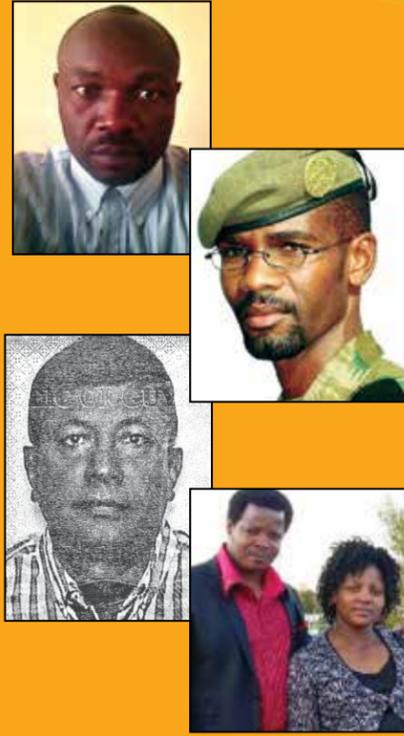


Chaplains Interaction

27 March – 7 April
Wright-Patterson AFB/Dayton area

Military chaplains play a vital role in the encouragement of military Christians, and providing training to international chaplains -- some of whom have received little to no training -- is an important part of our mission. Our next Chaplains Interaction program begins 27 March, and includes instruction in the basic principles of chaplaincy such as military ethics, managing operational stress, ministering to a pluralistic military society, commander/chaplain relationships, and prayer and Bible study methods. Currently we expect participants from Burundi, India, Cape Verde, Guyana, Nigeria, Suriname, and Zimbabwe (four of whom are shown here). Please be in prayer for participants and teachers in this program. We are also still in need of scholarship assistance for Chaplains Interaction – if you want to help with this need, contact Bernhard at 1-800-487-8108 or at deputy@accts.org.



OUR MISSION: To assist in the development of Christian leaders in the armed forces of the world and in the establishment and growth of military Christian fellowships.

MOLTO BENE!

Very Good! Thriving Fellowship Groups in Italy



"Praise God for His steadfast faithfulness and abundant provision in opening door after door of opportunity in Italy, and richly blessing us as we walked through each one," report Terry and Susan Wichert, an ACCTS associate staff couple who encouraged, equipped, and taught over 500 members of the Italian military Christian fellowship (MCF). Their month-long journey included six cities and nearly a dozen military Christian fellowships. As you read their report, please keep these believers in your prayers.

and linked up with Marcello, one of our Italian MCF contacts. He asked if we could be in Sicily the following evening to teach at a local church where the MCF was meeting, and then encourage the brothers and sisters in Christ as part of a concert the following night. In addition to the MCF, we also met with a city mayor and members of Youth Without Borders following the concert. [*Space A flights are free or extremely discounted flights available to U.S. active-duty and/or retired service members. It can be an unpredictable and time-consuming way to travel but is beneficial because of the associated low- or no-cost flights.] *Continued on page 2*

Catania and Lentini, Sicily After a day's delay waiting for an overnight Space A* flight to Naples, we arrived



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Molto Bene!

Continued from page 1

Taranto The MCF is truly thriving in Taranto. In addition to teaching on leadership, planning, and the relationship between the church and para-church organizations, we led a conference focused on Christian military wives, and preached at a church whose members are predominantly from MCF families. Through tears, praise, and laughter we formed and renewed bonds of fellowship in Christ. We could relate well to Paul's encouragement to the Thessalonians: "So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our very lives, because you had become so dear to us." (1 Thessalonians 2:8) God truly blessed these events and several people came forward for prayer following the sermon, including two who accepted new life in Christ.

Rome In Rome, we taught on fellowship and discipleship at an MCF gathering, and preached at a church that has a large MCF presence. In keeping with ACCTS' vision that everyone in uniform has the opportunity to hear the gospel from someone in their nation's military uniform, we focused on the need to share Jesus, particularly as God strategically places each of us within the armed forces to share His message of salvation.



Novara Moving further north to Novara, we met the Italian MCF vice president and his wonderful family. An active-duty member of the Italian Carabinieri (military police), he organized a meeting in his own home with MCF members from this region of Italy. While there, we not only shared a meal but were able to encourage the brothers and sisters of the MCF to invest their lives in building the Kingdom right where God has placed them. Truly a blessing for us, and we pray for them as well.

