

# ROMANIAN CHRISTIAN ENTERPRISES

Placement • Prevention • Provision

JUNE 2007

## A New Mission of Mercy

Monday, May 21st, was a day unlike any other for thirty children who have known terrible loss and deprivation all their lives. Their families have abandoned them, they suffer severe disabilities, and they have been forced to endure de-humanizing, abusive conditions in State run orphanages. But hope arrived on this spring day when they were introduced to gentleness and goodness.

RCE staff has long been aware of the terrible suffering of these children, living just across the fence from Darius House and Sunshine School in three State run orphanages, euphemistically called 'family cottages'. The kids are from four to seventeen years of age and have a broad range of disabilities.

RCE has been praying and actively seeking a way to intervene. Then God brought about the solution in the form of a national pilot program instituted by the Romanian government to address the country's devastating record on human rights for disabled children. The goal is to contract with experienced non-government organizations (NGO) like RCE to provide care and recuperative programs. Our work in this field has been observed over the years by the local authorities and in awarding RCE a contract to manage the cottages they are asking us to change things for the good for many more children in the city.

Board Chairman Jim Perry framed the issue this way when he visited the Cottages in April:



*"It was a beautiful spring day as we 'inspected' the now empty Cottages. Each cottage is supposed to be home to 10 special needs children in a "family" setting, I was standing in the middle cottage, the one used for the lowest functioning children.*

*Everything was in total disarray. Doors and windows are broken; the floor is coming up in places; toilets don't work. There is no evidence of any kind of program or healthy routine. The place is filthy and the stench from soiled mattresses and clothes is over-powering. The only cottage employee present is sitting in the corner watching TV.*

*Until 2 weeks ago, this was "home" to 10 needy and helpless children. It doesn't take much imagination to picture how terribly they suffered.*

*As I stood in the middle of this awful place, I looked out the window and across the fence, and there was Darius House. In the backyard, Darius and Bianca are playing with the latest pets, 2 rabbits, one of which is enormous. Both of them are bundled up in warm clothes against a chill in the breeze. Imola is sitting on the swing with a caregiver who is singing to her. In the front yard, a Sunshine School teacher is here on his day off to cut the grass. Someone else is planting flowers along the fence.*

*The contrast could not have been more stark.*

*As I thought about this contrast, I realized that I was standing in a dark and evil place. And over there, just across the fence, was a different kind of place; a place where the light of the gospel was shining brightly for all to see; a place where the work of rescue and redemption is going forward.*

*Taking over the cottages will involve spiritual warfare between the kingdom of this world and the Kingdom of God if we are to push back the darkness in a significant way. It is an opportunity to bring the light of the gospel to bear on 30 very needy children and many, many others through them. I have full confidence in our Romanian team who are called, ready and able to carry out this new mission of mercy."*

*"If you spend yourselves on behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday. The LORD will guide you always..."*

*Isaiah 58:9*

There was a flurry of excitement, and some panic, as the staff quickly got ready after the final contract was signed. Major renovation is being done, but the basics were quickly put in place: clean clothes and sheets, healthy food, proper supervision and productive routines, and genuine love for the children. God has begun to wipe away their tears.

In the parable of the Good Samaritan Jesus doesn't focus on the nature of the injustice, the character of the victim, or the difficulty of the need, but rather on the response of His people when confronted with suffering. And His final words are "Go and do likewise."

We need your help as we take up this challenge. Would you prayerfully consider a one-time contribution toward the \$50,000 needed for start up expenses? Or a monthly pledge that will

help provide the urgently needed care (\$3,000 a month is RCE's portion - the remainder will be provided by the city).

Thank you for your prayers and your financial support. We couldn't do the work of mercy in Arad without you.



Bride, and Sunshine School speech therapist, Mona Neta, brought her bridegroom to school and to the delight of the children, danced with all. The students are finishing up a very good year and happily looking forward to summer camp.



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