



**PEOPLE TO PEOPLE
INTERNATIONAL**

- Reaching out to a hurting world -

News Bulletin

April 2018



Newsletters



Children of Promise. During Easter food packages were handed out to families.



Dear partners and friends

We hope all is well with you. The weeks are going by so very fast and the month of April is already here. At our latitude spring seems to be late this year and it is still a bit cold in our area. I guess all of us are waiting for warmer weather. Switching to daylight-saving time makes the days longer and the light more apparent, which is fantastic. Now we are looking forward to a warm and sunny summer, whenever it will come. When this letter is being written Easter will soon be here, but when you receive this letter we will have just celebrated Easter and I will have just returned from Moldova where I celebrated Easter for the second time. I have been in Moldova together with a small team. We will of course get back with more information about the trip in coming newsletters. We are expecting God to do mighty things during our days in Moldova and that the power of God will be manifested in people's lives. We also want to thank you for the financial support that we have received. Thank you for your faithful support for the work that God has called us to do. In connection with Easter I would like to share a few thoughts.

While it still was dark

When Jesus had taken his last breath on the cross, darkness fell over the earth. Therefore, when we talk about the crucifixion, it is most relevant to talk about the light that breaks out in the world. Jesus, the light of the world, no darkness is in him and he has, according to the word of the Bible, risen from the dead. It is very interesting to read how the Gospels describe this event. When we read the Gospel of John 20:1-2 we meet these words: *"Early on the first day of the week, while it was*

still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. 2 So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!"

Mary Magdalene visited the grave while it "still was dark". It was on the very first opportunity after the Sabbath was over that Mary Magdalene visited the grave. The other Gospels describe the same course of events with words like "at dawn" (Matthew 28) or "at sunrise" (Mark 16) and "early at dawn" (Luke 24), that is the time when both light and darkness are present. But Mary Magdalene had made sure to visit the grave before the light had broken out. It is through this "lens" John describes the story of Jesus' death and resurrection. This story also becomes the story of our own lives. In the celebration of Easter, we can, in spite of how dark we might experience life, know that Jesus comes with his light. When we experience "the dark night of the soul" we can surrender into God's hands, He who is the light himself. We can invite him into our darkness. The light from Jesus himself is able to disperse the darkest of darkness! Jesus is the light of the world (John 1:5). He is the light that lightens up our lives, that brings us from darkness to light. It is darkest before the light breaks out. Many can testify to that, but also how the light of Christ has dispelled the darkest of darkness. Jesus is the hope of the world, he is your hope!

It must have been a revolutionary experience for Mary Magdalene to see that the stone had been rolled away. She was surrounded by darkness and an empty and dark tomb. What would she think? What was in her heart? Today, when

we celebrate Easter, we are privileged, because we know how Easter's drama ended. This event can also serve as a picture of how our lives can be. Regardless of how long and dark our "tunnel" may be, we know that the light will meet us at the end of it. Neither Mary Magdalene nor the disciples knew how it would end. The Easter message starts in a dark empty tomb, but it doesn't end there! Our world can at times be a very dark place that more than ever is in need of meeting the light from Jesus. Life can be surrounded by darkness; sin, suffering and sorrow can fill one's heart. In these moments, the light of Jesus and the gospel is a powerful force, powerful to transform darkness into light. Let us pray that the light will break through, that Jesus, who died on the cross and rose again, will be made known, believed and worshiped; that we in the power of the gospel will be able to break new ground and that evil and darkness will give way to the light of the gospel; that Jesus, who is the hope of the world, shall be known.

The Florian family in Romania

As an organization we also help the Roma population in Romania. We support, among other things, Children of Promise. Through the pastors that we support financially we get to know about different needs. In previous newsletters we have written about a woman named Katy. Over the years we have been able to help her with smaller needs. A number of years ago she had to move out of the house she lived in, because the township was redirecting a road which unfortunately was planned to go over the place where they lived. They were then provided with another place to live not far from the place where they live now. Katy has two daughters, but has also adopted three other siblings. They now live in the house they were appointed by the township. Earlier we helped them with a new water heater and tiling of a small bathroom that was in very bad condition when they moved in. They have until now lived in this house, but a few weeks ago the township told them that they will be evicted. Katy is in the process of building a new small house on a nearby site. But in order to house all of them, she needs to expand the building with two rooms and a bathroom.

We have decided to help Katy with the extension of her new house. This will help her to be able to move in sooner and not have to live on the street and risk of losing her small children. As a first step we will send \$1,200. The money will be given through one of the pastors we work with. Since Katy can neither read, write nor count, he will help her to purchase all the materials needed. Our help will enable Katy to start the construction, but will, of course, not cover the entire cost. We will closely follow the development and in May, when I will visit Romania, I will visit Katy and follow up on what has happened.

Children of Promise

The work at COP continues. Through their work many children get help with their homework and get the opportunity to learn to play an instrument. Through their social work they distributed "Easter packages" to about 75 families. This was a very welcomed element and became a small, but very important, help for the children and their families. Children of Promise do a very good work to help the Roma children move away from illiteracy and exclusion. By being helped with their school work, they can continue their schooling. It is a very important step to be able to live an independent life. Thank you for supporting this work.



Up: Katy and her new house still under construction.

Below: Easter celebration at Children of Promise.



Conclusion

We have several things in the "pipe line", but they are not ready yet to be presented in our newsletter. Waiting for this, we are not presenting any special project but appeal for financial support for our ongoing projects that we support financially on a monthly basis. The needs are many and it is important that none of these projects are without resources. We are so thankful for your support and pray that the Lord will bless you who give of your assets in order for the Kingdom to continue to grow and expand. If you are in need of prayer, we are here for you.

Ann Larsson

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