

## **Appeal for drivers, painters; refugee update; Philippines, July 2007**

Apologies for a hiatus in carelink reports.

We're all set to spend August and September working on the home reconstruction in Latvia, aiming to have it ready for use before the snow comes down. Various teams of helpers from the UK and Canada are planning to come over throughout August to assist local brothers and sisters in the work, and anyone able to hold a paintbrush is warmly welcome to come along. In order to keep costs to a minimum it would be efficient to drive over a large van from the UK to Latvia in order to bring over various furniture and fittings which have been promised. Is there anyone interested in doing this? The drive each way would take about 3 days- depending how much you want to rest en route! Please contact us at [info@carelinks.net](mailto:info@carelinks.net) if so.

### **Walls waiting for you to paint**



### **Windowsills waiting to be made**



Recent CCM publicity meetings in Australia and New Zealand, with over 100 attending in Australia and a total of around 140 attending the two events in New Zealand. You can see pictures and download MP3 recordings of the talks at <http://www.carelinks.net/audiotalks/ccmjuly.htm>

We're also delighted to announce that Bro Glyn & Sis Helen Pyper are now our Carelinks representative in New Zealand. Helen has much experience in the areas of dyslexia and hyperactivity amongst children. CCM are aiming to produce a brief guide for brothers and sisters with such children who live in areas where there is little access to medical advice. We aim to produce a short pamphlet and translate it into relevant languages. Anyone with experience in this area or who'd like to contribute their personal experiences can contact us at [info@carelinks.net](mailto:info@carelinks.net)

The situation with our sister Chenoor and other Iranian refugees is about the same- high level meetings have been held with various bodies to plead with the Turkish authorities to let our sister leave Turkey, but she remains depressed and spends most of the day in the apartment obtained for her.

In order to give more insight into the plight of our refugee brethren and sisters, our Sis Esther Worrell visited Bro Abedi and has taken the trouble to write out a description of some of the things he endured; it's viewable at <http://www.carelinks.net/refugeelife.htm> and the text is reproduced below.

Our brothers Steve Jones and Mark Gilbert continue pressing ahead with exciting work on the islands of the Philippines.

The dynamism of the brethren there is contagious, and we reproduce a recent email to share it with you:

>Hi Steve!!

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> We got the money last week. We bought the guitar and 12 Bibles, plus 7

>christian literatures. We'll scan the receipts next week then send the

>jpeg files on email so you can audit the money you sent us.

>

> Our Bible study group is very thankful for the Bibles and the guitar.

>We're planning to begin and end our Bible studies with music, and YYYYYY

>is beginning to learn it. He hopes to lead the woship session in the future

>when he had finally mastered the chords.

>

> We appointed Brother YYYYYY to be the leader of our study group. I assist him

>when he needs some help. We're using the Bible Basics book in our study

>although we still admit that we're having some difficulty on how to make

>the study sessions go smoothly.

>

> We have given some Bible to some of our friends who attended the Bible

>study at XXXXXX hotel even if they're not with us during our Bible

>sessions. SOme of the occupants actually thought we were selling Bibles

>because they were many of them piled on our sudy table! :-)

>

> We'll send you more news about our study group in the following weeks.

>Please pray that God will help us make our study sessions meaningful even

>if we lack the sort of "professional" training.

We should continue to pray for these brave and zealous brethren, surrounded as they are by Islamic elements. We also pray for our bro & sis Mike Flaherty (Pine Rivers ecclesia, Brisbane) who have bravely taken their five children with them to do mission work on a remote island in the Solomons. They're out of communication range for the most part and so our prayers are with them.

## **The Stresses of Refugee Life of Our Brethren – Our Responsibilities**

### **(Sis. Esther Worrell)**

As their brothers and sisters, do we have any involvement in the lives of these brethren?

Continuing my comments on our bro. Abedi's experience, there are certain aspects, in my opinion, on which we should focus. This is what greatly affected our brother's life, and which would affect any normal person who has a sense of responsibility. This aspect is the increasing and ongoing every day stress which the occupants found unbearable – stress caused mainly by the increasing loss of control of their family, and consequent distress at helplessly watching

their disintegration - a burden which confronted them every day. As a result of the spirit of despondency and hopelessness draining them, many people in the camps were dying – from the sheer wretchedness and misery that sapped their energy. Our brother, based on his own experience, feels strongly that we the brethren should take diligent and proactive measures to relieve this kind of suffering. Can we therefore just lightly disregard this matter because of our own busy lives, like the Priest and Levite who walked on the other side of the road to avoid helping the wounded man, or because it is too difficult for us to handle?