Trieste Trieste is near the Slovenian border. Once again, we encouraged the MCF members, shared the fellowship of Christ at two different events, and preached at an evening service.

Naples We connected with some young US military couples and encouraged them in their plans to start a discipleship and outreach ministry to the US and NATO military populations.

History Lesson:

Military Christian Fellowship Italy

In the late 1980s, Italian military Christians learned about international military believers who had formed military Christian fellowships. "In these early formative years, of particular note were encounters with the NCF (Naval Christian Fellowship), an association of believers belonging mainly to UK Navy, and ACCTS, whose exposure

Continued on page 3

History Lesson

Continued from page 2

occurred during a visit of the current MCF Italy President to the United States in 1997," states Marcello Debonis.

Because of these experiences and discussions, military Christian leaders in Italy officially established the Military Christian Fellowship Italy in December, 2012. Today, MCF Italy is thriving and growing, with a ministry base of more than 500 members and participants who are scattered from the southern reaches of Sicily to the northernmost parts of the country in Trieste and Novara.

Small Tasks, Big Picture

Ever wonder what a day in the ACCTS office is like? There are many tasks to fulfill, and some of them feel "small," but God has a bigger picture in mind and we hope He uses our work to fulfill His goals. Here's a typical day in our office:

Task: Skype meeting with European military Christian fellowship (MCF) leaders.

Staff member: Bernhard Kaltenbach

Big Picture: Provide planning assistance so that the March meeting of European MCF leaders is a successful and inspiring meeting for all who attend.

Task: Email and interview via electronic means (Skype) all people who have been nominated to attend this summer's Interaction-Rocky Mountain High program to get more information about them and their role in military ministry.

Staff member: Emanuela Haien

Big Picture: To successfully host this program, which trains young military Christians to minister through their military Christian fellowships.

Task: Email letters and follow up with all Chaplains Interaction participants to help them obtain U.S. visas to attend the program.

Staff member: Elizabeth Humphrey

Big Picture: To ensure the administrative details are taken care of so that participants can attend this leadership training program.

Task: Gather the office staff for daily prayer.

Staff member: Russ Hammerud

Big Picture: Focus us on God's will for the day and how He wants us to pursue military ministry.

Task: Brew coffee.

Staff Member: Mr. Coffee machine

Big Picture: Keep office staff sharp, on their toes, and fully caffeinated.

Task: Relationship building.

Staff Member: All

Big Picture: Now that we are properly caffeinated, our goal is to interact and support field staff, encourage and follow up with supporters, and support Executive Director Col. Phil Exner in his duties.

ACCTS Prayer Reminder

March 2017

“Remember that God’s responsibilities are creation, ownership, control, provision, direction, and the protection of everything. Our role is simply to be faithful, to receive the Lord’s provision, and to serve Jesus faithfully.”

-- from mmi.org.uk’s comments on prayer



1 This month, staff member Rick Ryles and ACCTS associate Thad Moe will be ministering to Christians in three South Asian nations -- Sri Lanka, India, and Nepal. Believers in these nations face unique challenges and are often in the minority. Pray that these visits will be an encouragement to everyone with whom Rick and Thad meet.

2 Syria continues to face devastating armed conflict, which has killed 300,000 men, women, and children. Pray for an end to this tragic situation. Pray for Syria’s displaced citizens. Pray for mercy and hope for this beleaguered nation.

3 Staff member Ed Ward will teach leadership in Mongolia this month. Praise God for this opportunity, and pray that God will give him wisdom as he teaches. Also uphold in prayer Ed’s wife and fellow staff member, Sally.

4 Approximately 70,000 and 80,000 people died during Sri Lanka’s civil war, which ended in 2009. (Source: BBC). Pray that healing from that war will continue, and that the small number of military Christians will faithfully follow Christ and spread His love.

5 Cape Verde, also known as Cabo Verde, lies off the west coast of Africa. This nation enjoys political and economic stability, although drought has caused significant issues (Source: BBC). Praise God for the group of military believers in this nation, and ask that God give them daily love for Him and for others.

6 In February this year a new commander in chief was

appointed in Suriname. A believer there asks us to pray for this new leader and his decisions.

