

Rome: Reaching a Neglected Minority

JOIN GOD'S WORK IN EUROPE'S CITIES.

- Less than 0.8 percent of Italians are evangelical.
- 2.7 million people live in Rome.

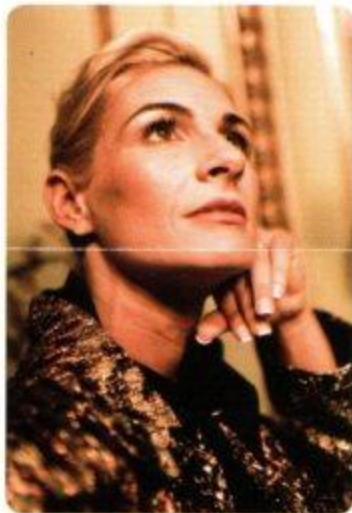
At noon on a Thursday, Marisa rang the doorbell at her friend Anna's house. She'd been there many times, but never for a Bible study.

What am I doing here? she wondered as she took a seat in Anna's elegant living room. Marisa, a literature professor, felt comfortable in the group—all of them were members of society's upper echelon, as she was. But she felt slightly uncomfortable with the discussion of Romans 4, maybe because it stirred her heart.

When the study ended, Marisa approached Peppo, the group leader, with several questions. After answering a few, he said, "Marisa, I think you could go on for three days asking questions! You're not here by chance—you had a divine appointment with God, and He's asking if you are ready to receive Him in a meaningful, personal way. Are you ready to meet Christ?"

"I would love that!" she said. Peppo started praying and then Marisa took over, asking the Lord to fill her in every way.

At the next Bible study, Marisa's friend Anna and two other women said they had grown up in the church but didn't know about having a relationship with Christ. All three received Christ.



GEM missionaries Peppo and Jane Biscarini began serving in Rome in 2004. God called them to a unique ministry: Reaching Italian influencers and fostering the spread of the Gospel through social networks. The goal is to form a Bible-teaching church with an Italian leader. Why influencers? Peppo calls them a neglected minority. "Given an opportunity to hear the message," he says, "these individuals would be the most influential to take the Gospel to the rest of the socio-economic pyramid."

Rome has a high concentration of influencers. "The Lord opened amazing doors with Roman nobility and gave us favor in elite circles," says Peppo. "In 2005 we started our first Bible study."

Through networking and hosting a dinner gala outreach, the Biscarinis have met all kinds of people, from countesses to princes. Nearly 40 people attend one of their Bible studies, and most now have a relationship

with Christ. The Biscarinis recognize that Italians can reach their peers more easily than missionaries could. Because most of the people in the Bible studies have large social networks, the potential exists to reach many in Rome with Christ's love.

"The Lord opened amazing doors with Roman nobility and gave us favor....In 2005 we started our first Bible study."
—Peppo

"We believe that true love and the presentation of truth are the conquering components missing in this city," Peppo says. "Only His unconditional love, in conjunction with fervent prayer, will give us the power to change lives."

Influencers who live in many key European cities could change Europe's spiritual landscape. These people are open to the Gospel message because they have experienced worldly success but are still searching for something to fill the emptiness inside. You can influence the influencers in Rome today through your prayers. Please ask God to open doors in key European cities so this neglected minority will become a major component in Europe's transformation for God's glory.