



PROJECT EMMAUS CENTRE

A SOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL ACTION SERVICE IN CALABRIA



THE TERRITORY

The Emmaus Center is located in the "Locride," the poorest region of Calabria, which is also the poorest region in Italy, despite its unique beaches, captivating mountains, and flavourful cuisine. The 'Ndrangheta, currently the wealthiest and most powerful mafia in Europe, dominates and controls the region. It has become incredibly rich by controlling the global cocaine trade. Any development of the Calabrian region would weaken the criminal organisation. Consequently, fear, apathy, and submission dominate the population, influencing the people's destiny.

Due to a high number of violent acts, many suffer with a sense of inferiority and frustration. Youth unemployment is at 35%. Chasing easy money becomes very tempting.



LA VISIONE

- Make God's love visible through concrete projects
- Work for the welfare of children and youth through a model of "extended family" and youth camps
- Care for the land by offering services to the poorest and most vulnerable families
- Invest in the future of young people by creating work experience for the packaging and sale of citrus fruits.
- Strengthen communities through retreats and work opportunities



THE STORY

In 1968, the founders, Swiss missionaries Ernesto and Rose-Marie Bretscher, welcomed the first children in need into their family. With their faith in Jesus and the help of young Swiss and Dutch volunteers, they took care of a growing number of children. They experienced genuine miracles daily, even when it was necessary to build the current Center's building, which they moved into in 1976 with many children.

THE EMMAUS CENTER PROJECTS

Extended Family: Today, an "extended family" resides here, consisting of several children from difficult situations. Supported by motivated professionals, they work on the traumas in the children's lives, bringing significant progress to their young lives.



Youth Camps: Every year, several camps are organized for children and teenagers. Hundreds of children, adolescents, and young people come together annually and share life-changing experiences, especially during the summer. We are always moved to see how many of these young participants make decisions that shape their lives.

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BIBLE WVEK : A conference that has blessed many families every summer for over 50 years. The combination of a wonderful sea and fantastic nature, coupled with spiritual and social projects, attracts and engages an ever-growing number of people.

RETREATS AND HOLIDAY HOUSE : Our hospitality service also allows families, singles, and groups to have a place to renew their minds, souls, and bodies.

FARMING ENTERPRISE: Cultivating 13 hectares of land alongside the farm has made the resident community almost self-sufficient. The farm's produce goes directly to the kitchen and adds value to the approximately 25,000 meals produced every year. The enterprise is also a valuable means of integrating disadvantaged individuals into the mindset to enter the workforce.

EDUCATIONAL FARM: It attracts students from primary schools all over the region, exposing them to the "School on the Farm" Project, for which four different teaching programs have been developed.

FAIR TRADE PRODUCTS: In collaboration with Goel, a major association of social enterprises in Calabria, an innovative project has been implemented to enable 25 agricultural businesses, often victims of the 'Ndrangheta, to remain in Calabria and sell their products at fair trade prices. In this context, a new warehouse has been acquired for the packaging of organic citrus fruits, providing paid employment for 10 men and women. A light in the darkness for them! Among the customers are Swiss supermarkets of COOP.

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE: Over the past four years, a service has been developed to assist the various needs of the elderly and the most vulnerable families in 19 municipalities in the region by nursing and volunteer staff, providing considerable relief.

FINANCES:

The goal of all our projects is to become financially independent. Start-ups always require investment capital, and on the other hand, state contributions to our "extended family" are still too low to achieve self-sufficiency. Among the various economic challenges are property maintenance and staff salaries.

THE CENTRE STILL NEEDS SUPPORT

We invite you to support this important work with a monthly donation or a one-time gift. Your support will be invaluable in achieving all the goals that the Emmaus team has set out to accomplish, and we thank you in advance for every small or large donation!

