

Little Samaritan Mission – Newsletter - March 2017

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“Train up a child the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it” Prov.22:6



Dear fellow Samaritans, can you imagine it is already the end of winter 2017? What a season we have encountered, since the last newsletter I sent to you. How much the world has changed, what a difference in America, and in the hearts of our service ministry in Moldova... we had elections and new presidents in both America and Moldova, with a socialist president being elected in Moldova. As we watch the news, we see massive protests, the refugee crisis, and one crisis after another on global, national and local levels. But how about any personal crises we may be encountering... have we learned from all the trials of our life to find refuge in the promise of our Lord? Do we still find reasons to count our blessings? I receive daily reports from the mission field from Moldova, about the impact of Little Samaritan, where we go to visit and distribute relief to lonely, poor, elderly desperate families, having no food and clothes for their children in the hospitals and institutional orphanages. I give great thanks to God, that He is using Little Samaritan as an instrument, with your financial and material support, to reach those in need, in the name of Jesus.

Thank you,
Florin PindicBlaj

Radio Ministry News

Now that the winter is gone, we begin to see the flowers blooming, especially here in the south. Spring is around the corner. I'm always thinking of how we'll make it into the spring season with the ministry in Moldova? Last year, in the beginning of April and May we had a shortage of funds to maintain the radio station on air. And indeed, **we are bracing ourselves now again because the summertime contributions are not coming in like other times of the year.** But I pray and believe in our supporters, who will send a response after this newsletter, and hope that we will have enough funds to continue our Radio Ministry.

Winter Coal Distribution



Seva is one of the five children in the **Zuza family** and was born blind due to birth complications. The family is struggling to make ends meet as the father works as a shepherd during the summer and Viorica, the mother, is not working. The house they live in is old and damaged. Inside, the house lacks basic supplies and does not provide any comfort. The family has no washing machine and so Viorica does laundry by hand. Often, the children have nothing to wear since the laundry is hung to dry in the freezing cold and it doesn't get dry by the time they need to wear it. Things like shoes and new clothes represent luxury to them. Little Samaritan

brought them coal, wood, a food sack, blankets, shoes, winter clothing and everyone was crying tears of joy when they saw it all. Seva was just as excited as the rest of the family, even though he could not see it, he would touch the coal, the wood and every single bag we brought. God showed His great love to this family and took these children into His care.

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We also visited **aunt Ana**, a 75-year old widow. She was so happy to see us again, she welcomed us with tears and gratitude: "thank you to the moon and back for these food items and for the coal! It's been some years since the last time I have seen coal! I only had some brushwood left; if you only knew how hard it was for me to carry them home. I had to take off my shoes to get down the hill because it was slippery. I would gather the brushwood, tie it with a rope and drag it. I would fall many times, but then I would get up and eventually get home. Ever since we had snow, however, I can't go, moreover, you can't see the brushwood. Oh Lord, thank you! I imagine you are tired and hungry, nevertheless, you came to see me and made me so happy now on Christmas Eve! I pray for you every day, may you have lots of health and keep on helping people! Thank you, and may the Lord keep you safe!"



We visited **aunt Elisaveta** who is 90 years old. Her story made us shiver: her house burned down right at the start of the winter. She lit up the fire with some corn husk and no one knows how it happened, nothing could have been saved. The roof and the old walls collapsed. Her neighbors, that she housed some winters ago, when they did not have a stove, have taken her in. She came out their house barefoot and crying when she was told Little Samaritan brought her coal. "I hope no one goes through what I have have been through. My husband passed away, I have no children, my house burned down. I moved to this village with my husband to work as shepherds, the owners took us in, but we

had bad luck all along. At this age, I have nothing left. You are truly kind hearted; may you be blessed! For as long as I have left to live I will be grateful for your kindness." The poverty they lived in has impressed us and we went to the car and brought another bag with food. The image we saw left us speechless: the aunt was crying and thanking God for every item in the bag: rice, sugar, past, vegetable oil, soup cans...



Aunt Victoria from Soci Noi village, Falesti is half blind and needs eye surgery. She says that she can't afford going to the hospital so she survives any way she can, with the small pension she receives. We entered her tiny home and it seemed like it was colder inside than outside. She would use damp corn husks to light the fire and would wear all her clothes at once due to the cold. On top of it all, she is sick with high blood pressure.

