

The background of the page is a musical score on aged, yellowed paper. It features several staves of music with treble and bass clefs, various notes, rests, and bar lines. The page number '82' is visible at the top left, and '85' appears on two staves on the left side. The score continues down the page, with '88' and '91' also visible on the left margin.

November 17, 2011

Dear Friends and Co-Laborers,

Buongiorno e Buon Natale! (Good Day and Merry Christmas) from Vicenza, Italy. Actually, we are living in Camisano – very near Vicenza, which is the location for the military base. All the services of the church are in English, and nearly all understand English, although a few sit next to an English-speaker, who will translate for them. The church is very much an international crowd. In the Sunday services, we have people who are Puerto Rican, Italian, Thai, Filipino, German, American, Ghanaian, Nigerian, and possibly some from other African countries. Some are military, and others are civilians contracted to the military base. Some come because they want an English-speaking church.

When we arrived, the church had no pianist, so they relied on “canned” music to sing by. They seemed glad to have Marvin play. This also gives us the ability to have more variety in choosing songs from the hymnbook. After a week or two, we decided to start a choir. We were surprised at the immediate interest. We have about a dozen who are faithful to practicing and singing. We have some very good voices among them, and have been very pleased with the results. Since we have our practice after the evening service, it has also been a boom to the attendance of the P.M. service. We have also had some new visitors among the military personnel.

Davide Cazzola, who is from this area, is expected to be here for an evangelistic outreach to the Italian community during the last part of November. Our church will help with refreshments and serving, as they did when he was here in 2007. We have one young American man who speaks fluent Italian and has many Italian contacts. He seems excited about helping with this meeting.

As we go from place to place, the evidence of a rich and ancient history and culture is all around us. It is also a culture with lots of challenges, such as the Socialistic “bent” which afflicts Europe.

Shortly after we arrived, we went to the Basilica and walked in on a mass in progress. Others came in, would genuflect, cross themselves, and either sat or stood for the rest of the service. The evidence of the art and wealth of their religion, with its emphasis on Mary and the crucifix, was a testimony to the declension of true Christianity in the 19½ centuries since Paul introduced the Word of God and salvation by God’s grace through faith alone (not of works). I know but very little Italian, but I did pick up in their prayer “Madre d’Dio” (Mother of God). How alien to the truth of Scripture!

The weather has not gotten too cold, and it’s hard to imagine that soon we will commemorate the Incarnation of the One Who stepped into time, that He might give to us life now and beyond time. In the ever-deepening darkness of this age, it is a cause for rejoicing to know that “the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined” (Isaiah 9:2). May many come to the Light.

As always, we are grateful for your concern and support! To each of you, may you have a blessed Christmas in Christ and a Felice Anno Nuovo! In the service of the King.

*Stanley B. Cline, Jr.*

Stanley and Marvin Cline