

# THE ROMANIA REPORT

February 2009



## Contents

### The Essentials of the Church



### Prayer Requests



### Romanian Orphan Choir Tour



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## The Essentials of the Church

What are some of the essential traits of the true church? The Church of the 21st century must have these inherited characteristics found in the historical confessions. The first one is unity. A unity of all believers, not an ecumenical movement, but a unity of spirit, the Spirit of Christ. The second mark of the Church is holiness; this is the crown of the Church in every age. The third mark is its universal existence. It is universal in its character. It has the same character all over the world because it is based on the Holy Scriptures. We are people called out to live the Word, all over the world. People of all cultures, races, nations, and gender make up the true Church. For this reason the Church is stronger, diverse, and colorful. The Church does not belong to any privileged group. It is for all who hear and are drawn to the Gospel. We belong to the Church simply by the Grace of God. The fourth mark of the Church is its apostolicity. One aspect of this mark has to do with the continuity in the apostolic tradition. The Christian message is not whatever anyone decides. We are the inheritors of the apostolic message



Alina receives love and care as part of our Foster Care Ministry

and its tradition. The second distinction of apostolicity is the perpetual need to find new voices to continue the spread of the Gospel. The apostle is one sent forth with a message,

Calvary Chapel Oradea, our new church plant





Georgiana, sharing the love of Christ with Gypsy children

not aimlessly but with definite purpose and mission.

One last mark of the Church that does not appear in the historical confessions, but is prominent in the Holy Scriptures is the mark of suffering of the church. Martin Luther, the reformer, made it an essential mark of the true church. Without it, *“all the traditional marks would be considered worthless and void”*. Why is this last mark so important and indispensable? Primarily because suffering is the condition of God’s world. To love God is to love a suffering world and to be involved in its suffering. If we claim we have the love of Christ in our hearts, we can not let our circumstances sideline us to only witness to this suffering. We must be personally involved. It is the Way of the Cross, the theologians call it, *“passio Christi”* (passion of the Christ). We have to be involved in the *“divine pathos”*. This is the main reason our church from the United States sent us to Romania as missionaries. We were sent to help suffering children, poor and needy people. We are here to show them the love of God

and to love them in His Name. We are here to be involved personally in their suffering and to bring them to salvation through the preaching of the Gospel.

We didn’t know what the future had in store for us before we came here. We are not called to predict the future. We are here by His grace to influence the future of these precious children and people. We are here with the host of other believers being willing to lose our lives for the sake of Him that gave His life on our behalf. In giving out His love, we give life and find life.

To this partnership in suffering and service I am inviting you to join Pathway to Joy, so that together we can show the world the mark of the True Church. Thank you so much for your consideration and love, for your prayers and sacrificial giving in this great endeavor.

Because of Him,

*Cornel & Karen Bucur*



Romanian Orphan Choir



Gypsy kids playing on the foundation of the Education Ministry Center in Sabolciu

## Prayer Requests

- † Calvary Chapel Oradea – our new church plant
- † The evangelistic outreach in Sabolciu and Tinca
- † New funding for our foster care ministry, as we lost a major financial partner for this project in January.
- † PTJM staff, volunteers, foster parents, ministry partners
- † Funding and prayer support for our ministry throughout 2009

## Romanian Orphan Choir Tour

A few months ago we decided to start an orphan children’s choir and tour the US to make the plight of the Romanian orphan children known to larger audiences. With the help of the churches that support our ministry we set up the tour and will be traveling to the US according to this schedule:

- March 27-April 2—Atlanta, GA
- April 3-April 6—St. Petersburg, FL
- April 7-April 20—Ft. Lauderdale, FL
- April 21-April 27—Old Bridge, NJ

Please pray for more ministry opportunities, for the necessary papers to travel, and for safety.