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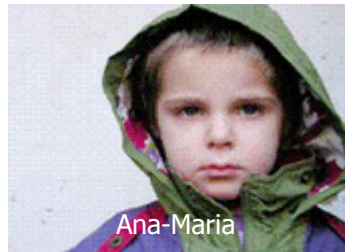
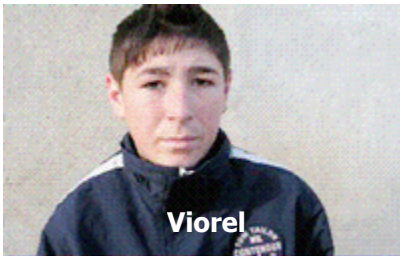
with FUNDAȚIA PRO PRIETENIA ARAD

MARCH 2011

Family in urgent need

(This appeal has been written by one of the workers in our Romanian partner-charity, Clara Kallai, who is a neighbour of the family concerned)

Varga Saveta is the grandmother of two children who have known suffering and poverty since they were very young. Viorel (15 years old) and Ana-Maria (4 years old) were born and live in the small town of Santana, in Arad County, Romania.



Their mother, Voichita, had suffered a medium degree of mental disability since her childhood after receiving a head injury in an accident. Despite her disability, the mother tried bringing them up and, although she cared for them as best she could, she could not give them the care they needed, especially since they were also very poor.

Both children were eventually placed in the care of their grandmother, Saveta, by the Child Protection Services. At that time, Saveta and her husband, Gheorghe, had a steady income and they were able to provide proper care for the children.

The youngsters have different fathers and their family names are different. Their mother's unstable life affected them and they both feel

and think that their real mother is the grandmother. The whole family lived in the same house but in separate sections: while their mother was living with her husband in one part of the house, the children lived together with their grandmother and her husband in the second part of the house. Conditions have always been poor but they got along.

The year 2010 came with much misfortune for the family. Already in 2009 the grandmother lost her job and became unemployed. In 2010 debts rose and they dealt with them as best as they could; the grandmother wasn't able to get a new job because of her age and her husband became very ill.

In December 2010 Voichita, the children's mother, had a miscarriage and due to complications she died two days before her 34th birthday on 14th December 2010. The entire family was shaken by this event. Despite all the problems they faced, they loved Voichita dearly.



The financial state of the family also worsened as Voichita's disability benefits were, of course, stopped. At the present time, the grandmother, Saveta, while still mourning her daughter, faces great difficulties in keeping the family at survival level.

The family has fallen badly into debt with their house - a state rental

owned by the Town Hall - and they face imminent eviction. Their debt amounted to £1200. In desperation the grandmother asked for an audience with the Mayor of the town to seek help. Consequently, the debt was reduced to £350, with the proviso that it be paid very soon. The mayor also promised to help them solve the paperwork for transferring the house from the deceased mother's name to the grandmother's name in order to open up the possibility of other kinds of help from the State.



The financial situation of the family is very bad now and it is impossible for them to pay the debt even though it's now much less. The grandmother has no income, the husband is gravely ill and has no income, and the children receive state benefits amounting to £45 per

month, which is the only income the family has. More often than not this not even enough for food. The grandmother has tried asking for loans from relatives and acquaintances but no one can lend them money since there is no guarantee they will receive it back.

The medical situation of the family is also worsening: the grandmother is 56 years old and is suffering from angina (medical certificate no.282/19 Jan 2011). The husband has chronic bronchitis and chronic hepatitis (medical certificate no.281/19 Jan 2011).



The grandfather is bedridden

The grandfather, Gheorghe, who is 61 years old, would be able to receive State benefits if it were not for the fact that his Identity Document has expired and he cannot renew it until the house problem is clarified (at the

moment the house is registered in the deceased daughter's name).

The children are in good health and attend school: Ana-Maria is in kindergarten and Viorel is at high school. Their grandmother says this is the most important thing - no matter how poor, they have to go to school because it is important for their future. All solutions to this family's dilemma rest upon the payment of the rent arrears: if they could pay their debt they would get the rental contract in their name, then they could apply For the grandfather's medical/retirement benefits and they could ask for other help that the State offers poor families (social financial assistance, help for heating in winter and even food from time to time). The grandparents would get proper medical treatment and the children would have a chance to grow up and be independent.



This family and these children are my neighbours. My name is Clara Kallai from Santana and I work at the Pro Prietenia Arad Foundation, a partner of the British charity The Friendship Foundation (UK – Romania). I meet

the family every day and see their suffering at firsthand - that is why I want to get involved in helping them.

If you want to help them in any way, we will keep you updated about their situation (if you wish) and also provide receipts for all donations. All contributions made to The Friendship Foundation (UK – Romania) will be forwarded on your behalf. No matter how small your contribution might be it will make a difference to this family.

Ways to help the family:

- **give £350 to pay off their rental arrears or make a part payment which will be added to other such donations to meet the full amount,**
- **give £25 per month for food for the family,**
- **give £15 per month to support one of the children in school,**
- **make a one-off contribution towards clothing and/or school articles for the children.**



A footnote from Brian Gregory, Chairman of The Friendship Foundation (UK – Romania):

I have known Clara, the author of this appeal, for the several years she has worked at the Charity centre in Arad, Romania. Amongst other things, Clara was involved in planning the Youth Exchanges between Wales and Romania in 2008 and 2009 and in the Youth Mentoring project that followed the 2009 Exchange. I am pleased to encourage you to give whatever you can afford to relieve the suffering of Clara's neighbours in Santana.

We are a registered charity based in West Yorkshire, and donations by taxpayers may be Gift Aided at no extra cost to themselves. You can download a Gift Aid form from our website www.thefriendshipfoundation.co.uk

The Friendship Foundation (UK – Romania) Reg Charity no. 1130205
Rev Brian Gregory, 9 Strawberry Street, Silsden BD20 0AT
Telephone: 01535 653056