

Brenda Ziska in Austria
July 2016

Dear Praying Family & Friends,

This summer I have several special praises to God and prayer requests for which I would like you to pray. The world here is all about the UEFA Euro 2016 - the European soccer championship being held from June to July in France. *Please pray for the French Christian believers and churches and the summer teams and missionaries that have gone to France in order to tell people about God's love for them.* Even with the high levels of risk in France, the French believers are reaching out to the foreigners who have flooded into their country for the soccer matches. *Pray for safety of all in France during the rest of the Euro Cup.*

Thank you for praying for our birthday parties at the children's home. It's hard to believe but the children are becoming teenagers!! Rafi just turned 14! They were little children when Joe, Gabi and I began. (Rafi and his sister are pictured below). One of our team's giant praises this month is that the home has said that the team may have a weekend "teenie" retreat with the young people. It is scheduled for August 18-20. Thank you, Jesus.



We want to especially thank the Vacation Bible school children at the Parkside Church in Solon, Ohio for their generous gift. A few summers ago the Vacation Bible School picked our ministry with Austria children in Klosterneuburg as their project for the week of Bible school. They sent notes and pictures and prayed for the children.



Because of their gifts along with the letters, we are able to pay for the housing and retreat this summer. The children are very excited about going to the retreat and have already started planning (see the picture below). *Pray that everything works out so that all of the children will be able to come and that they will understand how much God loves them and learn to love Him back.*



Please keep the Women's Breakfast in Klosterneuburg in your prayers this summer. At the last Breakfast meeting we announced that this would probably be the last meeting we'll be having.



The restaurant manager has decided he no longer wants to let us use his facilities. The women were shocked to find out that this could possibly be the last Women's Breakfast meeting in Klosterneuburg. On the response cards many said they were willing to pay a higher price for the food, or possibly have a meeting without food. Some also suggested possible places to meet. That is actually our major problem. We still haven't found affordable facilities that are near or in Klosterneuburg and large enough to hold 150 women. We have discussed changing the format of the meeting (no eating, just rows of chairs and a speaker, etc.). *Please pray this month for us as we seek a place to hold this very effective evangelistic ministry.*



We would like to thank you for your faithful prayers over the years for the ministry of the Women's Breakfast. I thought you would enjoy a short video Jonathan made of the committee singing at the last breakfast. (Please don't post the short video online or on your church homepage, but it can be used in your women's bible studies, at church or for prayer times when you're praying for my ministry with the women in Klosterneuburg.) The choir is actually the committee of women who have worked over the years to enable this ministry to happen in Klosterneuburg:

<https://www.dropbox.com/home?preview=FFT+2016.mov>

Every time I see the video I can feel God's loving Spirit filling the room where we met. We've been told many times that there is something "different", something "special" about this breakfast meeting.



Thank God also for the follow-up meeting after the breakfast that we had at our church - - 31 people came! Half of them came in response to the invitations passed out in the neighborhood around the community center where our church meets. Jonathan's father, Walter Mauerhofer, is a church planter in Austria, but also a fabulous gardener. He showed a beautiful power point presentation called "The Four Seasons of the Year." It was scenery from Austria and Switzerland and from his garden at different seasons of the year. The beautiful pictures

were accompanied by music and verses talking about God our Creator. Please pray that as the visitors go on vacation this summer, they recall that God is the One who created this world they are enjoying.



I'm sure you're aware of the refugee crisis in Europe. A power plant in Vienna's 22nd District is now home to more than 160 refugees. It's 15 minutes from my home. At this point there are only men being housed at the plant and being helped by the Austrian Red Cross. Austria continues to accept refugees, but the flood of so many people is a heavy burden on the little country no bigger than Indiana. Here are some things, however, that you won't hear in the news: God is moving among His people here. Churches began almost immediately to see where and how they could help as the people came flooding into the country.

In late November 2015 the diaconal (social) arm of the evangelical churches in Vienna held a "crisis" meeting in one of the Baptist churches in Vienna. More than 200 people from 45 little churches attended! It was an "educational" and networking meeting. The goal was to serve together those in need, however they could. Some churches have begun German courses; some Austrians began taking in refugees.

In the fall when the Austrian Red Cross moved the refugees into the power plant, the organizers sent out a plea to those in the neighborhood for food and clothes. Someone from the Kagran church got the info and a grass roots movement in the church began. Kagran, along with other churches in the area, decided to help. (Kagran was the first church Joe and I help plant in Vienna.)



Every Tuesday evening someone waits at the Kagran church for people to bring fruits, vegetables, clothes, soap, etc. for the refugees. The supplies are taken to the power plant. Four to five people from the church help prepare and serve the meal on Tuesday evenings.

Recently the men being housed in the shelter wrote a note to the Red Cross to thank them for the help they are getting. They said they were particularly thankful for the Tuesday group that provided fruits and vegetables, which they normally don't get. The week I helped, Kagran provided a salad and a half an apple for dessert with the linsen beans and bread the Red Cross gave for each refugee. In the spring the Red Cross will decide whether to continue serving refugees there. Although people are not to talk about God there, Kagran is having a week long English camp this summer. They asked if they would be allowed to tell the men about it, in case they knew of children that might like to come. In the end one of the English teachers for the refugees said he would like to send his children to the day-camp, even though he's Greek orthodox. Most of the refugees are Muslim. If you've been thinking, "What can I do about the refugee problem in the world?," maybe you can make Tuesdays your "Austrian refugee crisis" prayer day?

We're all excited about a new arrival to our Sunday school this June, Isaiah Mauerhofer. Jonathan and Raphaela, my co-workers in the Klosterneuburg church, just had Isaiah on June 8th, 2016. Baby and Mama are doing fine. Isaiah was dedicated at the church the following Sunday. Papa got him just in time for Father's Day, which is celebrated one week earlier in Austria. *Thank you, God, for Isaiah's safe birth.*



The last thing I'm really excited about and would love to have you praying for is the evangelistic/young believers Bible study that Jonathan, Raphaela and I are planning to begin this fall in Klosterneuburg. I'm working on getting some of the people from Joe's evangelistic Bible study to come to this new study and eventually to church. *Please pray that my friends can make the cross over from Joe to Jonathan.*

Thank you for your prayers and financial support as I continue on with Joe's and my ministry here in Austria, plus start some new things. It's so encouraging to hear from you through notes and facebook. *On a personal note, please continue to pray that David and Daniel will be able to find work.*

Love from Austria,
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A loving picture from the past.