



“... go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you ...” Matt. 28:19 20



International Team Member - Paddy Cook

Dear Friends,

Tuesday, July 1st 2003

Thank you for being so patient waiting for information from us. June 7th was my 59th birthday and our 28th wedding anniversary. We love the new home that God has given us, and our new church family. We treasure the way in which we have been folded into such a godly fellowship. We are so blessed.

We thank God, that in these difficult financial times, all our supporters have been so faithful. Just one church admitted to financial troubles, but God knew that and provided the necessary \$200 a month 4 months before.

For those of you, known unto God, who pray for us each day, we pray God's riches blessings on you and your family. We can not thank you enough!



Andrew and Jessi have just returned from a week in Florida with all the cabin boys (8) and their wives. Andrew continues to work hard in his business, "Trueshine." Jessi is working at Covenant College and has also begun doing flowers for weddings. Andrew is looking at going back to school for a business degree.



Here is a picture of me, preaching in Trent, Italy recently. Since being in Georgia I have made two trips to Sicily, a trip to California and a trip to a Reformed Worship conference in Greenville. Pray for discernment in choosing the next trips. England, Russia, Malta and Albania are under consideration.



Matthew loves inviting folks over to swim in our above ground pool. I had no idea how much work and expense it takes to turn a green frog haven into and ice blue swimming pool! He already has some great friends that he calls up and invites over to play.



Stephen paid off all his college loans 6 months after graduating and brought his first car, a Subaru outback. He has been offered a free condo for next year from the private school where he is working. He has invited his sister Mary to live with him and be her big brother in Greenville.



May's X-ray in KC was clear so that was a huge blessing and we are all rejoicing about that news. The fact that bills keep arriving when we thought that they had all been paid seems to be a fact of life. Mary is working in KC for the summer, to make some money and will then move to Greenville, SC. Please pray that Mary's tumor will not return.



Sheila enjoys reading her book on the porch, sitting in the suspended chair that Stephen gave us for Christmas. She has survived another year of home-schooling with all the blessings and pressures. She is experiencing some trouble with her joints already, which is a pain. Sheila has just broken her toe.

God be in my head. And in my understanding;
God be in mine eyes, And in my looking;
God be in my mouth, And in my speaking;
God be in my heart, And in my thinking;
God be at my end, And at my departing.

Words by Walford Davies 1869-1941

To be a good steward, as a PEF Evangelist, I will be mailing my newsletters electronically in future. They will be sent as an attached file in a .pdf format. If you are unable to download this new format, you can go to the Adobe Acrobat web site. www.adobe.com to receive a free download, "Acrobat Reader." This will enable you to receive the newsletters in exactly the same format that they are sent.

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THE FOCUS OF MY MINISTRY:

- **To take the reformed faith back to Europe.**
- **To teach reformed evangelism to churches in Europe.**
- **To supply new theological books for discipleship authored by Drs. Boice, Sproul, Schaeffer and Packer etc.**
- **To supply gift subscriptions of Ligonier's "Tabletalk."**
- **To encourage nationals who are interested in starting Presbyterian and reformed churches in their homeland.**

Much of my evangelism teaching ministry revolves around teaching my workshop "Boldly Proclaiming." This is a workshop on "The Message and Methods of God-Centered Witnessing." Personal evangelism is also taught, using John Blanchard's "Ultimate Questions" in the national's own language. "Boldly Proclaiming" has been translated into ALBANIAN, RUSSIAN and ROMANIAN. It is currently in the hands of nationals in CROATIA, TURKEY, ITALY, GREECE, CHINA, SPAIN, EGYPT, CZECH REPUBLIC and BULGARIA.

Why do I do reformed evangelism? It is because of the Evangelical Dilemma. What is the Evangelical Dilemma?

"EVANGELICAL DILEMMA for Christians" by Wm. Macdonald.

There is a curious problem today in evangelical circles for the individual believer. **The problem in brief is this:** a great many personal soul-winners have been mobilized to reach the populace for Christ. They are earnest, zealous, enthusiastic, and persuasive. To their credit it must be said that they are on the job. And it is one of the phenomena of our times that they rack up an astounding number of conversions. Everything so far seems to be on the plus side. But the problem is this. **The conversions do not stick.** The fruit does not remain. Six months later there is nothing to be seen for all the aggressive evangelism. The capsule technique of soul winning has produced stillbirths.

