

The Smiles FOUNDATION

Latest updates from Smiles in Romania

newsletter

series 4, edition 5 - SPRING/SUMMER 2023

Welcome to our Spring-Summer 2023 Newsletter

Greetings to our many friends and family around the world. Spring is a beautiful time of the year when we are reminded once again of the New Life, God brings about by His Blessings. It is evident in the trees as they begin budding and in the gardens with the flowers popping up through the ground. The cold, dark winter has finished, and another new spring has arrived.

This year, I am writing my 'welcome' on a warm spring day in Baton Rouge. Yes, I'm on my annual visit to America and currently with my many friends here in Louisiana. But by the time this newsletter is published, I'll be on my way back to Romania to continue the work on the front-line.

As beautiful as spring can be, bringing forth that new life and deep sense of opportunity, I believe we at the Smiles Foundation are sensing tremendous new life in the opportunities before us. We are so thankful to God for His many blessings each and every day, but as we look forward to the next 6 months, we are overflowing with thankfulness for the opportunities we face.

I'm thrilled we have a new publication here to bring you up to date with all Pillars and Projects within Smiles. So many great things going on in every department. New people with new energy and commitment to continue and develop the work begun so many years ago. Many faithful servants have been involved over the years and although I am saddened to see them go, I understand 'life doesn't stand still'. We should expect change and be thankful God has so many talented and gifted workers, he can take away what we thought were the best and see them replaced by someone equally gifted, ready to take up the baton and serve with all their heart for a period of time, according to God's Plan and Purpose.

There is plenty to report, and I know you'll enjoy reading the news shared. My executive management team are deeply committed servants of the Lord and I am thankful for them. Even when they face tough uphill struggles, they keep their eyes fixed on Jesus and keep their hands to the plough at all times.

Enjoy their reports and do drop them a message of encouragement, any time you can. I will enjoy of course updating you on progress with Sunset House, Cihei. God has blessed us beyond our wildest dreams with this project and whilst there is still a long way to go, I have no doubt God will fulfil His Promises and the building will be completed as planned to open May 1st, 2024.



Thank you for your faithfulness in supporting the Smiles Foundation. With love and appreciation to you all.

Kevin Hoy
Founder & Chief Executive
The Smiles Foundation



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MISSIONS PILLAR

Missions is one substantial corner pillar that supports the entire work of God through Smiles. It covers strategic elements of long-standing projects that have been the backbone of Smiles for over 20-years. Now with new vision and motivation, the MISSIONS Pillar strives to be "salt & light" as we are commanded in ***Matthew 5 v16.***

Maria Hava
Director of Missions Pillar
The Smiles Foundation



Peace… beyond understanding

It took me years, and I'm not done yet, to understand the Bible verse from Philippians 4:7 that says: *"a peace that surpasses all understanding will guard your heart and minds in Christ Jesus"*. One thing is for sure, peace without Jesus does not exist.

Today, just as I recently wrote for my Website Update, I realised it's one year since the war in Ukraine started… and it's not done yet! Millions of people have gone from their own country all over the World. During this past month, a huge earthquake killed thousands of people in Turkey and Syria. Every day I hear of people dying from a car accident, cancer, and so many other causes…

In all these things, I'm often asking myself, when will peace come?! And immediately, I have my answer: *only in God* you can find it! Yes, even while we still live here, on this earth, God can comfort us and provide us with His peace, which is beyond understanding!

My little projects, all part of the Missions Pillar, are doing great:

The Nursery is running smoothly and even if the weather is not so nice, kids are coming day by day. In this spring season, we celebrate "Mothers Day" in our projects and in the nursery the kids had a special time spent with their mothers! An activity that makes us proud each time and makes us appreciate more and more the staff that is working there.

In the Mission Centre, we started a small renovation. So, if you are curious to see what it looks like, come and visit us this Summer! Mission Trip season starts soon and we have lots of things that need to be done! I always have many "To Do" things on my list!

We also painted our Cihei office area. To be honest with you, I'm really proud of all my colleagues who worked in the Smiles Cihei office since 2006 until today! We have not painted the place in the last 17 years!! Yes, you've heard it right, 17 years! So, it was time for a change!

