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# *The Johnstons' Italian Job*

## **August 2016**

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*For a man's ways are before the eyes of the LORD, and he ponders all his paths. - Proverbs 5:21*

This may seem like a strange time in the month to receive our prayer letter but there is a good reason for it.

We decided to send a "Summer prayer letter" out now instead of two separate ones for July and August. July and August tend to be quiet months in Italy as they do back in the UK. Most of the congregation try to take a holiday to the golden shores of the south or up to the wonderful peaks of the Alps or Dolomites so the church empties for most of the summer. That's not to say that the services stop or that the Bible studies come to a close, no these remain in place regardless.

After helping in Chiavari, Liguria in June with the Walti family's "Kids camp" (Over 106 kids in attendance!), we managed to get home for a few days for Niamh's graduation. This was such a special occasion for us as a family and we were thankful to those who made it financially possible for us to make the journey.

As I write this we are currently at "home" in Castlerock and preparing the van for its annual MOT (road worthiness check). We came home to be with the 'kids' for a while yet when we got home Connor was in London with a couple of his friends from Verona and has since gone on another CSSM team in Bangor. Ross has volunteered to help at "Livewire" (a youth event at New Horizon) and so he's not here either. At least we still have Niamh! We are back in the UK for 12 days in total and leave to return to Italy on 15th August.

We have several upcoming things happening in the coming weeks that we want to inform you about which we would appreciate prayer concerning.

In just over a month's time Tracey and I will be starting our Home Deputation work for the Autumn. This will involve us returning to Castlerock in mid-September and from then until the end of November we will be doing slightly over 40 speaking engagements. Most of you know about this from previous prayer letters and many of you got in quickly to ask if we could be booked. We are greatly looking forward to seeing many of you then.



Niamh wearing a typical Italian Laurel wreath for graduation

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However, between now and then we have to prepare our talks for these engagements. We are prayerfully considering what the Lord would have us say and trusting that we would be found faithful in what we communicate.

Also at the end of August the 4 Western Europe Mission families (Johnstons, Cochranes, Frenchs and Steve Anderson) are meeting with Helen Johnston from the Global Mission office for a 3 day retreat in Bilbao. This will be an important time of fellowship and encouragement for us and we are greatly looking forward to it.

Immediately when we return from it we have a Porto United 3 day camp and then the annual literary festival in Mantova starts. We are hoping to have an Italian OM team with us for that.

On the tail end of all this we have been asked by the local council to host a one day five-a-side competition for the community. This will be another wonderful opportunity to highlight the work of Porto United and to do some evangelism.

The day after all these events finish we fly back to N. Ireland and start our deputation work the very next day!

We plan to be in touch again with dates and places of when we will be speaking during our time home so if you missed out on us coming to your church it would be lovely to see you at another venue.

Please pray for:

- 1) All the planning and preparation involved before these events happen.
- 2) For effective outreach during each of the events.
- 3) For wisdom and discernment to know what is important for Kingdom work Mantova
- 4) For Lisa Artioli (Andrea's daughter) who is spending a year in San Diego to improve her English.
- 5) For Connor as he waits to see where he will be studying next year.
- 6) For all the travel involved prior to our deputation starting in a month's time.



Kids games - Chiavari, Liguria

