

Dear Friends and Supporters,

I hope you and your loved ones are well. The pandemic has changed the way we help the poor and needy in Romania. The government who kept us from working with abandoned babies in the hospital in 2019, has kept us out of the state group homes since March because of the virus. As has been the case though in our 20 years of working in Romania, opportunities to

serve keep appearing. I am so very thankful for you, that you help us respond.



Our involvement with desperately poor children in a village with a significant Roma population, is increasing. At our Day Centre we provide these children with teaching and educational support, counseling, clothing and daily hot meals. The children are encouraged and supported to stay in school. School abandonment due to poverty is a serious social issue with oppressive consequences. In September all our children received fully equipped backpacks and new shoes donated from the community. We gave them the necessary school

supplies. Their village school teachers are glad they have what they need to work with, and the children are happy they are not put at the back of the class and ridiculed.

The 3 months in the spring when schools and the Day Centre were closed due to the virus, set the children back in their learning but they worked all summer when the Centre opened again in June.

During that period of lockdown when the people couldn't leave their homes, we fed these families with staples, and always made sure they had bread. It was an extremely sad situation with people not being able to get out to try to find day jobs, without any way to survive. Our social workers remembered how they were met with tears of gratitude when the food was taken to their doors and gates.



This past summer our social workers were able to keep 2 children from going to an orphanage. The parents were not able to feed Luca 9, and Maria who is 7. Oana and Marius who have worked at an orphanage and know what it's like, stepped in to prevent this. Now coming to the Centre to be fed, taught and cared for has made these unsmiling and frightened children become secure. In another situation, 2 children were sent to live with their grandmother because the family wasn't managing. The grandmother knowing about the wonderful help children receive at the Centre, came and asked for Alexandru 11, and Larisa 9, to be admitted. Now they are benefitting from the material, emotional and education support.

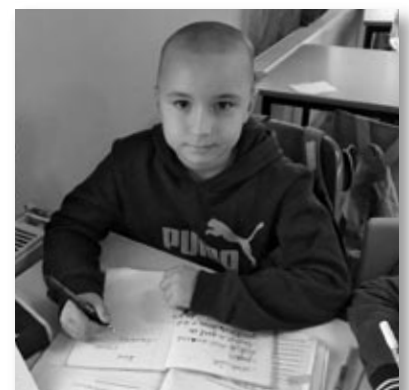


Maria



Luca

Denis was abandoned by his mother and stays with his grandmother. He was timid and withdrawn, but the love and counseling he receives at the Centre is changing him. His teacher commented on this. Nine year old Sebi's father left and although he is with his mother, he suffers. At the beginning he didn't speak at all and needed a lot of help with learning. His marks are getting better now, and like Denis, his emotional well-being has greatly improved.



Denis

When the children were asked what the Centre meant to them, they said they never want to be without it again, referring to the lockdown period. Gabriel 8, missed the food the most and said he didn't eat very well at home. Andreea 15, said "the Centre is the only place where I feel important and no one laughs at me". Ovidiu 10, says he comes to the Centre because he wants to make something of himself. Madalin 6, said when he first came to the Centre it was like a park and that he is so happy he can come. Izabela 14, is happy to come to the Centre because she sees it as a way to go to high school. Cristi 7, said "I like it at the Centre because I wrote my first letter to Santa Claus and he brought me what I asked for." The Centre is behind Santa too!

The Centre is like the children's second home. They learn to love, to accept themselves as they are, to be friends and to help each other. They

have a chance at education which they have not had from anyone before. No one believed in them. It is this education and being taught a different lifestyle which is changing their lives completely.

Now I would like to tell you about a new plan for food for the children and community involvement. Our social workers have been given animals: a cow, calves, goats, piglets, chickens and geese which they keep on a temporary vacant lot. Local farmers are helping with feed and they have become a good source of milk, eggs and meat. It has been our prayer and dream to build a mini farm to be able to provide the children with food. There would be a large vegetable garden and a place for parents to get involved with. This summer a small piece of land came

up for sale on the edge of the village. We were able to buy it, and with wood donated to us from a dismantled church in the city, we plan to start construction in the spring. The fathers of our children who worked on building the Day Centre will work again.

Through our advocacy, more parents have been helped to get jobs. In July, 5 fathers were hired for a community construction project. The boss has been so pleased with their hard work that he intends to keep them on during the winter. Eight mothers are working again at the mushroom processing plant and very happy to be able to buy the necessities for getting through the winter.

When the parents are helped, so are the children. I am extremely grateful for your prayers and financial support which are saving these children from a forgotten and hopeless existence.

God bless you all, with love,

Kathy

For a tax receipt, please make a cheque out to St. Olave's Anglican Church, 360 Windermere Avenue, Toronto, ON M6S 3L4, and write "Kathy Langston's Romanian mission" on it. Thank you again for your kindness.

See www.hosannachildren.ca for more photos and information.