When she saw us, she was very happy, we also came with three volunteers from the Grace Point church in Boston. Her face lit up and she thanked us for the radio where she could listen to the LS radio programs. The package with food items was also appreciated, she said it will last her a long time.

LSM - Moldova Team



Anatoli and Mila. 1990 was the first year we launched our Little Samaritan ministry in Moldova, I was looking for a person in charge to be our national director. Lidiana was sad at the end of every trip because I was not able to locate one who would serve the way our ministry required. Since 1991, when Anatoli came onboard with his wife Mila, they became very important instruments--Anatoli, as a director, and Mila, in charge of our radio ministry. Time passed with hundreds to thousands of phone calls, and a lot of challenges, but God gave him wisdom to find practical

solutions and good communication, not only with workers, but also with government authorities. He doesn't like to engage in conflicts. I give thanks to God for his calm spirit, which works very well with my temper and my hyper, energetic ways of solving things. Anatoli and Mila have raised 2 daughters, Alla and Natasha, and are grandparents of Kevin and Erika.



Lida is our humanitarian director for Northern Moldova. Years ago, I called her a "Mother Teresa" of Little Samaritan, for the destitute, poor, lonely elderly, and for thousands of orphan children. She started by presenting bible lessons with flannel graph's in the orphanages. Later she got involved with the administration to distribute relief, and then she took charge of all the cleaning at Sofia. For more than 23 years she has managed our medical clinic in Sofia. Most of the orphanages in Northern Moldova are closed; yet a few which help those with special mental and physical challenges, like Brinzeni and Badeceni, remain open. Lida continues to visit them periodically, bringing relief, medical supplies, and lots of comfort, by sharing the gospel and praying with them. With her husband, Anatol, who has already retired, but continues to serve faithfully alongside Lida, they raised a daughter Natasha, their son John, and now she is a

grandmother of three. In the Spring of 2017, **Lida will visit US churches** in Sacramento, Portland, Chicago, and Minnesota, to thank the supporters, for their faithful contributions.



Anisoara Vrincean has been working at Little Samaritan Moldova, as a secretary in accounting since 1991. In 1994, she was put in charge of all distribution of literature and correspondence between the children and our radio listeners. Between 200 -700 letters came every week. In addition to correspondence, she coordinated the humanitarian distribution in the Chisinau center and south Moldova. She is a very dedicated, one-on-one person, but in public she is shy and always busy for the mission calling, I don't know when she rests or sleeps. She spends a lot of time counseling and praying, one-on-one, for those who are hurting most. Even though she retired last year, we keep her active with the distribution of backpacks, relief to schools and villages. She is like a balsam for the

hearts of those she visits in lonely homes or in the hospital. Quite often, she goes to the children's oncology section of the hospital. Together with her husband, Alexander "Sasha", they have raised two sons, and have a granddaughter.



Natasha Badia – is the oldest daughter of Anatol and Mila. Since the first day, 26 years ago, when we entered their home, she was exposed to the mission work. Together with her younger sister Alla, they were often waiting until late evening for mama and papa to come home from the mission field; they were told: "One more hour, one more hour and we will be home."

Natasha saw the wonderful work and excitement of what the ministry of her parents could offer, as well as the frustrations and trials along the way. Just less 2 years ago, I proposed to her to take over the humanitarian department of Little Samaritan, and gradually, being inside the mission, to address the needs, the calls, the visits and the distributions. She was willing and open to meet those needs. Anishoara Vrincean and Lida were great, inspiring role-models for her and are still coaching her. Together, with her husband Oleg, they are raising 2 of their own children: Erika and Kevin.



Petrica Voza. Peter has always had a passion for music and he completed a college degree in music. For 19 years, he worked as an announcer at Little Samaritan radio, . Day and night, he was present at the radio studio, not only airing music and programs, but also being a pastor of a rural church. He is frequently asked to do counseling over the telephone. When Peter is on duty at the radio most of our listeners know that, day or night, the radio programs will be filled with soft, folk-style songs, which most Moldovan's love. Peter and his wife Aliona, have raised 3 children. I have known them since birth and seen them grow up as Peter often brought them to the radio. From the entire radio team, besides Miha, Peter has worked there the longest.



