

## **June 2025 Australia, France, Iran, UK**

### **AUSTRALIA**

Brother Mark writes:

"Wonderful news again today from Perth Western Australia. SCOT and his 14 year old son RON were baptised at our home today. They are sincere believers in Jesus; that is, they sincerely believe that Jesus freely gave his life on the cross for the salvation of weak folk like ourselves. They also sincerely believe the teachings of Jesus; teachings that are for our eternal benefit. They also sincerely believe that we are weak creatures and though we have the teachings of Jesus as guide to us, we will fail his teaching as we try to grow in his teachings. Scot takes encouragement from the scripture that says (Pro 24:16) "For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief [and leaves himself there]". I was able to bring the words of Jesus into this same context, for Jesus likens himself to a stone that the builders reject, but he is a stone on which repentant people can fall. Jesus receives the repentant and Jesus is the force that enables us to rise up and try again for him. I haven't at this time shared video of the baptisms because I have not yet sort their permission to do so, but don't let that stop you from praying for Scot and Ron that they (and us) grow in the wisdom of Jesus and by grace, bring us all into the kingdom when he returns".

### **FRANCE**

This week we spent a wonderful day spent with a wonderful family in a quaint village near Avignon in southern France. Brother Sylvain had baptized himself online and shared his faith with his 90 year old mother. What an unusual lady- mentally agile, and not bad physically for 90 years old. But more especially, an amazing spiritual journey, now culminating in her baptism. It's best to let brother Sylvain explain it in his own words [translated from French]:

"LEOCADIE FESQUET, 90 years old, has just been baptized into Christ. My mother. After an upset, transformed life... now illuminated by Faith. God has sent her a preacher from England to baptize her according to the true biblical baptism. Some lives seem to be all about broken, abandoned destinies, that no one believes are recoverable. Leocadie, my mother, was one of these. And yet, at 90, she now radiates a love and peace beyond comprehension. Her journey is a true testimony of restoration and faith. Better yet: a living miracle.

An austere childhood.

Born in France to Polish migrant parents, my mother grows up in a modest home. Her father was a miner. As for her school, she grew up under the harsh catholic nuns. Extreme harshness, lack of tenderness, threats of burning in hell... The God presented to her was just a cold and distant judge to her. So, as soon as she matured, she discarded all religious practices. How can you believe in a God of love, when all you've been shown is fear and punishment? The tragedy was too much...

But life wasn't done with her. She later brutally lost an eight-year-old child, swept away by meningitis. This drama nearly killed her. She was dark in despair, alcohol, isolation. She didn't want to live anymore. At 40 years old, even we her loved ones had no hope for her. We were running away from it, unable to cope with her. She was not doing anything to get out of that tunnel.

An unexpected glow...

And yet, one day, a slight change. A spark. No one would know exactly how. But Leocadie began slowly going up the slope and not down it. She quit alcoholism, went cold turkey on alcohol without any therapy. She no longer touches a drop of alcohol. She began to talk to people. She became interested in life and began opening up again to living. She discovered an unexpected

passion: beekeeping. She became warm, funny, loved by others. Those around her called her the "sunny granny". How was this even possible?

One day I dared to ask her, "How did you change like that?" . Her answer was disarmingly simple: "I said to God, "Since it seems that You are good, and have given me much, I'll give my life to you." That's when, in her opinion, everything started to change. No instant or dramatic conversion. But an abandonment of herself to God. A release of control to Him. A birthing of confidence in Him. I began sharing with her my learning from my Bible reading [that hell is the grave not eternal punishment, e.g.]. So she began seeking more knowledge of God, knowing him through reflections ,exchanging thoughts with Him, simple, sincere prayers, Bible reading. She discovered a God of love, truth, forgiveness. Far from what she was taught as a child.

Through the years, her faith grew deeper. She understood the meaning of baptism as the Bible teaches and not the Catholic Church: a personal choice, a total immersion, a symbol of death to old life and resurrection in Christ. And she wanted it, the Catholic infant baptism made no sense to her since Christ demands commitment. Not a ritual, but an adult, conscious, thoughtful, wanted commitment.

