Smiles 200 Hope Club

Giving Hope to Families living in poverty

Newsletter April 2009

Dear Friends **Edition 1**

Welcome to the first edition of the Smiles 200 Hope Club Newsletter. We are very thankful for your support to the work of the Smiles 200 Hope Club which covers 6 different projects all impacting the lives of families in Romania. We hope this report will be informative for you and if you have any questions or would like further copies, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Special Feature: Family Care Project



We are so excited to see how tiny gestures of love can change the destiny of a family! Over the years, we've testified how some of those we've helped have turned from having no hope into 'givers of hope'. When looking back, we receive encouragement and are motivated to continue and do more, together with all our partners.

We first met the **Banhazi** family in 2002, when they struggled to survive in terrible poverty. Five people living in tough conditions! Two parents trying desperately to keep their children alive and to provide medical care for a disabled child! Three children that needed to learn how to smile! We've realised that this was the right job for us, and we decided to do our best to help this sad family.

The Banhazi's house was rented from the owner of the farm where the father is working. He needs to keep his job at all costs, because losing it would be equivalent to being made homeless the next minute. He needs to leave early in the morning for a hard days work and to come back late at night, with almost no energy left for being a father and a husband. The monthly expenses pressured the family and pushed them to the limits. Every start of a school season would bring worries and sacrifices, but they decided the only chance for their kids is getting the proper education.

We were there to help the **Banhazi** family all these years. We've watched the children growing, we've shared their burdens, and we became their friends. Every month, a friendly face will bring a package of food, essential for the five lives. We brought medicines, school supplies; we also offered counselling and support. Every Christmas, Santa would stop at the **Banhazi's** house with a present in the form of a **Sack of Smiles**. Most important, we offered hope, and the chance for a new beginning. After seven years, the **Banhazi**'s are a totally different family.

Mum, **Jenica**, secured paid employment with the help of our social workers. She is paid to take care of their 14 year old disabled boy. Dad**, Ioan**, gets a bigger salary, after so many years being a key man on the farm. The eldest son developed into a fine young man; he finished school and got a job. If you ever come here, go to a restaurant and appreciate the cook for the quality of the food, it may be him! Their daughter plans to find a job this summer, providing the fifth salary for the family!



We are delighted to see them smiling, watching their brand new TV or renovating their house. Very soon, possibly this spring, they will stop being the Smiles Foundation beneficiaries. They are ready to move to the next level! An empty place is waiting to be filled by another family. And we are looking forward for a new miracle!

We looked back together with Banhazi family and we are happy to see where they are today and what they've achieved. They learned to smile with Smiles turning from having no hope into 'givers of hope'!

Club Project Updates:

- ## Family Care Project
  Marian Zaharia was appointed in December with a main responsibility to head up this project as we go through the assessment process to ensure monies are being spent wisely for the people who are in greatest need.
  We currently have nearly 200 families in this project.

- ## Medical Care
  Dana Zaharia, Senior Nurse Practitioner, joins with Dr Claudia to provide a Nurse and Doctor team through the Medical Care. Dana's training includes psychological counselling and so she will prove very beneficial across the projects.

- ## Sack of Smiles
  Through December 2008 and into January 2009 we were able to deliver over 600 Sacks. We will be promoting this project again later in the year as we look to increase that number for December 2009.

- ## Elderly Care
  Whilst we have launched a Capital Project for the Nursing Home and Disabled Centre, we have a short term plan to convert the old school into a day centre for the elderly in Tileagd. This will provide meals, health care and social assistance as well as social activity.

- ## Homeless
  Marian's experience with the Homeless has opened up opportunities for us to establish a work and though in its early days we hope support will be forthcoming for this to grow. We can then work with the individuals to assess particular concerns and needs and look to a plan of action to bring them in off the streets.

- ## Crisis Care
  A new project area aimed to provide support in crisis situations, such as teen pregnancy, support for families who have children with disabilities who are in need of respite care and other assistance.

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Prayer Points:

1. **Pray for the families that Smiles visits monthly that they would understand the reason for our visits.**

2. **Pray for our social workers, doctor, nurse and all the staff involved on a daily basis with the families.**

3. **Give thanks for the support given for the Sack of Smiles project and the opportunities to share the Gospel through the giving of these gifts.**

4. **Pray for the funding to enable Smiles to extend the work amongst the elderly to include a day centre in Tileagd and the residential care home in Cihei.**

5. **Pray for wisdom in the contacts with the Homeless in and around Oradea to help these families and individuals.**

6. **Pray for guidance and support for the newer aspects of the Hope Club through the Crisis Care for pregnant teenagers and families with severely disabled children.**






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