7 India has become a global power with a diverse economy, but does still deal with overpopulation and poverty (Source: CIA Factbook). India is also blessed with a small number of military believers who meet for prayer and fellowship. Please uphold these Christians in your prayers.

8 One of our planet’s poorest nations, Burundi, is working to emerge from a 12-year long civil war. Pray that military Christians will continue to work toward justice for their nation and integrity in their personal lives.

9 Pray for peace in the Middle East. Pray for Christians who live in these nations.

10 1.4% of Nepal’s population is Christian (Source: Wikipedia), and a small number of those Christians are military personnel. Please uphold these believers in your prayers.

11 A Spring Break Waterloo to World War II trip, led by ACCTS’ director Phil Exner, begins today. Phil will be accompanied by U.S. Christian cadets and mids as they tour battlefields in Belgium and France to learn lessons in leadership. Please pray for God’ guidance on Phil and the trip participants.

12 Today, please pray for leadership in the USA: political leaders, judicial leaders, religious leaders, and business leaders. Pray also that military believers will

be lights for Christ during this transitional time in the nation.

13 Myanmar is very diverse ethnically, and while freedom of religion is guaranteed by its constitution, some Christian minorities have suffered because of their faith (Source: Operation World). Pray for believers in this nation, particularly those in the military.

14 Pray with military believers in Canada as they seek meaningful ways to share their faith with their coworkers, family, and friends.

15 Guyana is located between Venezuela and Suriname in South America. Pray that its military believers will grow in their faith, desire to fellowship together, and share Christ.

16 Zimbabwe faces severe economic challenges as well as unemployment and poverty (Source: BBC). Pray that military believers in this nation will faithfully serve Christ while helping bring His hope to their fellow citizens.

17 Pray for the nation of South Korea as it goes through significant issues surrounding its president. Pray that military believers will be lights for Christ during this difficult time in their nation's history.

18 Today is the last day of the Waterloo to WWII trip (see Day 11). Pray that the midshipmen and cadets who participated will be able to implement the lessons they learned into their military careers.

19 Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, faces a challenge in keeping from breaking apart along ethnic and religious lines, according to the BBC. Pray for this nation, and for its military Christians.

20 Pray with our staff and volunteers who minister to international military students who are studying in the US. Ask that their words and love will bring many of these students to a deeper understanding of Christ.

21 A Christian in Haiti asks us to pray for positive changes for the nation, for the spiritual life of military believers and families, and that military Christians will stay connected with others of like faith.

22 France's presidential election will be held on 23 April. Pray for this nation and its election, and pray for its military Christians who serve God and their country.

23 Several people who were invited to attend Chaplains Interaction this month were denied visas or permission to attend. Please pray for those individuals

and ask that God will continue blessing their work for Him.

24 Pray for ACCTS' China Team as they are at a children's camp in an Air Force town in China this weekend. The camp partners are a Christian-led company that provides values and life skills education.

25 ACCTS volunteers will be leading groups of U.S. Christians cadets to Finland and Poland during their Spring Breaks. Pray that these groups will be an encouragement to the national MCFs in each nation, and that the cadets will see their military careers as vehicles to reach military personnel around the world.

26 Staff members from various U.S.-based military ministries will meet from 27-29 March for a Fellowship of Christian Military Ministries meeting. Pray for God's direction on all who attend this yearly meeting and the decisions they make about ministering together.

27 Chaplains Interaction starts today near Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio. At the time of this newsletter's publication, we expect participants from Burundi, Cape Verde, Guyana, India, Nigeria, Suriname, and Zimbabwe. Please pray that the participants will be open to learning new ways to minister as chaplains (or informal chaplains).

28 Pray for the staff members and volunteers who are leading this week's Chaplains Interaction program, asking God to guide their words and actions.

29 Venezuela's economy shrank by 18.6% last year and inflation was 800% (Source: theeconomist.com). Please pray for people who are coping with this extremely difficult situation. Pray that military believers will have joy in Christ even during such severe hardship.

30 Pray with staff members who are planning a June Academy Exploration Asia trip to China. Ask for wisdom and clarity among the Chinese people who are helping us plan this trip, especially as they face changes in the laws that affect religious behavior.

31 The last century saw a great decline in religious faith in many European nations, such as Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and Finland. There are military Christians in all these nations – pray for their faith and that their love for Christ will draw others to Him.