

Kosovo, May 2008

KOSOVO

Our last visit here paved the way for a huge amount of good work done both from afar and by our local brothers. You can read more about Carelinks work in Kosovo at www.carelinkskosovo.org. We enjoyed a further productive trip, taking with us clothes donated by local folk in Latvia as well as from Canada and some T-shirts specially donated from Br John & Sis Valerie Freer.

Our first task was to hear a good confession of faith from A and to baptize her in a hotel bath tub. She and others in the new ecclesia in Kosovo are without their own Albanian Bible- you can see her here reading from an electronic version of the Albanian Bible on our computer. It's all very well urging folk to read the Bible but they do need a Bible in their own language- would any of you be willing to order some Albanian Bibles online and get them shipped direct to Kosovo? If so please let us know at info@carelinks.net and we can give you the address to send to.

We continued our program of delivering food and clothes to those in need. Here we are delivering eggs and other staple foods to a family at the top of a tall apartment block [with no lift]:

D has worked tirelessly with the contacts. We discussed with one young man, FATMIR, and he invited us to his home where we found his mother [pictured below]. She has lost 5 of her menfolk in the war- her husband, father, older son and two brothers. She is herself sick with kidney and stomach problems and we bought her some medication. She has 2 young daughters and 2 older sons. She receives 130 Euros / month to feed, house and clothe them all, as well as to buy medicines. She has Bible Basics in Albanian and we are hopeful the Gospel will make an impact with her, she's a lovely person. Far from the coffee bars of Prishtina, conflict is still rife in parts of Kosovo- one only has to stand on the street of Mitrovica or Gracanica to observe the NATO patrols every 5 minutes and armoured escorts of Serb children to school. We found Fatmir's older brother had recently been attacked and badly stabbed in his leg. The whole family live in one tiny room with two divans where somehow all 5 of them sleep. This really is abject poverty. They'd not been able to afford to get him medical attention, and had been advised to bandage the wound with fresh bread to stop the bleeding [bread from within a fresh loaf is at least clean]. This they had done. The family stood at the bedside praying to God and not knowing what to do.



Cindy's medical training came into play here, although she didn't have the equipment to insert stitches we got to a chemist and bought hydrogen peroxide and some bandages to replace the rags they used to tie the bread onto the wound with. The poor guy was in quite some agony, tugging wildly at a cord in his pain, and his little sisters cheered him on as Cindy did her best to clean the wound and bind it better:



You can see a very poor video of Cindy's noble efforts, doing the best with what she had, at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NEMmV8dG-yo> .

We felt we had made a truly good Samaritan witness to this very poor, previously Moslem family. In addition to FATMIR we also were pleased to baptize VETON, who dropped out of school with chronically weak eyesight, aggravated by malnutrition. Cindy was able to give him some basic sight tests and other diagnostics and we'll try to get him appropriate attention, medication and spectacles. Truly "to the poor the Gospel is preached". The good news of the coming Kingdom is really so needed and appreciated by these new brothers.



We reported in a previous report of the family of Tefic, whose wife died and left him with 4 children to raise, despite his own significant health problems. They have a huge unpaid electricity bill, resulting in their power being cut off, and he had tried to hotwire a connection to the mains cable- and electrocuted himself, leaving him with a swollen, scarred hand. We gave the family significant help with food and clothes, but the greatest joy was to baptize TEFIC, along with two of his daughters, MIMOZA and AGNESE.



We had clothes donated from Canada, Latvia and a large load of T Shirts from Br John & Sis Valeriee Freer in the UK. Here we are distributing them to the girls, with Sis Mimoza adjusting her new blouse. In the left hand picture you can see one of the many photos of their late mother on the cupboard:



The young people were enthralled by computer presentations we showed them. Cindy showed the girls how to make a cake using an Australian recipe; it was sad to see the motherless girls, making their own hair dye, trying to pierce each others' ears, doing usual teenage things but with so little money and no mother. We presented the family with a quilt loving knitted by sisters in NSW, Australia as a sign of our abiding love and concern for them:



With Br Tefic earning a pittance doing cleaning jobs, they really have little cash. We bought 100 kg. of flour and loaded it up in our jeep- this again was the hand of providence, because we'd hired a small car but the car hire company gave us a 4x4 jeep as they had no other vehicle. This turned out ideal for transporting the flour. There is a bakery which bakes bread free for the very poor people, if flour is provided. So here's Br Tefic taking one of the sacks of flour into the bakery. The girls can go there and get four loaves of bread every day for at least a month. This seems a great way of ensuring that our needy ones have at least bread.



We give thanks that God's grace- the grace He wishes to lavish upon us throughout the ages of eternity- has produced such a response in Kosovo. Yet humanly, none of this would've been possible without your generous support and prayers; and we do ask that they both continue. We would be eager to here from any who'd like to accompany us on our next visit to Kosovo or to consider spending a longer period there leading the ecclesia which has developed and maybe running the 'Improve your English through reading the Bible' course. And please do especially consider our appeal for Bibles for Kosovo.

With love from your brothers and sisters of CCM