What lies at the back of all this malpractice in bringing souls to birth? Strangely enough it begins with the valid determination to preach the pure gospel of the grace of God. **We want to keep the message simple.** Uncluttered by any suggestion that man can ever earn or deserve eternal life. Justification is by faith alone, apart from the deeds of the law. **Therefore, the message is "only believe."** **From there we reduce the message to a concise formula.**

At first blush the method and the message might seem above criticism. On a closer study we are forced to have second thoughts and conclude that we have oversimplified the gospel.

1. The first fatal flaw is the missing emphasis on Repentance.

There can be no true conversion without conviction of sin. It is one thing to agree that I am a sinner; it is quite another thing to experience the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit in my life. Unless I have a spirit wrought consciousness of my utterly lost condition, I can never exercise saving faith. It is useless to tell unconverted sinners to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ -- that message is only for those who know they are lost. We sugarcoat the gospel when we de-emphasize man's fallen condition. **With that kind of watered down message, people receive the Word with joy instead of deep contrition.** They do not have deep roots, and though they might endure for a while, they soon gave up all profession when persecution or trouble comes [Math 13:21]. **We have forgotten that the message is repentance toward God as well as faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.**

2. A second serious omission is the missing emphasis on the Lordship of Christ. A light, jovial mental assent that Jesus is Savior misses the point. Jesus is first Lord, then Savior. The New Testament always places his Lordship before his Saviorhood.

Do we present the full implications of His Lordship to people? He always did.

3. A third defect in our message is our tendency to keep terms of discipleship hidden until a decision has been made for Jesus. Our Lord never did this. The message he preached included the cross as well as the crown. He never hid his scar to win disciples.

He revealed the worst along with the best, then told his listeners to count the cost.

We popularize the message and promise fun. The result of this is we have people believing without knowing what they believe. In many cases they have no doctrinal basis for their decision. They don't know the implications of their commitment to Christ. They have never experienced the mysterious work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration.

And of course **we have others who are talked into a profession of faith because of the slick salesmanship of the soul-winner.** Or some who want to please the affable, personal young man with the winning smile. And some who only want to get rid of this interloper who has invaded their privacy.

Satan laughs when these conversions are triumphantly announced on earth.

Wm. Macdonald 1849

Sicilian Update:



Pastor Roberto with his family.

As a Sicilian State trooper of 20 years service, Roberto writes: " ... in my leisure time I started studying theology by myself, starting with the "Institutes of the Christian Religion" by John Calvin. But above all, I read and I studied the Bible tirelessly. Studying Christian doctrine and the history of the church. I was fascinated by the Reformers, but Calvin struck me in a particular way. I became Calvinistic in doctrine."

In 1992 I felt the call to the Christian Ministry, from the Lord, but I didn't know how to begin. In 1995 however, following certain circumstances, the Lord opened a door to begin a new work in the city of Randazzo, near Mount Etna. This way I began to make some biblical reunions in my house, together with a few other converters. On 17th July 1997 we opened the Church. The city of Randazzo is strongly Catholic and implicated in black magic, and the growth of our congregation is slow, but the Lord knows his people in this city. (Timoteos 2:19-20).

In November of 2002, I knew a wonderful person: Rev. Paddy Cook, an evangelist with Presbyterian Evangelistic Fellowship. Paddy visited me in Randazzo, from America bringing a "load" for me: a lot of books of theology in the English language. During his stay in Sicily, the sermons of the Rev. Cook have very much encouraged our congregation, but above all me. He has given me ulterior stimulus and courage in my Christian Ministry, giving me all those books of theology and inviting me to deepen my studies in theology in a Presbyterian Seminary of USA. In March 2003 the Lord wanted to bless us again with the arrival of Rev. Cook. This time he came with a "load" for me: a lot of books of theology in the English language.

While he was in Italy, I served as his driver with my auto and we went around Italy to visit other believers, to encourage them. The Christian Ministry of the Rev. Cook has been a big blessing from God on everybody, but for me particularly. Thanks to his encouragement and the "load" of books that he has given me, I have been able to begin to deepen my knowledge of the Reformed Presbyterian theology and I have taken the decision to study Theology through the Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, to have a Degree and become a regular ordained Reformed Presbyterian minister. Rev. Paddy Cook has helped me in all this.

In Sicily there are no churches with Presbyterian believers, apart from me and my church, because liberal theology has destroyed healthy theology. Thanks to the Lord, I desire to study at the Seminary and become a regular ordained Reformed Presbyterian minister, to serve better our Sovereign God in His field. Thus I thank the Sovereign God because He has guided all the things up to here, allowing me to meet some people in the correct moment.

