



**ST. JOHN'S BEN RHYDDING AND  
THE FRIENDSHIP FOUNDATION (UK – ROMANIA)  
A PARTNERSHIP OF COMPASSION**

The remarkable journey of our little charity began here at St. John's Ben Rhydding in the year 2000. Our success over this past decade is due in no small measure to the magnanimous support of the congregation. Thank you so much, or as our good friend Puiu would say, *'Mulțumim frumos.'*

In the year 2000, at a service of Holy Communion here at St John's, Puiu Tarcea, then a businessman in Romania, was inspired to give up his commercial life to dedicate himself entirely to helping the poor and needy in his native city of Arad. He returned home to announce his decision to his family. They accepted graciously and, in spite of a decade of uncertain income and tragic loss, they have never looked back. As you can imagine, St. John's has held a special place in their hearts ever since.

Building on the previous five years of informal help to Romania, The Friendship Foundation here in Ilkley was born in the year 2000 in order to support the efforts of Puiu and his family. It is a wonderful story of dedication, devotion, compassion and Christian commitment that has brought benefits to many hundreds of families and individuals in Romania. Puiu's charity has become a model for the many charities now mushrooming in this new democracy and his expertise is highly sought after.

The following is a brief update for February 2010 on the work of Puiu and his team operating under the Romanian charity's name of Pro Prietenia Arad. Thank you for the part you continue to play in all this by supporting us. Thanks, too, to those folk of blessed memory who may no longer be gracing this world by their presence but who, in their time, gave much to support our work. They, too, remain a part of our story. Thanks be to God / *Mulțumiri fie aduse lui Dumnezeu*

With very best wishes / *Cu foarte cele mai bune urări.*

Rev Brian Gregory [Chair – The Friendship Foundation (UK – Romania)]

*Registered Charity no. 1130205*



## PROJECT UPDATE AT FEBRUARY 2010

### SECTION ONE: INDIVIDUAL CASES:

**MARCELA** is preparing for her next visit to the recuperation centre in Oradea. So far the results have been good and the treatment must continue. She needs to visit a dentist and the Team is negotiating with one who might accept her as a patient. Other dentists have refused to take her because they are not used to working with patients suffering her type of illness. She will need general anaesthetic for the treatment. Besides the dentist, £2,500 - £3,000 is needed for Marcela each year (this is £900 less than last year).

**NADIA** now has a job and we have found her an apartment with two rooms and a kitchen for £60 a month. The family need £100 a month for the kindergarten for Dalina and school for David. If partner Nelu finds a job they will no longer need our financial help but we will continue to provide counselling when needed.

**CLAUDIU AND AGNETA** no longer need financial support. Their only need is counselling and Dorina is providing this.

**NORBET** still requires a bone marrow transplant which will cost £45,000. thankfully, he has survived his illness longer than anyone thought possible. He needs £200 per month for medication and treatment. Cytostatic treatment, which suppresses the growth and multiplication of cells. is provided free of charge by the nation health service and Arad City Hall has provided free transportation to the Hospital in neighbouring Timisoara.

**RUSU CATALIN** needs £120 each month for medication. The house they live in is in a very bad condition.

**EBERLE SEBASTIN-MADALIN** has not yet had the eye operation he so desperately needs. We still have not found the money for this operation.

**THE STREET CHILDREN:** Easter is a special time in Eastern Europe and this year we will again provide our customary Easter meal and gifts for the

street children at the Adăpost Shelter in Arad at a cost of £400.

## **SECTION TWO: SOCIAL PROJECTS:**

**PALLIATIVE CARE:** An investment fund has promised £8,000 for the first year to start up the project offering care in the home to those who are terminally ill. This money will allow us to buy a small car (Puiu has spoken with Opel and we will receive an almost new Chevrolet Spark for £2,500 with the minimum of equipment). After the 15 of February Puiu will meet with the president of the investment fund in the hope of securing money for the next three years. The nation's health service will add to this so that wages can be covered. In a couple of days we shall receive a list of equipment that is needed. This can be second hand and, hopefully, received through donations. Transportation to Romania has been promised.

**MENTORING SERVICE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE:** This project began on 22 January with Pro Prietenia Arad in partnership with the Directorate of Development and Community Assistance Arad; the General Directorate General of Social Assistance and Child Protection, and the Probation Service of Arad. Originally the mentoring scheme in Romania (inspired by the Romanian leaders seeing the work of Yellow Wales last year) is for the benefit of 16 children and young people aged between 10 and 25 years. It will require Clara and Bianca of Pro Prietenia to attend a two week training course at the Bridge Mentoring Centre in Bridgend during February.

**VICTIM SUPPORT PROJECT:** The project is developing although at present we do not have a written and approved project proposal for 2010. We look for financing to smaller financiers such as the City Hall, the Arad County Council, Alexandrion etc. Step by step important people who can provide help are connecting with the idea of the project. National Agency Against Trafficking in Persons came up with the idea of creating a network in the Western region of the country together with the Diocese of Banat - Orthodox Church. They also suggested establishing a network between Great Britain and Romania which would involve The Friendship Foundation (UK – Romania) in partnership with Pro Prietenia Arad. The idea arises out of the fact that a significant number of children and Romanian women are

being trafficked to Great Britain. Up to now, an organized system of repatriation does not exist. We consider that the Victim Support charity in UK could well have a role to play in this network and we will continue our discussion with them.

### **SECTION THREE: INTERNATIONAL YOUTH EXCHANGES:**

**YOUTH EXCHANGE 2010:** Following the successful youth exchange between Wales and Romania in Bridgend last year, this year's exchange takes place in Romania and has expanded to five countries: WALES, ROMANIA, POLAND, REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, and THE NETHERLANDS. These exchanges provide opportunities for needy young people.

**YOUTH EXCHANGE IN THE NETHERLANDS:** As a direct result of Pro Prietenia's involvement in the Wales exchange a second exchange will take place this year in Rotterdam between ROMANIA, THE NETHERLANDS, IRELAND, and ITALY. This is for younger youth aged 15 - 19 years, but, again, all with fewer opportunities.

**DVD - 'I HAVE FEELINGS JUST LIKE YOU':** This DVD, being produced by The Friendship Foundation, as part of the exchange's dissemination process, will be available for use in UK and Romania as a small attempt to combat discrimination and prejudice amongst young people. It is called 'I have feelings just like you' and carries the slogan 'THINK FEELINGS!' As well as speaking directly to young people it also equips Leaders/Teachers to provide workshops on the subject in their own settings.

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Many of our projects are paid for by grants from the central government in Bucharest, the local authority or the EU. However, there is still much **that can only be done** by your generous support. Thank you.