In Mierlau Emergency House Unit, we have a new family living. They are really nice people that used to be involved with serving in Russia on the ministry field. Once the war started, they felt that it is not secure there, so they decided to leave. Now mum, dad and 5 children, plus their attached families, are sharing the place with Denis and Ramona.

So, my dear friends, many times in life we take things for granted. We do not know how to be thankful and happy with the small things. And yet, we expect God to give us the big things. Start learning today how important are the little things in life and I'm sure your life will be much better, overall!

Thank you very much for everything you are doing for us day by day, month by month, year by year. Thank you for not giving up on us!







OUTREACH PILLAR

Adrian Matis
Director of Outreach Pillar
The Smiles Foundation



Outreach represents several well-established projects that Smiles has become known for in more recent years. Now the focus has moved from the primary "social" concern to our primary responsibility of "spiritual" concern. This new emphasis of purpose encourages all in the OUTREACH Pillar to honour the Great Commission of ***Matthew 28 v19.***















Activities and Programmes, Plans for what's next

Often times, we discuss, here between us, how many blessings we are given from God and how much He entrusts us to do the right thing about it, not only for our own purposes, but also for the work and Christian ministry. And everytime we get to the same conclusion: there is more to be done, more to be achieved, as God's grace is always renewing and provides more and more!

Looking at the past years, we moved more towards the spiritual concerns regarding the work with people, and we explained many times why is that. The social work is not forgotten, but we strongly believe our role is rather to assist people in getting their life changed for better, and in fact the only real way is to get them to Christ and allow Him to do the change.

That's why we have enlarged the team again, to include more people, with good experience both on the field, but also with the spiritual work. The purpose is to cover all areas of work. When it comes to talking with people, getting them to be receptive to our message, it is still important to provide for their immediate needs. So, we continued delivering food parcels, medicine and clothing to the families out there, but we try to spend more time exploring the deeper issues they might have, we pray with them, advise and encourage them into the right direction, in the spiritual aspects, but also assist in practical ways.

Programmes like Rapa Community or Homeless Container Village visits are, of course, still very much a permanent activity. We are meeting with the kids twice a week and with the people at the Night Shelter three times a week. In all our interactions with them, we talk, pray and teach them, in a way they can understand and relate to and might find to be useful to them.

Every Wednesday our team goes to our own Residential Centres and spends time with our residents. They are happy to receive us and they enjoy not only the fellowship we all have together, but also the individual discussions and prayers. We found this time to be very valuable and we are looking into increasing it.

We are anticipating a lot of other activities developing in the future months and years to come. We are considering even partnering with other people and organisations that are also involved in ministry, to get involved in other areas. Looking into what's possible, we are excited and we pray to receive the support, human and financial, to get to all of these. Through the 2023 Mission Trip season, which is near, we hope to be able to show you and get you involved a lot in all we do under the Outreach Pillar, and we are sure you'll enjoy it!

Please continue to pray for us and to support our Programmes, we believe they are part of God's plans for the Romanian people and we are grateful to be part of His work in this country. May God bless you and keep you well and safe!







Conferences in Dezna,
as part of our Outreach Programme

Under the Outreach Pillar, we are and have always been concerned with providing opportunities for those interested to learn more. We believe every man and woman can be better at whatever they want to do, should they spend the time and energy to get there! Especially in the spiritual sense, when it is actually God himself who empowers!

Earlier in February, we organised the first conference for pastors and leaders, hosted at Dezna Outreach Centre, where we discussed the perspectives and needs of the Church in the XXI century. The invited speaker was a professor pastor with great experience and knowledge and the points he shared were really useful for those attending. We had with us younger and more experienced church workers from various places, who felt they wanted to have some good fellowship for a couple of days together and learn something useful in the same time!

There are two more conferences we have planned for this Spring, before the summer camps kick-in. One at the end of March, for women especially, and another one in April, specifically for Youth and their concerns. All great occasions to enjoy time with people who can share valuable experiences! We are sure about this because at the end of the first conference, we had a questionnaire for the participants and everybody was very happy and appreciative. The only discontent was that it didn't last long enough! At least one or two more days would have been appreciated! And that was despite the rain outside, which did not stop for a minute, so we could not even do our routine of going up on the mountain!…

So, please continue to pray for us and for the future activities at Dezna Outreach Centre, there are many exciting opportunities coming, which we want to benefit from, to spread the Gospel and to enable other people to do the same, being well equipped and guided! All for God's Glory!

