

**AURORA CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION**  
**MORE NEWS FROM ROMANIA – JULY/SEPT 2008**

**“It is good to give thanks to the Lord, and to sing praises to your name, O Most High;  
To declare Your loving kindness in the morning,  
and Your faithfulness every night.” Psalm 92 v.1, 2.**

The above words express our hearts as we give thanks and praise to God for all that He is doing in these difficult and darkening days in which we live. He alone is the answer to life, and each day, we are more aware than ever of this truth. Jesus said “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, no man comes to the Father but by me”. We have proved this in all the years that we have known Him, and continue to prove in as the days go by. May He have all the glory. Please remember that all the work of ACA is based on love for Jesus, the Bible and prayer, and we want this to remain, even with all the pressing needs that we all face every day.

**We have seen many rapid changes in Romania** during the last three months. Some are very good, some are very disturbing. In our area, there is a lot of input into repairing roads, new road systems, new houses and guest houses, and a big concentration on the growing tourist trade. Vulcan is situated in a fertile, volcanic basin in the mountains, about 750 metres above sea level. It just ‘happens’ to be near the Mountain Ski Resorts of Poiana Brasov, Sinaia and Predeal, as well as in beautiful country side, comprising hills, valleys, forests and streams. Only a few kilometres away there is Bran Castle, with stories of Vlad the Impaler (the Dracula fable) as well as the old German cities of Brasov and Sibiu, and Rasnov Castle, an old fortress from the days of constant invasions from Hungary, Turkey and the North (now Russia). A new International airport is also being constructed between Brasov and Vulcan, just 20 minutes drive from our house. All this in turn is excellent, and we believe God has placed us in this specific location.

Unfortunately there is another very sinister, immoral side of life in Romania, and in many parts it is still a third world country.

**Corruption** is still a ‘way of life’, especially in ‘high places’ and amongst professionals, i.e. doctors, nurses, police and lawyers. Mechanics (especially those doing MOT’s) and some private firms also ‘make money’ by stealing materials or motor parts, or half doing a job, if bribes are not offered. No one can get a doctor, dentist or hospital treatment without offering ‘gifts’, even if the patient has medical insurance or is a child or pensioner entitled to free treatment. They will just be ignored and left to suffer. Even regular treatments such as blood tests, scans, chemotherapy, operations or a stay in hospital, necessitate a ‘gift’ to all staff involved. Of course it is illegal and wrong, but impossible to change, without enforcement from authorities. This means that those with money or means, can manage, but those without, have no hope, and therefore get very sick or suffer injustice from the law.

There is still no workable Social structure at all in Romania, so consequently there are a rising number of very poor people. This in turn increases corruption, stealing and hopelessness resulting often in drunkenness.

**Romania has the largest population of Gypsies** in Europe and there are four different tribes there. These include the very rich, who build big lavish houses, drive big vehicles and usually are involved in the Mafia. The others are in various businesses, such as metal or woodwork or are market traders. Some still travel in covered carts during the summer months. Then there are the lowest of the low who are intermarried and live on the outskirts of villages in extreme poverty and are hated by all and extremely marginalized by society.

**The following is one very real situation** that we are trying to deal with at present.

A young mother of 28 years, with two children from a previous relationship, lives with a young man of 22 years with whom she has another three small children, one, a baby of 3 months. In the same ‘shack’, live her brother, his young son and another woman. The ‘house’ is about 3 metres by 3 metres. It is made of bits of wood, felt, cardboard and rags. The floor is earth. There are two ragged beds, a wood stove that does not work, and a table with piles of clothes on it. There are holes in all the walls, and at night the rats come and nip the children’s feet, unless the light is on. They have no electricity, as cannot afford it (everyone has to buy their own pole!!). So a kind and daring Christian neighbour, wanting to help them, has taken a line from his house to their shack (about 100 metres) and he pays the bill on his account. Of course it is illegal, but it is done everywhere, especially between families. The house has been constructed (by them) where a new road will go through the gypsy village, so it will be demolished soon. They were offered a plot to build on by the council, but as had no money and absolutely no means of obtaining any, they lost it. They are desperate. In addition to all this, none of the three youngest children have birth certificates. This is because the mother, (Anca’s) bulletin (identity card), which everyone in Romania is required to get at age 14, expired 3 years ago, and she had no money to renew it. Added to this, she was then fined, and is still being fined, for every week it is overdue, and because she has no bulletin, she cannot register her children’s births. There is also an ongoing fine for this default. As well as all this, she cannot make any requests for help from the council, if there are any, of which we are not sure, because she has

no documents. Maybe this explains some of Romania's dilemmas, and Anca is only one in millions. The country has no idea how many gypsies there are, as so many are non-existent as far as the authorities are concerned. Where do we start with cases like this ??

