

AUG. 09

# IRWINS IN SPAIN

*good news from a distant land...*



**THE REAL OLIVE GARDEN**  
REFLECTIONS

ANDALUCIA



GRANADA

“Your children will be like vigorous olive trees as they sit around your table.”

Psalms 128:3

**WILL YOU PRAY FOR US?**

## How to Pray...



### Monday

**Wisdom & Vision**

While we can do many things, what is the plan that God has for us? Pray that He will make His Will clear, and that we will have the wisdom to see and act.

### Tuesday

**Team-Mates**

Would you pray today that God will guide the right people to join our team. May God place Spain on the hearts of His workers and strengthen the work.

### Wednesday

**Jacob & Itxel**

In each English class, both Jacob and his girlfriend ask us spiritual questions--it's exciting as they clearly are curious about our faith. Pray for them both.

### Thursday

**Kaylea & Daniel**

In just a few weeks, both Kaylea and Daniel will begin Spanish school for the first time. They are very nervous! Please pray they will persevere those first weeks

### Friday

**Financial Support**

We have some big needs coming up: Chris' month long TESOL certification course will cost \$1860.00. Would you pray that God would work so that this funding would be provided by October?

### THOUGHTS ON THE OLIVE TREE

Upon entering Andalusia, the province in which we live, one can't help but notice the thousands upon thousands of acres of olive trees, making it the largest producer of olive oil in the world.

A symbol of peace, it takes a decade or more to mature. Even though it lives in dry, rocky places, it is not a hardy tree and needs much care. The ground must continually be broken up and fertilized. At the end of its life, it will send out a great many shoots that will rise around it.

God speaks of the olive tree a lot in Scripture. Particularly thought-provoking for me, is the simile found

in Psalms 128:3 (quoted above). While this verse speaks of the promises of God for the faithful, I apply it to our lives here in Spain.

The soil is dry and rocky. It must be broken up. The olive tree is slow-growing and requires years of patient labor before reaching full fruitfulness. In order to grow you must introduce marl, a foreign agent to produce growth.

This is Spain. This is also our task. We are the foreign agents and we seek to break up the soil trusting that growth will occur with God's help.



# Five Countries, Ten Adults, Ten Children and God.



**G**ranada is a city of about 300,000 people. Evangelical churches are few, but God seems to be doing something special as we witnessed in our home this past Saturday.

**On Saturday** we invited over some Christian workers that we have met over the last few months. One couple own the TEFL school where I will receive my English Teaching certification. Another couple are newlyweds of just 4 months and have been in Granada since June. Pablo and Judy are missionaries that used to work in Guayaquil, who we knew from years ago. We had a cookout and ended the night with worship, prayer and communion.

**As we shared,** the couple with the TESOL center spoke of their ministry and where God would take them in the future. Pablo

shared how they are teaching English as an outreach, but unsure of where God would take them. The younger couple spoke of how four months ago they felt the Lord tell them to come to Granada, and so they obeyed, but are wanting further guidance. Each one of them echoed our very own situation; we feel that God wants us in Granada even though we don't have the entire vision worked out.

**Maybe you had** to be here to capture the sense of wonder that we each had, as we discovered we were not alone. God had brought us from all over the world to live and work for Him in Granada, and on this night we were in our living room talking, praying and dreaming together. *What is God going to do in Granada?* We don't know, but we left encouraged that somehow, He would use us to make a difference in this city.



Vince and Roberta have been involved in missions for many years, serving in Australia, the U.S. and Mexico. Originally from England, they now run the TEFL school in Granada. [www.TEFLspain.org](http://www.TEFLspain.org)



“The fact that plants somehow find their way through barren matter to grow and bloom gives hope to believe that life is also coming forth in other ways.”

Pablo Kauffman  
Missionary Teaching English in Granada  
Photo: Pablo & Judy

[www.kauffmans.rosedalemennonitemissions.org](http://www.kauffmans.rosedalemennonitemissions.org)

**GOD WRITES THE GOSPEL NOT IN THE BIBLE ALONE, BUT ON TREES AND FLOWERS AND CLOUDS AND STARS. ~ MARTIN LUTHER**

## Passion Fruit

Another Spanish Fruit comes from the passion fruit flower. It's known in Spain as the "espina de Cristo" (thorn of Christ). According to Wikipedia, the symbol-ism given by Catholic missionaries is the following:

- The pointed tips of the leaves were taken to represent the Holy Lance.
- The tendrils represent the whips used in the Flagellation of Christ.
- The ten petals and sepals represent the ten faithful apostles (less St. Peter the denier and Judas Iscariot the betrayer).
- The flower's radial filaments, represent the Crown of Thorns.



- The chalice-shaped ovary with its receptacle represents the Holy Grail.
- The 3 stigmata represent the 3 nails and the 5 anthers below them the 5 wounds (four by the nails and one by the lance).