

Myanmar, China, Latvia June 2009

MYANMAR

A brother whom we baptized earlier this year in Myanmar, Suum Pi, has travelled to the Irrawaddy Delta area which was decimated by Cyclone Nargis last year. The devastation was under-reported by the military Junta governing Burma, but Western estimates of the final death toll are between 150,000 and 400,000, with 3 million homeless and mass destruction of infrastructure. Suum Pi reports that the only way to get around some of the areas was by chartering boats. He distributed literature and held meetings with his contacts there. He didn't baptize anyone this time but did manage to teach a number of people, and is hopeful he may be able to baptize some on a future visit. In the photos, Suum Pi is the one in the red shirt and blue jacket. He also met a number of orphans and others in need of assistance. Seeing Western aid groups are severely limited by the ruling Government, this is an amazing entrance for us into another area where the true Gospel is going for the first time. Just amazing how the Truth is spreading- an honour to be part of the process.



Giving some small aid to orphans:



With Bible contacts:



Travelling by boat:

CHINA

We continue getting great response from our brethren's preaching here, and we continue to follow our policy of empowering them to follow up. Brother Feng made good use of the Chinese Dragon Boat Festival in Guangzhou to meet up with others who had travelled there for the festival- it's a major event in China. He was able to meet our contact LAN and baptize him. Brother Feng reports: " I ordered a room at the east train station in Guangzhou, but there are no bath in the hotel, so Lan and I went to a big sauna nearby and I baptized him as he wished in the sauna. it is a public one, which means people inside are not allowed to take photos, sorry! Before the process of baptism, I asked him to answer some question of the *Bible Basics* and we read Romans chapter 6 together".



LATVIA

We're delighted to report the baptisms of a married couple, IVAN and ANGELA,

and also MARIA and then PAVEL, ILGUNIS and GENOVIEFA. These are all in Riga, and we can say we are seeing a huge upsurge of interest here, especially in the wake of the economic disaster affecting the country. Some of the poorer people are turning to God very seriously.

Pensioners benefits have been severely reduced, and pensions just don't cover basic food needs let alone medicines, clothes and utilities payments.

Sister Genoviefa is an invalid who used to live at the women's shelter. The conditions are so bad there that she tried her best to get out. So, she clubbed together with two other pensioners, Pavel and Ilgunis, and between them they manage to rent a room- literally, a room- in a very run down and crumbling apartment block. She's scarcely mobile and has bandaged her right arm tightly to relieve the awful pain in her bones. She was given a Bible by one of our sisters in the women's shelter, and has been reading this each day for as long as her weak sight allows her. She's also been learning the Gospel, and given that she and the two invalid men are living together in about 15 square meters, sleeping on chair-sofas, it's inevitable they spend their time talking with each other- especially about hope for the future and resurrection. After 18 months, they now reached readiness for baptism and it was our joy to baptize the three of them. They are all of limited mobility, Genoviefa is hardly mobile, so the men collect her pension for her. They too are weak, and the three of them are currently suffering an outbreak of scabies [see photo below] because of the poor hygiene in that tiny room. They've shaved themselves but the problem persists. They have no medical attention, so Cindy's doing what she can for them.



Genoviefa sits like this for most of the day with her Bible on her lap, reading as often as she can. Note how close is the 'bed' next to her, and there's another such bed the other side of that one, too:



Talk about "the hope of the Kingdom". It really is, just as it is for our dear brother Leonid whom we've mentioned in recent Carelinks [he's pretty weak just lately, but keeps saying he's looking forward to the Kingdom].

The block they live in is just terrible. It's a hangout for drug addicts, alcoholics and prostitutes. One can't safely enter it in the evenings or at night. The graffiti of the drug abusers is in English, so you can see what kind of a place it is- we took this photo in the stair well:



Note the red hammer and sickle [symbol of Soviet Communism] sprayed there too. There's quite a resurgence of this, given the failure of capitalism in the eyes of many poorer people. These 3 pensioners literally barricade themselves in to their room after 5 p.m. The toilet is in the corridor, so they have to use pans etc., contributing to the smell and terrible hygiene in the room.

We keep asking for your prayers, but please do pray for them and know that these are very genuine cases of need.

With love from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks