

Today I was thinking about the trip my sister Susie and I took to Rome, Italy in May of 2005. I'm not sure what made me think about it, except that we've recently entered the month of May, and I'm starting to think about summer and vacations. I was scrolling through the photos on my phone and came across a snapshot I took of 'The Roman Road.' The Roman Road for Christians is a valuable set of scripture verses found in the book of Romans that are very useful when leading someone to Christ. I've shared those verses at the end of this blog.

When Susie and I were walking around the streets of Rome, I took notice of the cobblestone streets. I asked our tour guide, "Are these really the same streets the Roman soldiers, and Jesus, and the Apostle Paul walked on? Are they that old?" She said, "Yes, they are very, very old." It occurred to me that if water aqueducts built back in those days were still operational, I had no reason to doubt the age of the roads. What do you think entered my mind? I must have one of those stones from 'The Roman Road.'

Susie and I had a delightful time sightseeing, and if you ever make a trip like this, I highly recommend using a touring company to book your hotels, etc. There were long lines wrapped around the Vatican and in front of the Coliseum, but we were able to walk right in, no waiting at all. Of course, they want you to rejoin your group at a certain time, but they give you ample time to look around on your own, and for gift shops. Some excursions even give you the option to not rejoin the group when the tour is over, and you're free to do as you wish.

Simply put, we had a blast in Rome. Lots of laughter, good food, and wonderful memories. As we were coming near to the end of our trip, I started staring at the ground everywhere we walked, looking for a loose stone in the street. To my dismay, there weren't any to be found. When we returned to our hotel, they had part of the street blocked off directly in front of the hotel. Something under the street needed to be repaired, and would you believe there was a pile of the stones from the road that had to be dug up for them to make the necessary repairs? Oh – my – goodness!

Susie and I stood out there for at least a half hour contemplating how I could get one of those stones. You may not realize it, but those stones are at least six inches squared, six inches deep. Each stone weighs about eight pounds. Susie put all of her purchases into one bag and gave me an empty bag, because I certainly didn't want to walk into the hotel with a chunk of the street in my hands.

I finally found courage and I leaned over the wire fence and grabbed my piece of the Roman road. I stashed it in my bag and the two of us went into the hotel and got on the elevator as quickly as possible. When we realized we succeeded, we both broke out into hysterical laughter, thinking about how confused the street workers will be when they start putting the pieces of the puzzle back together, only to find a big, gaping hole.

This trip was before 9/11, so the airports weren't as restricted as they are now. I'll be honest, I didn't even really think about the return home, or if I would get into any trouble until I arrived at the airport. All of my souvenirs, including my little pebble, were in my carry-on bags. I really should have put the rock in my regular luggage, but I didn't. You won't believe it, but my bags went through every x-ray machine, every checkpoint, and no one even questioned me.

I made it back to the states safe and sound. I confess, my other souvenirs didn't fare as well, due to their heavy companion. I had smashed snow globes and statues, which I hated. But I had my piece of the Roman Road, and it is my most treasured souvenir of all. I've shared some photos below from when we were in Rome, including my beloved 'stone.'

When trying to capture our special moments, either I had to take a photo of Susie, or she took one of me. I must confess that since these photos were taken before 'selfies' were a thing, I photoshopped us into the photographs together for the purpose of sharing here. Seeing us in the photographs together took me back to that wonderful trip, and such wonderful memories with my precious sister. I hope you enjoy.

Blessings,  
Lisa Jo



My piece of the Roman Road



Ancient Ruins – Found all over the city.



Outside the Vatican  
(Notice the stones?)



Enjoying some gelato



The Coliseum



A rose from St. Paul's Basilica

## **The Roman Road**

Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 5:8: "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Romans 10:9-10: "That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

Romans 10:13: "For whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."