But I thank Him above all to have let me know, lately, the Rev. Cook. **I also want to thank all those believers in America who have made it possible for the Rev. Cook (with their prayers and their support), to work in Italy in his Evangelistic Ministries. God bless you greatly all.**

Pastor Roberto



RUSSIAN UPDATE: Russian Reformed Pastors:

The two reformed churches in Russia have always been very independent, capable and desiring self sufficiency. It has been a privilege to be able to help them in a small way towards that goal. In conjunction with Bibles for Russia, we were enabled in the last few years, to fund their first two Reformed pastors conferences. Now they fund their own. Previously we were able to bring them books, cell phones, a telephone for Eugene, and supply money to pay the bills, so that they don't have to travel by bus every time they want to talk with each other. On the last trip to Russia I was able to update Eugene with the latest computer and Vladimir with the latest laptop. Both Eugene in Tver, and Vladimir in Moscow are extremely capable and gifted men of God.

We continue to pray for them and thank God for their commitment to God and His truth and the application of it for their beloved Russian people. Now in a real sense we are not needed. Praise God for that! Pray with us, as to whether God would have us continue to minister in Russia or whether He would have us labor in another field or even a new field. I thank God that Vladimir introduced me to Col. Oleg at the airport in Moscow and PEF had the historic opportunity and privilege, to work with Russian Christian military officers.

Russian Christian Military Officers - Chaplaincy Training

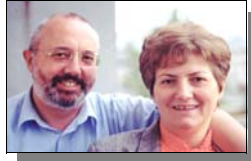
However, the ministry of training Russian Military Officers for the Chaplaincy has been to me the most heartbreaking story of my ministry. One of the problems comes from the fact that dear brother, Col. Oleg, has been asking everybody he meets, it seems, to help him train Christian Russian military officers for the Chaplaincy. As Sheila put it, "If you flirt with everybody, you may end up not marrying anybody." When I said yes it started something of a firestorm among ministries who had been working with and investing in Oleg for years. However, trouble surfaced at home also. I approached the leadership of PCA chaplains. I was told that they were accustomed to training chaplains in other countries. I asked if it would be possible for them to do what they do here and in other countries, but in Russia. Not having been in the Military myself, I was excited and thought that it was a matter of coordinating schedules. It became unbelievably complex. In the process I was told by another brother, that he had made a decision about how my PEF ministry was to proceed. Since PEF had been commissioned to begin the ministry, and at that point, this dear brother was a guest team member, I could not allow bypassing the chain of command in a delicate cross cultural/military setting. A letter was sent relieving the guest team members from any further responsibility. My good friend David, a friend of 30 years, a PCA Westpoint Chaplain came with me to Russia after many further problems were finally overcome. He did a great job and we enjoyed traveling and working together. However, for him the problems outweighed the benefits of developing the ministry. Early in the year David generously hosted me in his home in California but it was clear that David did not plan to return with me to Russia. Coupled with that we have lost the services of an extremely competent Russian translator, who was very professional and who knew how to translate the distinctives of the reformed position.

In summary, Oleg gives the impression that he desires American dollars more than reformed theology. American chaplains are put off by the Russian disorganization. Russia is an expensive country to go to and minister in. The Lord appears to be closing this door of ministry at the present time. Pray with us please about this ministry.

It will continue to be my prayer, that the situation in Russia could again be opened up by God, to train Russian Military officers for the chaplaincy. My vision is for PEF to take the initial risks and develop the ministry over a period of 3-4 years and then when it sufficiently resembles an "orderly ministry," hand the work over to retired reformed chaplains. That was always the plan.



ITALIAN UPDATE:



Walter & Nardia



Dr. Mario



Italian Baptism

Please continue to pray for Walter and his family in Mantova.

Walter is a dear brother with a heart for Christ and the reformed faith. He is a gifted teacher and a particularly gifted translator. One of the works that he has translated is "Preachers and Preaching" by Martin Lloyd Jones.

Italy is such a desolate country spiritually speaking, and even more so for the handful of men who are committed to proclaiming the faith of the Reformation. I was sad for Walter, as I know he was hoping that working with Dr. Mario would be an opportunity for partnering in a reformed ministry. After ministering together for 6 months God showed Walter that was not his plan for him. Walter is very discouraged at present. In all our lives, there are times in our Christian walk when we are afraid that we have let go of God and that he has withdrawn his face from us. Thankfully, Walter is convinced of the doctrine of the Perseverance of the saints and he knows that his faithfulness depends on God hanging onto him, rather than the other way around. It is a very difficult and lonely time for Walter. **Please be sure and pray for Walter and his sweet Christian family at this time. Pray that God would teach Walter what it is God wants him to understand about himself and the ministry that God is preparing him for.** That will be a great comfort to him, at this time of testing, to know that other believers are holding him, his family, and his future ministry, before the throne of grace.

