

that God exists or does not exist, because science deals with what can be explained while God is invoked to provide explanation for that which cannot be explained.

As a biological anthropologist, I have some

means placing more credibility in adding up assumed time periods from Biblical stories than in a massive set of data linked by a self-consistent explanation. There are no scientific data to support the young earth

for God in forming its explanation. It is religion which does not belong in schools. Our constitution provides for separation of church and state.

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than 1,100 community colleges serve 12 million students (45 percent of all our undergraduates). Almost 60 percent of their students are women, half are non-white, and 36 percent are first-genera-

leges and universities.;

— Relationships between two- and four-year presidents/chancellors are strong.

— The community colleges are experiencing far more student inter-

and West Virginia universities and former chancellor of the University of Kansas. He was also past president of baseball's American League. Alan Heaps is a former vice president of the College Board in New York City.

## MIKE PEMBERTON: VOICES

# In Italy, it's about embracing the moment



Last summer my wife, Yolanda, and I spent three weeks in Rome with side trips to Tuscany, Florence, and the Amalfi Coast. The

culture, history, food and scenery were all highlights, but what I appreciated most was the state of "being" of many Italians. They embrace the moment, not always focused on work and worries, but enjoying life with co-workers, neighbors, friends and family.

We stayed in a second floor, one-bedroom apartment in the Monti District, the Colosseum three blocks away. In the mornings we opened the windows and sipped coffee. Beeping scooters, pedestrians clip-clopping on cobblestone streets, and rumbling trucks hailed a wakening city.

What struck me, however, were the conversations wedged between the hustle and bustle. The lyrical patter of Italian mingling with the fresh-baked scents of the local bakery wafting up to our flat as neighbors paused to talk. They often greeted each other with open arms, a kiss to each cheek, a hug, and a smile.

Yes, we were on vacation, stress level low, nothing to fret about, so perhaps our senses were heightened, eyes and ears receptive to sights and sounds otherwise ignored. But it was not only in the cool morning hours of the chummy Monti District, chock full of family owned shops and restaurants with living quarters above, where we witnessed these serene intermezzos sandwiched between the screaming hard metal rock of contemporary life.

Rome is an ancient yet vibrant city, the nation's capital, center of commerce and culture. It's teeming with tourists, traffic jams, road construction, public transportation delays and the myriad stresses of big city existence. There was a garbage hauler's strike while we visited and the politicians and workers slugged it out. Folks on the street shrugged and stepped lively past the overflowing bins.

I'm no Pollyanna and Rome is no nirvana. People are people. Folks juggle work and personal lives. They struggle with divorces, illness and death. Italians are no different. The hurly-burly of life knows no borders.

But we do get respites. Or, in the case of Italians, we create respites.

## About Voices

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Riposo, or rest, is the Italian midday break. Wherever we traveled, many businesses shut down in the middle of the day for a couple of hours. Working folk congregate for lunch at sidewalk cafes with no "promise-to-serve-you-in-20-minutes" stickers on the menu. People read papers, go to parks, home, or do whatever strikes their fancy. The frenetic pace of modern, merry-go-round life whirls, but many Italians step off.

Some Americans find this jarring and illogical. The Italian economy is weak. It draws over \$200 billion a year from tourists. Yet Italians shut down

in the middle of the day Monday through Saturday and close on Sunday. In August, many businesses close for the entire month.

I'm all for work. It's a necessity, financially and spiritually, for most of us. We need to contribute, produce things and express our creativity whether it's in a traditional job, vocation or volunteering. But sometimes we take it too far, being a workaholic a badge of honor as we "bring home the bacon" and "take care of business." Every major company advertises their 24/7/365 day availability. Americans expect service at any hour which means someone must work those hours.

In Italy, folks just stop working. No service, no sale, no big deal. Catch them after lunch or on Monday.

"Slackers," American's scoff.

Italy's daily rhythm, however, reminds me of Sundays in the 1960s when I was a kid. The pace slowed. Many stores closed, shopping delayed until Monday. We went to church in the morning and ate donuts afterward. Our grandparents and other family stopped by the house unannounced, lingering and lounging about. We'd have a big meal around three o'clock at

the dining room table, the whole family eating and talking. Later my father fell asleep watching TV while my mother played the piano.

In 21st-century Rome, Sundays are like the ones of my youth. But so are midday weekdays. Romans are as busy as New Yorkers. Italians face everyday stresses like Americans. But Italians seem to take the longer view. Perhaps it's in the DNA of a people who have lived on the same land for 2,500 years. A bow of humility to the Gods, whose sculptured, weathered contenance's stare down from ancient ruins.

I keep a saying on my desk that reads: "Being is more important than doing. The heart is more important than the mind. Being with others is more satisfying than being alone."

The Italian tradition of riposo embodies this spirit. It may not yield the most productive economy, but it may allow for a better quality of life. I think even go-go Americans recognize that at some level. At least we used to.

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