The Continuing Story of
Sunset House, Cihei

Just about everyone in the Smiles Family or associated with us, will have heard of the vision and the hope we have for the newest Facility we are building in Romania, we call Sunset House, Cihei. This has been an active project now for over 18 months, and to avoid repeating myself, I strongly suggest if you are not familiar with the project thus far, catch up using the Gallery Update on the Smiles Website – www.thesmilesfoundation.org and go to the Sunset House Link, normally on the Homepage. Our previous newsletters can also be seen on the website – from the Homepage, go to the NEWS drop down box and select 'Smiles Newsletters'.

For those who know the story to date, I am delighted to have the opportunity here to share the current situation with the project and detail a few of the issues to be prayerfully engaged with in the coming weeks and months.

After some delays experienced with the project, we recently agreed with the various Contractors involved, that the completion stage of the main construction would be rescheduled from May, to late June, early July 2023. But not withstanding any further unexpected delays, especially now weather is less of a concern, we truly expect to have a finished structure by July.

Even while that main structure is being completed, a great deal of critical work is being undertaken on the interior of the building, such as Electrical, Plumbing, Fire Department requirements, Internet and Data installations, Plastering to name but a few.

We are also excited in anticipation of windows and doors currently in manufacture, to start being installed during April. The elevator, already contracted for manufacture in Spain, is scheduled to be installed during May. Likewise, the Hydrotherapy Pool should be installed no later than June 1st. With such a large facility, the process moves step by step through the building, so we expect by some point in May, certainly by June, rooms will be ready to start painting. There are 106 rooms of varying shapes and sizes, so painting will take some time!
Painting, second fix of Electrics and Plumbing, along with Landscaping and Gardens, will all be tasks we trust many of our Smiles Family will come to help with. From June 17th, we have Construction Specials starting and we seriously need your help, so check the website or call the Smiles Office.

The timing and order of events will of course be critically important, not to get the 'cart before the horse' and we have a carefully designed schedule of when each area of work is needed and completion dates, so the next stage can get started on time.
I am very excited to see the interior work begin, so please consider if you can join us to help with the challenge. Our many Mission Teams this year, who will assist all our regular projects, will also be given a chance to spend a day or two helping at Sunset House, but there are many coming to Romania to spend their entire stay, working next door to the Mission Centre, at Sunset House. What a great time of fellowship and positive achievement they will enjoy.

We are so overwhelmed, yet extremely thankful, with the generosity of so many supporting this project. To date, more than £1,459,000 ($1,750,000) has been invested in Sunset House, Cihei.
















Coming up in the weeks and months ahead will be the following commitments to meet:

By July	Completion of the Main Construction Contract	£ 511,000	$ 613,000
By May	Windows and Doors, Balance of Contract	£ 160,000	$ 191,000
By August	Fire Department Contract Work	£ 48,300	$ 58,000
By May	Elevator – Balance of Contract	£ 14,700	$ 17,700
By June	Clinical Hygiene Flooring Material	£ 42,675	$ 51,210
By May	Completion of Hydrotherapy Pool	£ 4,600	$ 5,450
By May	Purchase of Paint for the Facility	£ 16,250	$ 19,540
		£ 797,525	**$ 955,900**

Then looking ahead, other significant expense to prepare for is special installation for the Sensory Room, quoted at £31,504 ($37,805) for just equipment and the interior finishing and furnishing, budgeted at £200,000 ($240,000) but that won't be fully needed for another 6 months or more – but all is designed to see the entire facility completed and ready for occupancy by May 1st 2024.

I know that seems a long way away, but with right around £1million ($1.2million) to raise, we are probably going to need every day, to be achieving something special for the Lord, through Sunset House, Cihei.

Please continue to pray about how you can help with a Gift, a Fundraising Event, a Loan to help with the cash-flow time pressure. All sorts of way you can be part of seeing this Dream become a Reality.

My sincere thanks for all you do, prayerfully and practically.