Dr. Mario writes: "Since the Lord brought Paddy and me together many things have changed regarding my knowledge of God's revealed truths. The Lord blessed me one day practically and unexpectedly with manna from heaven. It was God's perfect timing. Paddy presented himself to me with Reformed books, an economical expense also, of which I was totally ignorant, being in a Dispensational Brethren Assembly. Doctrinal and Church government errors and confusion were rampant in this particular Church. I need to be frank about how things were in order to attest that Paddy was sent by the Lord, just in the nick of time. The "elders" came to know through my "trusted" friend that I was reading "Chosen by God" by R.C. Sproul, and privately going through the Westminster Confession of Faith. Profound frustration had set in my deep and sincere desire to honor my Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. God was calling me to do something far better, but I didn't know what it was until I began reading the thoughts of the Reformers and reformed authors.

I don't want to get into the details, but in the meantime a group of 12 members or so from our "mother church" were in great part under my responsibility and pastoral care in my town. When the "elders" came to know that I was personally thinking through things, even still unsure of many things, they came down on me, in my own home with incredible arrogance, ignorance, and spiritual violence used in order to try to pin me down in my spiritual life. These "brothers and elders," eventually used terrible group pressure techniques and not sound Biblical reasons, in their desperate effort to dominate me and my wife's spiritual lives, but God had other plans and He is the Faithful one in all of this. It boils down to this: we are learning to discover, rest in, and serve the Sovereign God. The previous church believed that God was about 90% sovereign. When my group, which by the grace of God I had the privilege to nurture, saw with what pressure and arrogance the overseers handled the problem, half left the church and wanted to follow me while the other half was so confused, but lovingly hugged me farewell. At that moment the last thing I desired was to pastor anyone, considering the fact that doctrinally I was now between two poles and said I had no intentions nor preparation to lead a group.

Now, two and a half years later, the Lord brought almost the entire group together again and added another 8. We're a small church now of about 20 adults, not including children, that are desiring to be an Italian Presbyterian and Reformed Church. You can imagine the difficulty for most Italians regarding "infant baptism" but I see the God bringing this precious doctrine into focus for them.

We had our first baptisms this winter... Paddy baptized them. The Lord has blessed me with my converted cousin who is co-leading the church with me, contributing his lay preaching and ruling gifts. I am teaching the Westminster Larger Catechism in our Bible studies, and the children their Catechism.

We are a mission church 40 miles north of Rome. If you have never lived in a Roman Catholic country, especially this close to Rome, one couldn't even imagine what this could mean therefore....**please pray for us!**"

Albanian Update



The Evangelical Church in Albania by Albert Kona - "Bertie."

Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto **Illyricum**, I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ." **Romans 15:9**

It was around A.D. 56 that the Apostle Paul writing from Corinth on his third missionary journey, reveals to us a very important fact of history about the Albania Church. Once known as Illyricum, today known as Albania, this country was evangelized by the Apostle Paul himself. We know from history that Albania embraced the Gospel, the Church was established, and it even served later as a base for further missionary work among other nations. Later, it came mainly under the dominion of the Byzantine Church, with a small presence of the Western Church. After 500 years of Turkish occupation, nearly 70% of Albanians were converted to the Muslim religion, leaving nearly 20% of the population as followers in the Eastern Orthodox Church and the last 10% remained part of the Roman Catholic Church. After 50 years of communist regime, a long and successful brain-washing project has made Albania an atheistic, pagan country. Today, many people are able to trace their religious background, but religion does not really mean anything to them. A man named Mohammed in Albania knows and loves his religion as much as any non-believing man in the USA named Matthew or Chris.

But what about the state of the Church today?

In 1992, the first groups of evangelical short-term teams came to Albania. They were passionate college kids with much love for the Gospel and lost souls. During those first summers many came to Christ and were zealous to learn and to grow, and that was just great, but that revealed problems with the way that missions was done in Albania. The first problem was that those college kids were in Albania only for the summer. **The question was: who was going to lead the church?** Well, some of them decided to stay and try to establish the local Church. But problems were many. First, as part of international and interdenominational para-church organizations, they had come from different theological backgrounds. Every one preached his/her own beliefs within the same group of people, and this way throwing the church into doctrinal confusion and frustrating the new believers. Second, being theologically untrained but creative, they presented the gospel with many errors, and sometimes very strange ones. As I look back, I now understand that many of the ways that they tried to teach the Doctrines of the Trinity and salvation were not simply wrong, but heretical. But this was not all. They failed to reach the whole person. The mind was not challenged so they themselves would not be challenged. Many of them came from emotionally driven denominations. Third, they failed to preach the Gospel to families. They preached the Gospel to the kids and young people and, to females, leaving out fathers and mothers. They failed to reach the middle and high class citizens because they were not able to talk intelligently to them