Nicu Holban has worked for 10 years at the radio. When he is there, he likes to fill the air with more contemporary music programs and topics for the youth. He completed a degree at the Institute of Theology and has served as a youth pastor, but family and work at the radio absorb most of his heart and time. He and his wife Anisoara are raising 3 children, Iasmina, Rhema-Briana and Ianus-Augustin



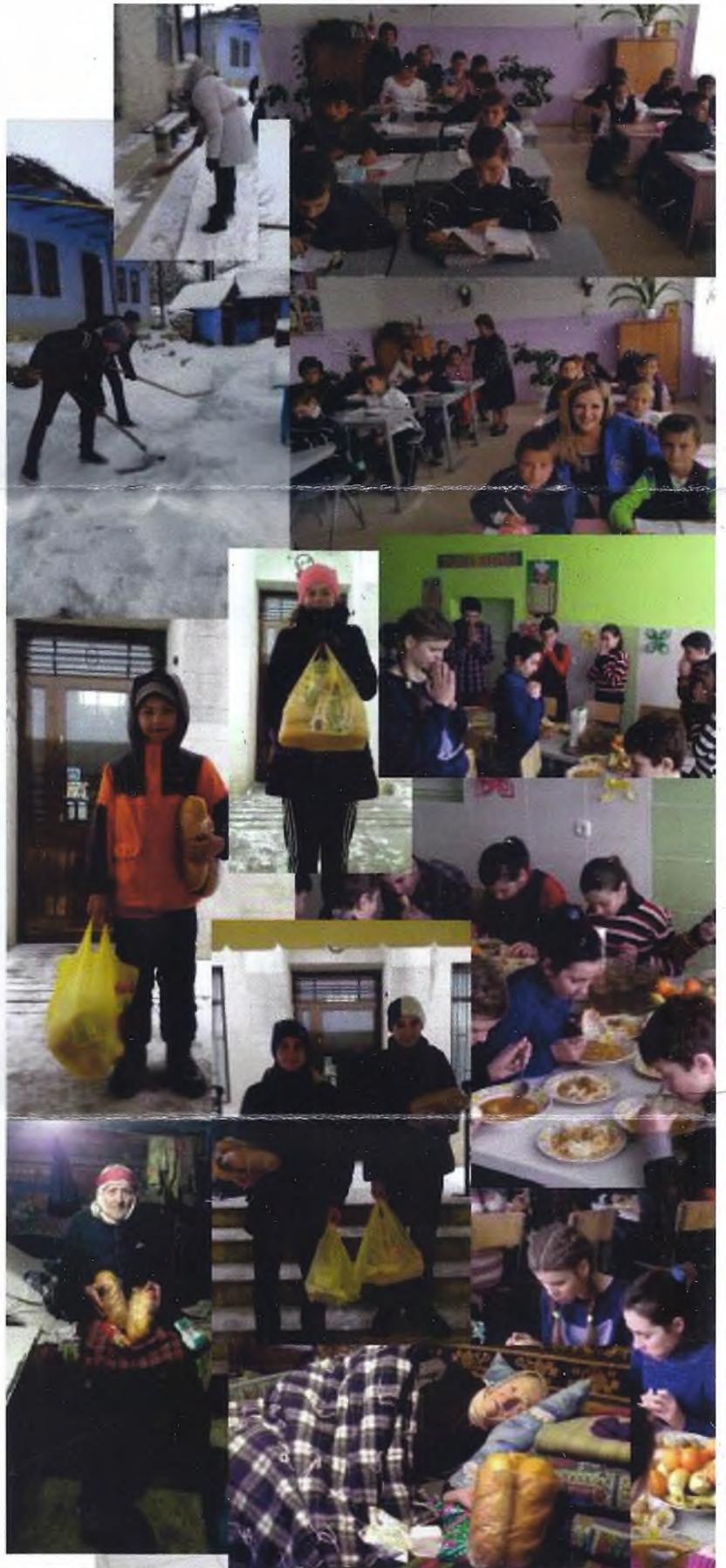
Violeta Andriuța. I still remember about 20 years ago when every 3 to 4 months, we were meeting with new believers, who came to know Christ through our ministry. There was a long table at our Christian library. One by one, mostly teenagers and young people, were sharing how they heard about the radio and how they decided to take the step of accepting Christ. Most were writing letters to us and LSM staff was responding to their questions. One day, at the end of the table, I heard a soft, shy voice of a 15-year old girl, I looked at her and said, "*Violeta, one day you will be working at the radio*". No wonder, a few years later, she came to the capital city at the college. While she was involved in the church with the youth, we hired her at the radio station. She is doing a great job. With her husband, Anatol who is a pastor, they are raising 3 teenage children.



