Giving Hope to Families living in poverty

Newsletter April 2010

Dear Friends **Edition 3**

Welcome to the third 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 5 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.

Offering HOPE to the Family in Need, the Sick and the Homeless

From Marian & Dana Zaharia (200 Club Manager & Family Nurse)

We finished late that evening. The night was cold and quite unfriendly. Dana suggested going out for a coffee. ***Ok, I said, let's do it.*** We knew just the right place for this: a Christian Café, cosy and always welcoming. Coffee is always great, people the same. After a while, Dana pointed to the door. I turned and saw an old lady, humble and trembling but still clean and decent. Dana suggested that she may be there to beg for food. I trust my wife, like any man should do when it's about a woman's intuition. ***Let's invite her for a coffee, I said…***



This is how we met **Marika.** For an hour she told us the story of her life, a very sad one, quite tragic. She used to be just your average person, happy and full of life, like all of us. But her family had all died, her husband and a 27 year old daughter. She got on the streets after these losses.

Marika looks meek and weak, but speaks calmly and confident. One eye was highly infected, needing surgery actually. She coughed badly and couldn't walk without her stick. She was amazed that we offered to visit and to help. She lives in the same location as us, but Marika survives in an abandoned building, with no heating or utilities, staying with four other homeless guys!

Next day, and every week since then, we have visited her place. We have got to know her better, and have provided food and warm clothing. We have taken care of the medical issues, one by one. One day she begged us to accompany her to the hospital. ***They know I'm homeless***, she said. ***They won't treat me like all the others because of that.*** We agreed to do it. The infected eye was bleeding and getting worse every day.

Now, our new friend is recovering after the surgery. Dana brought her everything she needs, for excellent hygiene and also the best medication and you can tell the difference, already. There is still a long way to go for Marika, but we want to go all the way for her.

We are happy and confident as Marika smiles again, after many years of pain and loneliness…

Dear Partners and Friends,

You may not be here physically, to help this sad lady and many others like her, but your generosity saved Marika, giving her a smile back. If you ever come to visit us, maybe you will meet her and see how much she appreciates your gesture of love and support. Thank you for sending your heart in a medicine box, or in a donation envelope. Your love and support enables The Smiles Foundation to do the work God has called us to do. Through your gifts, the Smiles 200 Hope Club can indeed offer Hope to the Hopeless and make them Smile once again.

You make a huge difference. Thank You and Keep Smiling!

Smiles Nursing Home – Cihei: **A Home for the Elderly** who are in need of daily care and an Assisted Living facility for those needing less than 24/7 care but are otherwise living alone and vulnerable to the dangers and limitations of life on their own in Romania. We already have many elderly people asking us each week we visit them, **"Is the Nursing Home ready yet?"** We don't like to keep telling them we haven't started building yet! ***They are desperate and waiting.***



For the Nursing Home, we plan single and twin rooms with special guest rooms for visitors. We also plan a communal lounge, dining room, TV room, reading room and elevator between floors if we can manage to fulfil our dream. The facility will have specialist care and medical staff to provide quality supervision to the highest standard possible.

Initial construction budgets are £493,500 / $789,600.
This is our major Construction project for 2010/11 and we need your help with a special donation or fund-raising event to raise the crucially needed funds to enable to start the Construction. **Please get involved and give Hope to an elderly person today.**

Club Project Updates:

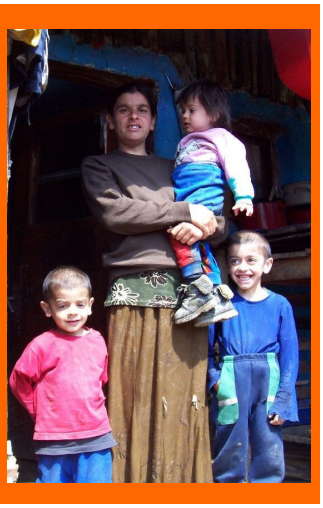
- **Family Care Project:** some of the families we have helped over the years are now ready to move on and leave our programme. We have met new desperate people, needing our help. They all require sponsorship.
- **Medical Care:** the poor people of Bihor have poor access to medical services and medicines. In our daily work we provide essential services, helping them and even saving their lives. Your donation can make the difference between 'life and death'!
- **Sack of Smiles:** for so many Romanian children there will be no gift this Christmas unless S.O.S. can provide one. We are praying for many sponsored Sacks! Could you help?
- **Elderly Care:** many of the elderly people from Bihor are lonely and live in very tough conditions. They need a place where to live with dignity, to be cared for and loved. Please join the campaign for building the Smiles nursing home!
- **Homeless:** people of Oradea are going through some tough times. We are currently looking for a piece of land where we can place the converted containers, where we can offer housing and a new start in life. Please pray for progress!

Prayer Points:

1. Pray for the families leaving our programme. That the help we have given them will enable them to live better on their own in the future.
2. Pray for the many new families asking for our help. Many as a result of the Financial Crisis which has put them in very difficult situations.
3. Pray for more Sponsors for regular monthly support that enables us to plan and budget the support for more families.
4. Pray for the Construction Campaign of the 'Home for the Elderly'. Lots of support is needed and fund-raising events to build the Fund so that Construction can begin this year!
5. Pray for the sick who can't afford medical treatment and that Smiles will continue to have sufficient means to meet all the needs that confront us.
6. Pray for the Land needed to locate our Containers for housing the Homeless. We are building great relationships with the Homeless community, but need to offer real solutions to restore their Hope.







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