

Summer-Fall, 2008
PMI Ministry Update
J. Nelson Jennings, President

PMI Missionaries in Europe

I was privileged to visit recently four PMI Missionary families serving in Europe. These families' passion, vision, gifts, connections, and cultural embeddedness impressed me afresh. Here is a brief report from those visits.

Farellys in France

Nicolas and Alison, along with their three children William, Elliot, and Aimee, currently live in an apartment on the southwest side of Paris. They plan to move next spring to the northeast of Paris, where they will be in an equally strategic location and a more stable living situation.

The Farellys are well connected with Christian groups in and around Paris. The [Forum Culturel Protestant](#) that they run has generated great interest among Christians and others alike through films, publications, lectures, and other media. Nicolas teaches at both a Bible Institute in Paris and a seminary at Aix-en-Provence. The widespread impact the Farellys are having is significant and should only increase.



Nicolas (right) with an expatriate missionary friend

Rinns in Italy

Joel, Jessica, and their children Nicolas, Emeline, Anaelle, and Etienne moved two years ago to a third-floor (in American terms; second-floor in Italy) apartment in Vigasio, a town on the outskirts of the fascinating and historic city of Verona. Joel is well-prepared to give visitors an instructive tour of Verona, as he did for me. I was also able to see those parts of the city that Joel is targeting for ministry to university students and others.

Jessica's translation work with *Alfa e Omega*, the kids' school involvements, various church connections (including those within the International Presbyterian Church, in which both Joel and Nicolas Farelly are ordained), an open home, counseling relationships, bible studies, and other relationships give the Rinns a wide network of friends and contacts among whom to share the gospel.



A “non-tourist” street in Verona considered for outreach

Bukovietskis in Ukraine

Sasha and Debbie live in Cherkassy, about a three-hour drive southeast from Kiev. The three girls – Jane, Emma and Anne – encourage each other in their school work and other activities; they are also constantly entertained by their little brother Michael. We had a grand time together on a day-trip to a special Ukrainian country fair, with traditional singing, crafts, food, and games.



Sharing lunch at a Ukrainian country fair

Sasha's teaching and publishing work through the Colloquium he runs has him widely and strategically connected to many circles in Ukraine. Ordained in the Presbyterian Church of Ukraine, Sasha's ministry is only expanding and increasing in effectiveness.

Futos in Hungary

Rob, Tunde, Hajnal and Csenge have recently moved after many years living in the hustle, bustle, and stress of downtown Budapest to a more stable and family-friendly – and still strategic for ministry – setting on the southwest side of the city. Their multifaceted involvements in the community and church continue to enhance the sharing of their faith with others. Tunde's leadership in local church choir ministry is much appreciated and inspiring to many. The girls' school and neighborhood friendships are significant and meaningful.

Rob's widespread ministries extend through [film club ministry](#), family-life seminars, translations-publications, and bible-theology teaching. His leadership and initiatives cross many lines of ministry and denominational affiliations. As was the case when I visited Budapest several years ago, I was struck with Rob's positive influences on many lives and groups throughout Hungary.



The Hungarian Parliament building in Budapest, on the banks of the Danube

Contemporary Europe

From a U.S.-evangelical perspective, Christianity's status in Europe looks uniformly weak – and only worsening. Church attendance is low, genuine interest in the gospel seems hard to cultivate, and in many cities Islam's growth and influence is on the rise. My trip and further reading shows that the situation is more nuanced and complex than such a bleak picture. First, Europe is not religiously uniform: Poland, Ukraine, Holland, and England, for example, are quite different from each other on a number of fronts. Second, immigrants are bringing not only Islam but Christianity as well. East Asian, African, and Latin American Christian groups – many quite sizeable and growing – dot the landscape of most cities. Third, while many "traditional Europeans" are nonchalant toward organized Christianity (whether Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox, or Roman Catholic), spiritual interest, including in the Christian gospel, is very much alive. PMI Missionaries are among those cultivating that interest, and while progress may sometimes seem slow, the Spirit of God is most definitely at work in religiously pluralistic Europe.

Thank you for your interest and involvement in the European, and worldwide, ministries of Presbyterian Mission International.

Yours in Christ,

J. Nelson Jennings
President