Maybe many of us have given this problem serious consideration, but are at a loss as to what action we should take. What, in our little corner can we do to help? Certainly we should do something positive. I've been often asking myself if this is a test that Our Heavenly Father has placed before us to stir us into meaningful service.

Weekly, many of us gather around the Table of Our Lord to commemorate his sacrifice – this amazing act which clearly demonstrates his love for us in rescuing us from the prison and wretchedness of our sinfulness. This love therefore, is the essence, the foundation and bond of our togetherness and fullness, as without this our meeting together in this way is meaningless. We thank him for that great love which prompted him to give his very life in this cause. Jesus wants us to grasp this kind of love, this spirit, and to extend it and carry it on with each other - “A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (John 13: 34, 35 (NIV)).

Our brethren in the camps are in reality experiencing physically the same imprisonment, wretchedness and burden, with which we are contending in our sinful nature, and Jesus our Master has shown us the kind of selflessness that is required to relieve our brethren, even going so much further to give his own life for this. So, what can we do? I find it helps to really think often of what our brethren are going through, by putting myself in their place. When we can relax with the comforts around us, what of our brethren? In so trying to occupy our thoughts this way, we would resort to prayers because of our powerlessness and helplessness in this situation. It is those prayers that will draw us closer to them in love – the love through which Our Heavenly Father will work, using us, on our brethren's behalf.

Recently our ecclesia held a meeting specifically to discuss ways of trying to sponsor a family, relieving them from the terrible situation in which they lived as refugees. One of our brothers, who himself was a refugee, and has since been resettled in Canada, spoke of the terrible predicament of families, who flee to another country seeking refuge from persecution for taking on the saving Name of Christ. His account of the risk of life and the sacrifice they made to be one of Christ really struck us, when we considered how easy we have it in these countries. Many of them were qualified with senior job positions and comfortable homes and material possessions in their countries. They left all to follow Jesus. They have nothing. In the country of refugee, they are forced to depend on brethren for daily support, as they are not allowed to work. The brother who spoke to us was in a managerial position in his home, and now has to start as a labourer in this country, with hopes of working his way up. The most important thing is that he can serve Our Lord and Master without fear of persecution. In this situation, what are our responsibilities towards these worthies, these men and women who have sacrificed all for Christ?

There are others who are still held captives as refugees, not knowing what their future would be, even worse yet facing probable deportation back to their countries where they could be

executed. We can see how vital our prayers are on their behalf, also our action following our prayers.

The brother who addressed us spoke of the enthusiasm, diligence and interest displayed by those sponsoring ecclesias and concerned brethren who have been seeking freedom for our refugee brethren, and the positive and encouraging effect on the authorities responsible for processing the applications of sponsorship. At his interview, he was amazed at their willing response to our efforts in this matter. Above all, our active love and eagerness to help our brethren in distress could be a powerful and convincing proclamation to these authorities in high places, of the spirit of love generated by the Word of God and the gospel we preach.

I would like to call on those who read this circular to urge their ecclesias to consider taking similar steps in this direction. However we must all be prepared to put our all, individually and collectively, into this effort, which must be ongoing and proactive, as we sojourn to the Kingdom. With our prayers everything is possible.

We should not be deterred by the obstacles which can discourage us. I've been reading recently about the rebuilding of the temple in the book of Ezra, the attempts that were made by the governor and their fellow associates to stop this work, their near success of achieving this and God's intervention in turning the events around. Ezra 6: 22 tells us, "For seven days they celebrated with joy the Feast of the Unleavened Bread, because the LORD had filled them with joy by changing the attitude of the king of Assyria, so that he assisted them in the work on the house of God, the God of Israel." God could work likewise in our operation at this present time.

I have often thought of the words of Haggai in Chapter 1 vs. 1 – 11. The people were reproofed for remaining indifferent to the condition of God's house, while they attended to their own houses, even though they were forced by the authorities to stop the building of the temple. It seems to me that the reproof could well have been to direct their attention to their weakness in giving in to the uncircumcised adversaries of God, instead of demonstrating their faith in the unconquerable power of God over any situation, and continuing to do what God required of them. They were admonished to consider their ways.

I was tremendously encouraged by the eagerness and willingness of the brethren who attended that meeting, to consider the question of applying to our Government for permission to sponsor a family who needed to be rescued, also the possibilities of continuing this work on an ongoing basis. May Our Heavenly Father bless us with the faith and strength to work at this, also inspire ecclesias worldwide to join in this project.