



Romans by Paul, and the “Roman Empire”

The NT-Bible tell us about Rome/ Italy. “Faith Basics” from Paul’s letter to the Romans and records of 1st Century Christians shed light on the area. The “*Roman Republic*” which by 1st century BC exceeded Italy while replacing the Hellenistic world, became the “*Roman Empire*” in 27 BC, (3 years after annexing Egypt); Its **first** emperor was “August” (from Luke 2:1). It peaked for over 250 years. The capital changed to Milan (and Ravenna) as the empire started to decline and then broke up by 476, while already being replaced in Eastern Europe by the “Byzantine Empire”.

The “Holy Roman Empire”

Invading migrating tribes and warring kings wrecked Italy, but in 962 the Pope crowned German “Otto” as emperor of the new “*Holy Roman Empire*” (abolished by Napoleon in 1806) which created a clerical and political intertwined Western-Europe, made up of principalities including many of the Italian city-states. Florence and others became dominant affluent renaissance cultures, with Venice once expanding to be ruling parts of the Adriatic Balkan coast. In 1400 the main (of 3) pope(s) lived in Avignon, France.

Earliest still existing Reformation roots.

The since 962 politically more influential clergy, enriched themselves, causing others to search for Christian values often in humble poverty. Franciscans a.o. remained in submission to the pope, but a generation earlier, Italian followers of Valdez (focussing on the Sermon on the Mount) promoted: Lay preachers; translating the gospels in local languages; Rejecting: prayers for the dead, purgatory, veneration of saints and relics. They broke with the church in 1205 as *the first and still existing protestant movement*, pointing to lasting reformation trends; The *Waldensians* work with the Baptist now, both are among the very few non-catholic denominations recognized by the Italian authorities.

2011: 150th Birthday for the Baptists and for Italy!

In the 1800s Spanish ruled the South, French the North, but Rome held some central states. After the brutally suppressed riots of 1848/49, Garibaldi united the independent regions forming the current “*Republic of Italy*” in 1861. With a fleeing pope, the Catholic church could have been without rights, but the central states joined by 1870, even though “Rome” did not recognize Italian sovereignty until Catholicism became state religion in 1929 (until 1984). Also in 1861 the Baptist Union was formed, witnessing by a focus on the social needs of the people (until today). Mafia control, illegal Immigrants, and 62 governments since 1948 cause many challenges to the currently 60 mil. population (9% practicing Catholics). California-like climate & landscape but with 116.000 SqMi, 26% less large. Worlds 3rd largest public debt (105,8% of GDP), while World s 7th largest economy. GDP is 82% of the US, it is higher in more industrialized Northern Italy, which natural border is like a half-moon of Alps with France in the East, Switzerland and Austria in the North, and in the North-West Slovenia.

Points of Praise:

- Increasing acceptance of diversity, helps protestants/ Evangelical Christians to unite and to witness.
- vast numbers of Immigrants bring vibrant faith and open up eyes for lack of own faith, and a challenge for mission.

Challenges for Prayer: (p4 = Pray4 = Pray for - It = Italy)

- Pray4 removing of barriers to understand the Gospel.
- p4 Christians to live out Kingdom values while facing difficult decisions, as organized crime (mafia/ camorra/ Ndrangheta) infiltrates all levels of society, p4 transformation of Italian government law-enforcement and economy.
- p4 It. -church’s secularized or disillusioned Catholics.
- p4 Gospel break-through; Turin center for satanism; protestants outnumbered by Jehova Wittnesses; 37% Italians pray to Padre Pio, 21% to St Antony, 10% to Jesus; 150.000 occult leaders only 50.000 Cath.Priests
- p4 unity and renewing living faith among protestants.
- 1,1% Evangelicals: immigrant ev. outnumber It.evangelicals
- p4 training leaders & mature leadership in It.churches
- p4 reaching out to the 70% of all communities without Bible believing congregation; only 30 Ev.Churches for 1.7 mil on Sardinia; 94 Uni’s with near 2 mil.students are prime mission-field; 1/2 mil. drug addicts (high HIV rate).
- p4 reaching 1,5 mil. illegal immigrants mostly North-African Moslems; Increasing numbers of Gypsies. Italy is often used as migration gateway to European Union.
- p4 expatriate workers and missionaries as attrition in this complicated hard mission field is a concern.
- Pray for a hunger for Gods word and quality Christian literature, to triumph Italians reluctance to read.
- Pray for I.M. Missionaries Jim & Debbie Kelsey
- p4 Jim training leaders in/ for immigrant congregations
- p4 Debbie helping exploited immigrant women at risk

Volunteer and Short Term Mission options:

- Teach conversational English from the Bible in Fall or Spring Quarter near Rome (retired couple, or student).
- See: www.kalkmaneurope.org ask for more options.

Prayer and Support for IM-Missionaries the Kalkmans:

Assigned to work as liaison and volunteer coordinators from International Ministries with the EBF. (European Baptist Federation), Italy is one of our 50+ partners.

We need your help and support to do this ministry. If you feel God is leading you to partner with us in reaching out to Europe, please pray for us and consider monthly support by sending a check to International Ministries with “Target Kalkman” in the memo to P.O.Box 851, Valley Forge, PA. 19482; or go: www.internationalministries.org/missionaries/70 to give electronically; or call 1 800 222 3872 ext. 2324

Contact us through www.kalkmanEurope.org click “send us an e-mail” in the top-bar, asking for our prayer information and newsletters.

Thank you for your prayers!
Thank you for your support!

Pieter & Nora Kalkman,