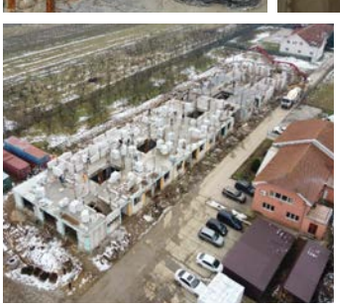
Kevin Hoy
Founder & Chief Executive
The Smiles Foundation























You can support the Sunset House Project, through a donation, using these codes:

UK ***US***

RESIDENTIAL PILLAR

*Residential is a key-pillar of Smiles - demonstrating God's love and compassion for the elderly and disabled in our communities. Substantial facilities with trained and dedicated staff, enables Smiles to be a leader in the development of Residential Care in Romania. We rejoice at God's provision as stated in **Isaiah 46 v4.***



News from JFL - an update report from Residential Pillar



Andrea Borszeki
Social Worker at JFL

At the beginning of this year, we planned for each month various activities with our beneficiaries. This time we wanted to organize activities on specific days like Day of the Elderly, International Read Together Day, various Spring holidays, Poetry Day, or World Earth Day. Plenty opportunities!

In February, in addition to the usual activities and programmes with the residents, we also organised a "reading together" session. Gathered in the big living room at the centre, we discussed with our beneficiaries about the importance of reading, well-known authors, new books to read and, of course, we spent some hours reading from a book, as per the occasion.

The book in discussion was **Unstoppable** by author Nick Vujicic. The author, despite being born without arms and legs, could be a great inspiration for each one of us, he managed to overcome all the hardships of life, focusing on the certainty that he was created for a unique and specific purpose, that his life has value and that God is present and He can use us, no matter the circumstances. By reading excerpts of this book, we wanted our friends to be encouraged through the difficult situations caused by illness and infirmity, to strengthen their faith and so become unstoppable when life's difficulties arise.

Thinking about that activity, my wish for all of us is to be unstoppable even if the illness, the sadness, the pain, the worries try to stop us all so often! Here at JFL, we thank God for His promises and guidance, like the one written in John 16:33: "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart, I have overcome the world!"

Because of God's grace and your support, we also feel unstoppable! May God bless you! Thank you!





Precious in His Eyes

Dora is a young woman who came to our centre earlier this year. She is the youngest of all the residents, she is only 36 years old.

For the first time, she celebrated her birthday away from home, but she is definitely not alone. Not only does she have the other residents close by, as everybody likes her, but she still has her family coming to see her, they do show their love and so Dora feels she is the luckiest person in the whole world.

Her father was always close to her, and despite the severe disability Dora presents, she was never neglected or abandoned. For all her life, family took good care of her, but now it is harder and harder, as her father is ageing and brothers and sisters have their own families to take care of.

Dora's mother died a long time ago. With herself being in need of support, she couldn't have helped much - and yet, Dora sometimes recalls moments they had together. The rest of the family was supportive though. And now, as this major change happened, our team will continue to offer the support and assistance she needs.



We were all very pleasantly surprised to see how much Dora enjoys our gatherings for worship on Sundays and Wednesdays. She also prays with loud voice, every time! Of course, because of her condition, she has sometimes moments when she's noisy and acts awkwardly, but she remembers what was being preached and she is worshiping together with the others as well. We were very intrigued by this, but equally thankful to God, because this is showing that even a severe disability cannot take away that deep and profound touch of Christ!

We think of Dora as precious in God's eyes! We are not to judge people in any way, rather we are called to love, assist and support them, to help them understand and then to confirm to them every day that God sees value in each one of them, just as in every single human being and He loves us all so much!

Thank you very much for all your support and for helping us do our job and may God bless you every day!



Delia Mezea
Social Worker at TAL

ENTERPRISE PILLAR

The Enterprise Pillar carries the responsibility of supporting the Work of God through Smiles as an honourable Business, doing God's Work in God's Way. 100% owned by the Smiles Foundation, ensures all profits are channelled into front-line ministry - wherever most needed with the other three supporting Pillars of Smiles. Inspired by ***Matthew 25 v15-16.***

Simona Tosity
Director of Enterprise Pillar
The Smiles Foundation











19 March Sunday 7.25 am! - My alarm rings with the text "Finish the newsletter today an send it immediately to Adi!"

It's a lovely sunny day with 12 degrees Celsius already, so I take my coffee and my laptop and go out on the terrace. The beautiful sky takes my eyes from my messy garden, realizing that spending so much time in the greenhouse steals my time and my interest to make my garden more presentable. Well, its time will come for sure at some point!