By the grace, the hand of God, this wish has come to fruition. At 90, Leocadie was baptized by immersion, at home, surrounded by those who love her. An English pastor, sharing his convictions, came specifically from England for this solemn act as crazy as it seems (GOD'S ways are impenetrable). A sobering scene, but charged with intense spiritual depth. Bright-eyed Leocadia came out of the water in peace, smiling, like a child born again in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ by the Power and the Glory of GOD. The miracle of a restored life.

Leocadie is proof that faith has no age. Never too late to meet with God. GLORY TO GOD FOR THIS BEAUTIFUL DAY! Thank you my brother Duncan. If God wishes I hope this leads to the baptism of more elderly people".

You can see a video of the baptism and breaking of bread [all in French] at

<https://youtu.be/TmVLqpRLIVk>

We hope to baptize another family member but in the sea, somewhere between Marseille and Montpellier, later this Summer, Lord willing, in July or August. It'll all be in French but it'd be so great if any in the area could come along, especially if they speak any French. Let us know if that fits anyone's travel plans. And again we thank God for all the good fruit coming from all the investment in the *Bible Companion* app in languages like French, which is producing all this good fruit to His glory. Especially we remember the countless hours of thought and work that brother Phil Martin and others put in to prepare the material for the French version. At a time when producing an app was... just a rather new fangled idea and of apparently unknown usefulness. The faith and works have paid off hugely.



## IRAN

Our prayers of course for our brothers and sisters in both Iran and Israel at this time. This week we were able to online baptize SHIRIN and her adult sons MOHAMMAD and HAMID. They are users of our Farsi language *Bible Companion* app, but were moved to baptism by the current crisis:

**UK**

Advance notice of our next Carelinks / Croydon Church in a Pub retreat at the usual venue in Tonbridge, Kent, God willing Friday 7 - Sunday 9 November. Speakers will be Julian Baseley, Steve Gretton, Duncan Heaster and Tony Whitehorn. These are amazingly positive, spiritual gatherings. Do come along if you can and do share the attached flier with your ecclesia or contacts. And consider funding those who can't really contribute to the full cost of attending.

It's great to see real spiritual growth amongst many of those we baptize. Changed habits, like quitting swearing, blaspheming, shoplifting, drugs etc. - all testimony to the Lord's transforming work in human hearts, to His glory, which is what we're all about. That is our end goal. Sister Claire posted on social media as follows:



We continue feeding and teaching the Bible to all kinds of people at our lunchtime meetings in the week. We showed photos before of how some of them live beneath the Croydon flyover, but were forcibly moved on from there by Council contractors and had their tents removed. They have put them up just outside the car park- but on the pavement. So, these tents have again now been removed. All so hard:



Daniel and David accompanied Duncan on a visit to our online social media "followers" in Yorkshire this week. A huge amount of driving, with the boys on best form and actively involved in discussion with everyone we visited. We met a long term contact in Hull, CRAIG, who has been in touch with us really a long time. His kind mum came with us to the baptism and bought us ice creams... and watched us struggle with the very muddy water of the mud flats beneath the Humber Bridge where we baptized Craig in the River Humber. It was so muddy and we kept sinking down into the mud; there is quicksand there. His prayer of thanks after the baptism was wonderful, lifting his eyes to the skies and thanking the Lord for having worked in his life for so long and leading him to baptism.



Then there was RORY in York, who again has been in touch for quite a while. We baptized him in the River Ouse in the very quaint and historical centre of York, at the spot where us used to go fishing as a boy. With no idea that 45 years later he would be returning there to be baptized into Jesus. He was just so happy and grateful to be baptized, having become disillusioned with churchianity:



And then PAUL in Bradford, whom we baptized in his bath tub. He was born and lived all his life in Bradford and has seen a huge change over the decades, until he is now about the only non-

Muslim [and white male] left in the street of terraced houses where he lives. He witnesses to everyone with great zeal and his small home is full of witness to the Lord Jesus. Again, he had come to realize over a long time that popular Christianity is astray in both spirit and truth from the Bible. He was just desperate to be baptized into "the Truth", as he often said. Along with Craig and Rory, he sent us such lovely messages of appreciation afterwards:



### **PRAYER POINTS**

- For those recently baptized
- For brother Sylvain's family as they grow in the Lord and for our work in France
- For our homeless contacts and brethren in south London
- For our work in Norway this week
- For our dear ones and their families in Iran and Israel at this time

**With love from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks**