

# AUSTRIA

JANUARY 2010

bread of life bible fellowship

for Jesus

***Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you!" Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. "Don't be frightened, Mary," the angel told her, "for God has decided to bless you! You will become pregnant and have a son, and you are to name him Jesus." Luke 1:29-31***

Dear Team,

I was thinking how strange God's blessings look to us sometimes. Here a young, unmarried girl was to become pregnant and bring forth the special child who would become known as the Son of God. That blessing could have gotten her stoned in that culture, and getting stoned was not as popular as it is today. The young girl's difficulties were just beginning. There would be the strain in her relationship as she explained the blessing to Joseph. She would have to travel in her final month of pregnancy and give birth in a stable. Her baby would soon be hunted by a crazy ruler causing her family to flee the country. You can only imagine how the blessings must have appeared to Mary at times.



Monika, Monica, & Maria

Our last Home Fellowship of the year was to include two very special guests, who have also paid very high prices because of their faith in Jesus Christ. Monica and Maria shared part of their testimonies, dangerous adventures and some of their hardships with our Bible study group. Monica had fled from her Muslim husband leaving behind everything except her youngest child Maria. Being hunted by Interpol for kidnapping, Monica miraculously was able to escape from Kuwait into Egypt, and there she was able to take refuge in a Catholic monastery. She lived there for several years until she was suddenly discovered by the police. She and her daughter were captured, handcuffed, and jailed for eight days until they could be deported back to Syria.

On the day they were to leave Egypt, there was some difficulty with the flight, so they were taken to a nearby hotel and kept for two days under guard. From there, Monica was able to sneak a phone call to the priest who had been hiding them. He told her that she must find some way to escape, otherwise face certain death in Syria. He asked for her location, and said that he would circling the area in his car until she could break free. Monica convinced the guard to allow them to go across the street to a Kentucky Fried Chicken to get something to eat. Faithful to his promise, the priest drove by and they jumped into the car and disappeared. They were on the run and in hiding for many years before they eventually made it to Austria. Today, they have refugee status and live from a little social assistance given by the Austrian Government.

God's blessings do look strange sometimes. Having lived in very poor dangerous conditions much of their lives, they are still thankful to God for all He has done for them. It is a great privilege to be their friends

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# PAGE 2



Gifts for Monica and Maria

and help them in the small ways that we can. Monika has been tutoring Maria in English and our Bible study group was able to bless them with a few gifts for Christmas.

Several of us from the Bible study group went to one of the most notorious drug hangouts in Vienna to share the Christmas joy. It was an unforgettable time. We met a very scary looking guy who had just been released from prison. He was tattooed & pierced everywhere, half his head was shaved while the other half was shoulder length, and dressed all in black. We walked right up to him and another freaky guy and pulled out a bag of cookies. Jumping back in fright thinking we had pulled a gun on him, he looked at

us in shock, and asked, "What were we doing?" We said, "It's Christmas! We just wanted to give you a little something for Christmas and tell you that God loves you." He looked so confused. His next question was why people like us would stop and talk to someone like him? God's Spirit moved us with love for this guy. He said, "Nobody has ever stopped and talked with him." After sharing the Gospel, he actually asked if he could see us again. We went there two Sundays in a row sharing with the druggies, and God gave us favor with everyone. Another touching moment was when a young nineteen year old girl came to us. All five children in her family are drug addicts. After talking for awhile, she went and got her twenty-one year old sister for us to talk to. They were desperate to get off drugs.



About a year ago, a young lady asked if I would go with her to a mental hospital and talk with her brother about the Lord. He was a heroin addict who had freaked out. We went together and prayed with him. I recently found out that his treatment is about finished, and he is clean and healthy again. God has little ways of encouraging us to keep going. Although we are far away from the plays, pageants, and festivities of our homeland, I think this has been one of the most meaningful Christmases I have ever experienced. God has made Himself real and personal in so many ways.

Taking the love of God to the people

Please continue praying for God's direction for our lives and for more and more opportunities to share the hope we have through Jesus Christ. (As a follow-up to the last newsletter, Monika's teaching evaluation was finally adjusted, and we got the back pay.) We are praying for you as well, since many of you are suffering from Charger fever.

*Robert & Monika*

*- In God we boast all the day long, and praise His name for ever!*



**FINALLY, BROTHERS,  
PRAY FOR US THAT  
THE MESSAGE OF THE  
LORD MAY SPREAD  
RAPIDLY AND BE  
HONORED, JUST AS IT  
WAS WITH YOU.**