked about Michelangelo, an artist our class just recently studied. I especially appreciate Dan straightening me out on the proper pronunciation of his name (it's meek-il-angelo). For so many years I called him Mike. Yipe!

He also discussed world war two history and how Trieste hosted a headquarters for the Nazi SS. The very ground on which the Kaiser's apartment was built in the sixties, was the location of a Nazi concentration camp. Some of the senior citizens who survived the war recalled how they would hear screams of torture coming from that SS headquarters /camp. At the beginning of the war there were 5,000 Jews in Trieste, at the end of the war, fewer than three hundred. Our students needed to be reminded that freedom isn't free and how brutal mankind can be when we turn our backs on God.

I was very pleased how respectful and attentive my students were that day. They seemed genuinely interested in his message and warmly welcomed him. As an educator, I could ask for nothing more.

Respectfully submitted on 11.20.11by Mr. Bill Shryock