And I thought "Simo, this newsletter is not about you, it's about Smiles Enterprise Pillar - SMINRO!" So then I thought, let me tell you a few things about how our past six months passed.

As you all know, time flies when you are having fun, or in our case, when you are extremely busy! Winter season is the busiest time of the year for us and once again, I could see God's presence in this season's success.

Starting from December and all the way to February, all our 550,000 hyacinth bulbs, 60,000 daffodil bulbs, 40,000 primroses, 10,000 tulips were delivered and invoiced to our customers, securing over £142,000 (over $170,000) sales within a 3-month timespan. For our staff, that meant hundreds of hours spent in the greenhouse, working very hard, but it was all worth it.

There is no bigger satisfaction than seeing the greenhouse empty, but empty only to be full again, very soon! Empty for only 2 weeks – from 10th March, all the spring crops will kick-in : 35,000 dianthus, 62,000 geraniums, over 150,000 bedding plants and so on.

So, after a week of cleaning, disinfecting and resting, we start all over again. This is a needed process, in order to make sure the next production will be safe and only high quality plants will be delivered.

A production season is finished now and soon another one will start. It's a good time to count our blessings, to acknowledge once again God's favour upon us. He gives us strength, physically and mentally, to deliver in time and to fulfill all of our commercial obligations to clients, opening doors and more opportunities for the next season.

God rewards hard work and this fact (because it's no longer only an immaterial belief) keeps me motivated and strong in challenging times. This is what I tell my colleagues all the time and I am happy to see their commitment and desire to do their best. Please continue praying for us and for the Glasshouse to stay successful!

In the past months, we launched a new and demanding challenge, to all those who are willing to give a hand, in a practical way, to make Sunset House Cihei that beautiful place we imagine it can become!

So, we launched the **Construction Specials,** which will start on June 17th and will be available for every week, for those interested in visiting Romania to help with their practical skills. We need everybody!

From Plumbers to Electricians, no matter what you can help with, your contribution will be very much appreciated and we are looking forward to hearing about your interest. Professional or not, you are welcome to join!

There are plenty of details about this on our webpage, so make sure you go online to our website and reserve your place on a Construction Special Trip in Romania!



The **Container Challenge** appeal we launched a while ago, in order to support the projects running in Romania, was a real success and we were wonderfully blessed with a large variety of goods that will make a huge difference for our colleagues' input with the beneficiaries we serve every where.

We want to say a huge **Thank You!** to all of those who participated, either by donating stuff or by supporting financially! This is an amazing encouragement for us and we appreciate your generosity very much! God bless!



Please pray with us!

When we pray, there are several things going on, all at the same time. As we know, when we tell the Lord our needs and desires, it is not that He is unaware of them, but we rather acknowledge our complete dependency of Him. We pray because we can't afford not to!

Then, when praying, not only do we talk to God, but also God will talk to us, as it goes both ways. Often we get inspiration and guidance during prayer, because it is the Spirit who takes over our thoughts.

And finally, when we pray together for the same things, the prayer becomes a powerful tool, to make and keep us all one! So, pray for:

1. *As we move toward the last stage of construction with Sunset House Cihei, we need to make the preparations for the next stages, like the interior finishing, furniture, and so on. Please do pray that all will go smoothly and fast.*
2. *The work we do here often is about presenting the Gospel to people and getting them to understand they have this solution to all problems! But we need colleagues who are ready to share this, with boldness and faith! Pray for them!*
3. *As we all are getting older, there are many issues we have never faced before, but now we have to. Please pray for the workers of Smiles, to be encouraged and motivated to serve, despite many new challenges they might encounter.*
4. *The Bible teaches us to make various kinds of prayers and requests to God, but also tells us to always be grateful to Him, and thankful for His blessing! Join with us thanking God for the wonderful provisions and opportunities!*

Thank You!

After this one year of war in Ukraine, not too far from Romania, just following a world-wide pandemic, there is a lot of concern and confusion about where we're all heading towards and what is the future looking like.

Amidst all of this, we are very grateful to know what we are meant to do and what direction we need to move, equally for the people who are supporting us and provide us with the means to do our work!

Be it financial support, or any other kind, your contribution is much appreciated and we want to express our thanks to you, thinking of you as part of our team, because we can only do this together.

May God bless you richly, dear Friends!

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