Diana Rotaru came to work at the Little Samaritan 15 years ago. She finished her degree in literature and theology. Very well organized and balanced in everything that she says, Diana is loved by youth listeners, but her favorites are the elderly, the lonely ladies from Moldova, who do not turn off the radio during the entire night.

LSM After-School Program

The LSM After-School program has just begun the Winter-Spring semester. After the Christmas holidays children return to school. In the village of Bolohani, 25 children remain after the school day ends to receive help with homework, a warm meal, and most importantly, to be in a positive and nurturing environment so they can develop and grow despite the the poverty, negligence, and difficult and abusive context they may have at home. The after-school program is not something to just keep them busy, or to entertain them. It is literally a lifesaver and a beacon of hope. We receive so much wonderful feedback from teachers and family members telling us what an impact this program has had in the lives of the children and how they have blossomed and grown due to the attention, encouragement, and assistance they have received as part of this program. They have learned to give back to the community in which they live by assisting with LSM' s food and coal distributions during the winter months to seniors and bedridden elderly and in the spring, the children **work outdoors** in gardens, digging and **planting crops** for seniors in the village who are physically unable to prepare the soil and the gardens for planting. They also help these seniors with chores around the house. The After-School program has impacted not only the lives of the children who benefit from this program, but also the village in which they live. Thank you to everyone who continues to pray and to support this amazing and life-changing program. It is only with your generosity that we can continue this program.



My Recent Journey to Cuba

Recently I made a short trip to Cuba. I was waiting for 50 years to see this country and especially its people. I was amazed by many things, like hardworking men and needing to be on alert every moment, how these people make everything they need practically out of nothing, and how they hold on to family traditions, with 3rd and 4th generation living in the same apartment or home. Since I lived in Romania until 1985, I understand the economic, social and moral issues that Cuban people are facing, in this time of change. As I was interested to learn more about the church and Christians in Cuba, **I was amazed to discover the evangelical church has grown by 300% in the last 20 years.** I met some pastors, encouraged and provided some support for their needs, from building classrooms, helping VBS, to delivering food to needy people, among many other projects. I see their passion to serve the Lord. As a Christian, with the amount of experiences that I had in Romania and Moldova, I'm excited to share the expertise I accumulated, in benefit of the Cuban churches and communities. This assistance includes educational projects, such as teaching English, to self-sustaining, agricultural projects. I am working and aiming toward the prospective of Christian broadcasting.

Last week when I went to Cuba I had a strange idea to bring along a tandem bike, maybe to save some money on transportation. I don't think anyone else has taken a tandem bike to Cuba before. Sharing that with one of my pastor friends, he said: "Florin, there is a need for a tandem bike." I said: "In Cuba? I know there is great need for bikes because everybody would appreciate one, but a tandem bike is a luxury, no?" He said, "let me tell you, there is a young pastor, blind from childhood, a great pastor, who needs to go from village to village and we don't have transportation for him.

But there always is a deacon or a young guy who would take him on the back seat of a tandem bike, to minister from church to church, from village to village. He is powerful in sharing God's Word, but he is very poor, and needs to raise 2 children with his wife. "I smiled and he said: "The Lord knows how to orchestrate many things."

This church started with 7 members, 20 years ago, and has now grown its membership to 500 people!

An interesting fact, in the parking lot, I could see only one motorbike and 6 bicycles, but the church was packed full, with no air conditioning inside. **They still dwell in their first love for Christ.**

