



Servant Leaders



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Teaching English and Making Friends for God

by Jarda Tusek

Litomerice is a small town in Northern Bohemia, located in an agricultural district. It's not as isolated as some small Czech towns, but it's not Prague, either. Yet in this sleepy small town, something great for God is happening.



The summer of 2006 saw a group of eleven Christians from Jacksonville traveling to Litomerice to work alongside Czech Christians at Dum Krestanske Pomoci Bethel, a center for social services and ministry run by Martin Okac.

Each year since 2004, a team from Celebration Baptist Church in Jacksonville has run a summer English language camp.

In addition to all-day intensive lessons in English, the volunteers have the chance to demonstrate their love for Christ with their Czechs students. This year's team was of particular interest to the Institute, as we know quite well three of the volunteers.

Providence Connections

Scott and Erica (Lucas) Magdalein [above] Sara's former Providence students, were two of the eleven who spent ten days forming strong and genuine friendships with the



Czech students at the camp, giving English lessons and providing a witness of "the normal Christian life," to quote Watchman Nee, great Chinese evangelist.

All the Jacksonville team members became deeply attached to their new friends and came to realize that the harvest of human connection reaped was planted in prayer, grown through community among the team members, and matured through Christ's love.

Observations from Scott and Erica

Erica (who's been married to Scott since 2005) commented that she was repeatedly asked by the Czechs, "Why are you Americans here?"

This question gave her a perfect opportunity to share how her relationship with Christ prompted her to travel overseas and spend time with strangers, to bring them knowledge of the Living God, through Christ.

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Erica's testimony was effective; after much emailing and conversation, one of the first Czechs to ask this question decided to be baptized and join in the work of Christ.

Scott shared that he (brave man!) tried to learn Czech while he was in Litomerice. In those few days he picked up a few phrases and got acquainted with the pronunciation of this notoriously difficult Slavic tongue. His efforts bore fruit, as he showed real interest in the Czech point-of-view rather than wanting to force his American views on the Czechs.

During those time in Litomerice, Scott and Erica became so fascinated with Czech culture, and so close to their new friends, that they plan to live in Litomerice for ten months, beginning in September 2006, assisting Martin at Dum Krestanske Pomoci Bethel. They are believing God for the funds for this exciting experience of being "messengers for God," demonstrating their commitment to the Lord and to the Czechs.

Katie's Story

Katie Bishop of Calvary International [photo to the right, between two new Czech friends] is our other special "person of interest" on the eleven-person Litomerice team. Katie had shared with us before she left for Litomerice that the Lord had revealed to

her during a previous brief visit to Prague that she was to do something life-changing with and for the Czechs.

Of Czech heritage (through her grandmother), Katie found herself remarkably moved by her Czech visit and determined to return for a longer time. The ten days in Litomerice confirmed her sense of identification with Czechs, and her desire to minister to them.

Katie is now the "local expert" on European evangelization, having gained useful insights into the special approach needed to reach Europeans who have seen the Christian Church in all its glory (and, unfortunately, all its evil) for two millennia. She is aware of the need to destroy "the 'religious' boundaries that have been placed by wars of fear and hate" in all of Europe, and in the Czech Republic in particular, and she knows that evangelizing the Czechs will take time, patience and sincere love.

Now returned to Jacksonville, to her job as Director of Advancement at Calvary International, Katie is working directly with Sandra Barfield, Vice President of Mobilization. In this role, Katie directly assists messengers for God who spread the Gospel throughout the world. And no doubt part of her heart is still in the Czech Republic.

God and the Czechs

We are thrilled to see what God is doing through committed Christians in the Czech Republic. We know He loves the Czech nation, with its



heritage of Christian faith from St. Cyril and St. Methodius to Rector Jan Hus to Jan Amos Komensky (Comenius), educator and exile.

Making friends for God is a noble calling, and doing it by teaching English com-

bines the practical and the spiritual in one neat package. We pray that these new friendships will ripen into true Christian fellowship, and we echo Katie's prayer that "believing hearts will open to the Gospel, and that the love of Jesus will flow freely in this loved nation."

