

## **BOSNIA AND CENTRAL EUROPE October 2004**

Carelink readers will be aware of our appeal for clothes and drivers in order to support the work of our very active brethren in Sarajevo, Bosnia. The country is still in ruins after the bitter civil war which left hundreds of thousands dead and over half the buildings in the country demolished or badly damaged. Land mines remain a significant threat.



Photo: Bro. A. near his old school- pockmarked with bullet and mortar holes

The brethren in Sarajevo have formed a society which aims to distribute clothes and food to the many needy people in the area. They are in real, coal-face contact with those in need, have no admin costs, and simply do this work as a way to express their own response to God's grace in showing them the Truth. We would earnestly encourage your donations direct to our brethren to enable them to store clothes, transport them to where they are needed, and produce and distribute literature about the Truth to back up the witness which their good works make. For more details please email [sarajevo@carelinks.net](mailto:sarajevo@carelinks.net) .

Sisters Pam and Lindsey gathered a large amount of clothing in Luxembourg, and bravely drove it all to the Czech republic, where we met up outside the home of two local brethren there. We transferred everything from their car to ours, and then spent some time with the local brethren, witnessed the baptism of OLEG there, and then had a joyful breaking of bread.



Photo: Transferring the clothes

Our team then drove onwards down to Sarajevo, calling in on a promising contact in Austria on the way. The spiritual discussions on the long night drives were most encouraging. Crammed up with clothing all around us, we must have discussed about everything, from whether Mary went through a mid life crisis of faith in her Son, to how soon before the Lord returns.

We arrived at last in Sarajevo, after a rather eventful night drive through the mountains between the Croatian border and Sarajevo, stopped frequently by Police and army units. It was a pure joy to rendezvous with our brethren as arranged, outside Sarajevo Post Office.



Photo: Rendezvous in Sarajevo

The brethren had all taken time off, and the first job was to carry all the clothes up 10 flights of stairs to an apartment, where they could be divided up as needed. They'd done an excellent

admin job- they had the exact list of the families to be helped, how many children, of what gender, what special needs there were, e.g. for blankets.



Photo: Dividing the material into relevant sacks or boxes for each family

We were able to participate in visiting two families, both of them nominal Moslems. The first family lived in a typical mountain cluster of houses that had been attacked by rebel units during the war, killing most of the men. They are buried in a small graveyard at the side of the house, as is typical in Bosnia.



Photo: The graves of the menfolk next to the homestead

The remaining women were poorly dressed, and the mother of the children had shoes literally tied together with string. We were able to offer her an almost new pair of decent shoes. Two of her girls gleefully grabbed hold of the shoes we gave them, knelt down and immediately put them on, discarding the inadequate things they had on their feet. The Winter is now coming down, so they really do need warm clothing. Further, they have to walk huge distances up and down the mountain to get to any normal civilization. They walk each day past a disused concentration camp which we were able to photograph.



Photo: The need and the solution- the new shoes given to a woman whose shoes are tied together with string



Photo: Her daughters immediately kneeling down and ripping off their shoes to put on the new ones

This is relevant, direct aid. We journeyed on, joyfully singing, to another even higher village. We had to abandon the car and carry the sacks of clothes further up the mountain, to the home of a woman with 7 children. Clearly these people had never seen such grace in their lives. Our brethren made no attempt to convert them- this was an act of grace. However one suspects that such effort will not go unnoticed by the surrounding society- the newspapers have already

congratulated them on being the most relevant charity in the area. And their good deeds will surely bring others to the truth of Christ.



Photo: Brethren carrying the sacks of clothes after we'd had to abandon the car.

Back down in Sarajevo, it was a delight to discuss Scripture with the brethren, and to see their firm commitment to the great doctrinal truths which they have learnt. They have eagerly spread their new understandings concerning the nature of the Lord Jesus and lack of a trinity, and the true understanding of the devil, to many others. The ecclesia now numbers 5 brethren, there having recently been the baptisms of MUSTAFA and NIKOLA- and all are really on fire for the Truth.



Photo: Sarajevo ecclesia

They are witnessing for the truth of Christ in a hostile environment. Two of them were fired at whilst distributing bills in a Moslem neighbourhood. One sees anti Christian, pro Moslem graffiti on the walls around where they live and witness.



Photo: Anti-Christian, pro-Moslem graffiti

## **RUSSIAN SPEAKERS IN CENTRAL EUROPE**

The CCM remains in contact with many people throughout Central Europe who are earnestly seeking for the Truth of the Father and His Son. We're delighted to report the baptism of VALIA, a Russian speaking young lady in Romania, and OLEG and BOGDAN in Czech. They are encouraged to make contact with the nearest local brethren to them. There are several other promising contacts amongst the large number of Russians, Belarussians and Ukrainians now working in Central Europe. Their lives are often unstable, they remit most of their wages back to help relatives finish school, pay the heating bills, survive the Winter, yet many of them are searching for the Truth.

We ask for your continued prayers for this exciting work. Anyone willing to drive clothes out to Bosnia should please contact us at [info@carelinks.net](mailto:info@carelinks.net) . We really do need assistance with this- the clothes are already donated, we just need drivers. Any donations that can be made direct to those wonderful, love-filled brethren in Sarajevo would also be appreciated. You could send to them direct by Western Union or Moneygram- contact us for more details.