

Winter Heating Update 4 Jan. 2006

We mentioned briefly in the last message the severe temperatures that have descended upon parts of Eastern Europe, in many places breaking all known records, with temperatures of - 50 centigrade recorded in some places. In several towns states of emergency were declared, schools and shops closed etc. This has severely affected our brethren and sisters; you can think of them in prayer over the following issues:

- The elderly and children with breathing problems [it's hard to breathe at those super low temperatures]
- The difficulty of those in rural areas having to go out and gather firewood
- The problem of keeping a room warm
- The problem for the elderly of having to walk over very slippery ice in order to go and get their pensions, mail, shopping
- Those who work outside [e.g. brethren on building sites, sisters who work in the markets or selling things on the street] who aren't able to work or who have very few customers
- Those in the towns who live in Soviet era blocks have experienced many broken pipes, resulting in the blocks being poorly heated, and there's little any individual can do about this.
- Those who have heart and other problems aggravated by extreme cold who need medical and hospital care but find it hard to pay for it.

Thanks to your generosity we are running around trying to do what we can to assist, but the distances are huge. We've spent a lot of time over the past week running around collecting pensions for old sisters, and visiting some who have been hospitalized.



Sisters Cindy and Irma visiting our beloved Sister Vija,, hospitalized in a very dirty hospital with heart problems. It was pretty cold even in there due to burst pipes- note how Cindy and Irma are fully dressed even inside a hospital ward.

We spent some time with Sis Anita, whose two children are suffering collapsed lungs because of the cold. The temperature in their apartment is only + 6, because of burst pipes. This means they wear heavy clothes all the time. Anita said the girls cry at night because it is just too cold to sleep. They are all sleeping together in the same bed to try to keep warm. This month they spent all their earnings on medicines, so we were able to help them with buying food, paying the heating bill for last month, buying an electric heater, and promising to pay the electric bill. We conducted the ecclesial breaking of bread at their flat, all huddled up together around the bread and wine. They continue trying to weave scarves on their loom, and we are always looking for agents who can sell them. The electric heater was good, just takes a lot of electricity, which is now relatively expensive in the Baltics with the EU insisting the Soviet era nuclear power station is closed [because it is leaking radiation]. So they have some warmth, food, and we also gave them some warmer clothes.



Food on the table for the first time for a while



The new heater installed in the room where the loom is they use to weave scarves for sale [note how many layers of clothing Anita is wearing]



Cold children getting more clothes [they have been wearing coats and hats around the house]



Breaking bread together

This is just one of many such cases. Please do continue to support the Winter heating appeal. The heating bills for January, which most people will have to pay in February, will be very high.

We had a pleasant surprise however on Sunday night. There is a sister in the ecclesia who works long hours waashing and ironing table cloths for a big hotel in Riga. She mentioned to others there the work we're doing and how she had given her own spare clothes to us for distribution. The management heard of it, and have donated us bags of clothes which were left in rooms by guests and never claimed. So, we were invited to go and collect several bags of high quality clothes for distribution!

We've also heard from Bro Mostafa of Bosnia. Obviously it's too cold to run the chicken project, and he's again not been paid his wages from the coal mine where he works. His wife has also just given birth to their first child, so they're in a real bad way. We've sent some funds to assist them.

A team of CCM brethren in Australia led by Br Joel Pickering (Melbourne) have put together a self-help initiative involving providing a washing machine to sisters able to do laundry for others and thus secure an income. At present we're looking for appropriately placed needy sisters who might like to consider this project. You can read about it at <http://www.carelinks.net/laundry.htm> . It's part of our ongoing desire to provide those in need with a fishing rod rather than a fish, i.e. to empower them to become self-supporting.

Please do remember all in your prayers
With love to all

Your brothers and sisters of CCM

STOP PRESS

Here are some ways you might consider helping our various projects:

- We're re-writing Bible Basics, and want to take out all references made from the KJV and

replace them with quotations from a modern version. Are there any volunteers to help in this?
Contact us at info@carelinks.net

- We have more people in Latvia willing to attend our English language seminars about the Gospel of Mark than we can teach. Would anyone prayerfully consider coming out to spend say 6 months with us running the seminars in English? Likely if someone dedicated themselves to this project they could run seminars in other towns in Latvia too. Please contact Duncan & Cindy if you're interested- cindy@apollo.lv