about the Gospel. Because of this, the Albanian evangelical church was always considered by the people and the government simply as a youth movement, a phase that all kids go through when they are young. The Church was never taken seriously by anyone. It was ridiculed by everyone, and unprotected by the law. A local church could never buy a piece of land to build its own church. Fourth, these missionaries, being young and untrained, caused a crisis in church polity too. If and when they discovered potential local leaders to lead the church the question was always, how are we going to train and ordain Albanian leaders. They could not lay hands on any one and commission them because they themselves had not been ordained. But many times, they went ahead and did so anyway. Soon, anyone was laying hands on anyone, and internal conflict was killing the very young evangelical church. Needless to say that no one ever thought about the Presbyterian type of church government. There is much to tell about the present state of the evangelical church in Albania and the reasons for it. **Three things are sure. First, the Albania church does not know what to believe.** It has never heard the real Gospel presented to the whole man and to the whole nation. **Second, the Albanian evangelical church does not know what to do with the gospel.** It does not know how to bring the gospel to the society. They cannot be a positive factor for change in the life of the nation. **Third, the Albania evangelical Church, with the way that it is administered, will not be able to reach out, multiply and survive a very hostile atheistic and post-Communist country.** I believe that the answer to this situation is the power of the Gospel, preached to the whole man, family and nation, with the reformed faith and the Presbyterian form of missions and church government.

This is where the great ministry of PEF and men such as Rev. Paddy Cook came into the picture. He was one of the few among all the missionaries that I have met so far in Albania, that understood the issues from the very first time that he was there and led me to the answers for this situation. As well, he was the only one that really saw God's gift and calling in me and trusted God for provision. Today, as many of you know and have prayed about, I am studying at Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary in South Carolina. This last May I finished my second year of theological training with two more years to go. The blessings have been innumerable. I am a member of a great Presbyterian church body and I am sitting under the teaching and leadership of a wonderful minister, Carl Robbins, as well as under the wonderful teaching and leadership of Dr. Pipa and the whole faculty of GPTS.

My plan for the next years is to get ordained and commissioned by Calvary presbytery and Woodruff Road Presbyterian church in Greenville. I pray that by the time that I head back home, to evangelize and Church plant, that I will be able to take with me a couple of ordained men and their families **to start reformed and Presbyterian churches in Albania, and do that this time, the right way, the Presbyterian way, the Biblical way.**

Prayer Is The Christian's Business

Pray for us please!

Luther wrote:

"As it is the business of tailors to make clothes and cobblers to mend shoes, so it is the business of Christians to pray."

Prayer, then, is not an option with the Christian; it is an obligation. He does not have the right whether or not he will pray. He must pray. To be a Christian without praying is no more possible than to be alive without breathing.

Prayerlessness is sin. Samuel exclaimed: "God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you. (1 Samuel 12:23)

Hooker, the famous Puritan, said: "Prayer is my chief work, and it is by means of it that I carry on the rest." It would be easier to conceive of a city without electricity, transportation, telephone service, water, and police protection than it would conceive of a church without prayer. Yet the unhappy truth is that many churches have "supper rooms" for eating and drinking, but no "upper rooms" for prayer and waiting on God.

(Taken from "When You Pray?" by Harold Lindsell, p.13.)

Prayer Requests:

Ministry/Support/Sicily/Italy/Albania.

- **For God to continue to open doors for ministry.**
- **For new supporters and full support - we enter the summer months with a \$4,500 deficit.**
- **For Roberto's online M. Div. at GPTS.**
- **For \$600 for first years books for Roberto.**
- **Pray for the church in Randazzo, Sicily as it seeks to Glorify God with it's witness despite the local occult influences, along with it's outreach in the city of Palermo, Sicily.**
- **Pray for the church in Viterbo, Italy as it too seeks to Glorify God in it's worship and it's obedience to the Great Commission.**
- **Pray for "Bertie" as God prepares him for the Gospel ministry in his beloved Albania.**
- **Praise God for our faithful ministry partners in these difficult financial times. We love you and thank you!**

35th Annual - PEF Family Evangelism Conference on

July 12th - 18th in Florence, Alabama.

Call PEF at 1 800 CALL PEF.