We are at present hoping to be able to buy a small plot of land for them, so they will be able to build a small house. There are some loving Christians who will help them and oversee the work.

**Helping build small houses**, is something we feel is of paramount importance at present. We are just finishing two houses. One, a one roomed place for an elderly couple who were evicted from the husband's own home by his family, because he, a widower married a widow. The second, is a three roomed house for a family of seven, who are at present living in one room. Then there are three more on the list. The third is a family with 6 small children living in a falling down hovel, which is irreparable. The fourth is the project mentioned above, and the fifth is for another family of five, also living in dire straights in one room. This also will necessitate buying land first, and then materials. They will do the construction.

**There are many changes taking place in the Lord's work in Vulcan.**

**The Kindergarten** will have to move its location soon, as we can only continue to rent the 1<sup>st</sup> Baptist Church building for three more months. We are praying for another temporary solution, until we are able to construct a purpose built Kindergarten at Betania. Miki, Carmen and Lela work so well with morning and afternoon sessions and they have 21 children so far this year.

**Eventually the Canteen** will also have to be rebuilt according to EU regulations if we are to continue, but at present that is not priority. We have finally managed to get all the canteen workers, Rica, Simona, Felicia and Geta to wear the white overalls we bought! This is a step in the right direction!!

**The food parcels, old peoples bags and clothes aid** distribution continues regularly as available. The next full lorry will go in October and after that it will be the shoe box lorry in November.

**The gypsy school** is enlarging and goes very well. Sue and Marioara now have 7 pupils, 5 boys and 2 girls. All are permanent 'drop outs' from school, and have no chance to return. It is so wonderful to see how quickly they are learning with one to one teaching and much love. All are aged between 11 and 14 years and have very difficult backgrounds. Most could not write or read at all when they first came. Some could not even hold a pencil and now we are seeing great improvements. At least they will all be able to read and write simple things, and do basic arithmetic which will of course be some help for them in life. They are also being clothed and fed and receive love and attention in a way they never knew existed.

**Matthew and Joanna** have received a bursar from the International school for a year, because the school was desperate for another teacher. They approached Jo Stebbings (the Owens' home school teacher) to come and help. She said that she was already committed to Bill and Sue, so was unable to do so. They then offered the bursar for Matt and Jo. It is a miracle.

**We would like to say a big thank you** to all those who donate food to us for the canteen and all the food boxes for the poor in Romania. A special mention needs to be made of Blytheswood Trust in Scotland, 3663 Food Wholesaler at Lee Mill, Plymouth and M.J.Bakers Food Services, Heathfield, Newton Abbot, as well as all our regular sponsors who help finance transport, toiletries and sponsored gifts for the canteen, kindergarten and the workers. Also, thank you to all who give in any other way, both financial and with their time, sorting, packing, loading lorries and helping in Romania. A special thank you too, to all who pray. Without your support none of the things mentioned above would have real value. May God really bless you all.

**Now for our BIG news which we have saved till the end of this letter.**

Casa Aurora is still not sold, but ACA have received a very large gift which has enabled us to buy Gary's house next door to Betania for the Association, freeing Gary to move to Bran. This is an amazing miracle and all we can say is that our God is eternally faithful, and so generous to His people. Our trust is in Him alone and His timing is perfect.

Gary and Nico are moving full steam ahead now and hoping to move (so they say!) by Christmas.

We will then plan the future use of the house, and alter some things, making it a base for all the work of ACA.

Also on our return to Rora, we heard by email that there was a gift coming to us for the canteen. We are so grateful to all of you who give so generously in this way, enabling God's work to continue, especially in the face of the present financial crisis. God is not bound to these things as man is. Praise His Name.

Paul and Anna will be in Romania in October, and Malcolm and Christine in November. We all value your prayers very much for us at this time of change and enlargement in the work.

We greet you with much love and many thanks for all your involvement with us.  
In the precious name of Jesus our Saviour and Lord, without whom we can do nothing of lasting value.

Malcolm and Christine, Paul and Anna.

**Pressing needs are still as follows:-**

Prams, buggies, cots.	Baby and children's clothes.
Beds and/or mattresses.	Bicycles in good order.
Bottles and teats	Rucksacks, exercise books, crayons, and felt pens.



Cornel & Lenuta's new house. We are now planning to build fence around his property.



We have started to help build a new house for this family in the neighbouring village of Holbav.



Children in the canteen, in their new school uniforms.



Vasilica, who helps care for her disabled brother Silviu.



4 of the 7 who attend the Gypsy School, with Marioara who helps Sue with the lessons.



Malcolm, with Bill and Sue.