

Site Report: Vicenza, Italy

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Introduction: Vicenza is located in Italy's Veneto Region. It is within an hour's drive of Venice. American forces have been stationed in Italy since the end of the 2nd World War. The base is home to the Southern European Task Force (Airborne) a forward deployed task force that can react quickly to events in their area of operation.

Need: The American base in Vicenza needs a solid Presbyterian and Reformed Church. The community is comprised of more than 9,000 soldiers. With a significant civilian infrastructure to support the mission and family members one can see the need for a solid biblical church for this size community. The base is home to the 173rd Airborne Brigade which has a rich history of serving our nation. Vicenza is an Army base. The soldiers are highly trained and motivated professionals. Spiritually, the community is served by chaplains in a highly pluralistic environment. There is one fundamental Baptist Church off post and a para-church group that runs the Hospitality House (Cadence International). There is a Church of God in Christ work that meets on post. A Presbyterian and Reformed Church can best serve the military community. Many of the Italians in the area speak English. It is possible, if God is so pleased, that an outreach to the surrounding community could be established and perhaps bear much fruit.

Project Description: A Church planter is needed to establish a Presbyterian and Reformed Church near the American base in Vicenza. This will be a pioneering effort. Funding for this work will be initially borne by the sending presbytery that adopts this location. Churches outside the geographical bounds of the sending presbytery could also partner in this effort to expand the Kingdom. The church planter could also participate in the raising of funds for this effort. Our experience, though somewhat limited with two church plants, indicates that such a work could become self-supporting in fairly short order. The church planter must be a self-starter. He must be willing to work hard in his vocation. He should be a good expositor of the Word of God and have a strong desire to reach the lost with the Gospel. He should be moved to make disciples for Christ. He should be strong in the faith, but gentle in spirit. A familiarity with the military culture would be helpful, but not necessary. A brief training period could be provided to help the Church planter to better understand the military culture. He should understand that the military is a highly mobile organization. It moves people around constantly. To some this is a negative, but it also offers opportunities to impact so many more over the life of the ministry. He must be prepared to live and work in an environment where there are few like-minded, if any, pastors around him.

Conclusion: The military community is a wonderful community that could benefit greatly from a doctrine of grace ministry. In addition to the opportunities for ministry our Lord will provide in this setting there are numerous cultural events that the minister and his family can participate in with the local citizens. Italy has a rich history. Rome,

Florence, Pisa, and Assisi are within an easy train ride or drive. The Tuscany area is beautiful. There are so many things to see and do in Italy.