



# Hand of **HELP**

*The Truth for Today*



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BLESSINGS

# Great & Small



BLESSINGS  
*Great & Small*



Seeing as with each passing month another ministry or organization that had previously operated in Romania is shutting its doors for good, we have numerous reasons to be thankful to God for His many blessings whether great or small.

For us at least, the staff here at the Hand of Help orphanage, the greatest blessing is that every one of our children is healthy, and we've almost traversed yet another year wherein there have been no major health issues, and no accidents. As is the case with any family, especially one as large as ours, we've had our shares of runny noses, coughs, sniffles, scraped knees, and one case of chickenpox that we were thankfully able to isolate before it spread to the other children, but all in all we are ever grateful to God for keeping us under the shadow of His wing and protecting us.

Ask any parent and they will tell you that having a healthy child is a great blessing in and of itself, so having over eighty healthy children is an outright miracle.

As is the case every year during this time, we have been busy preparing for winter, from storing potatoes and other root vegetables, to canning those vegetables that would not keep without preservation, to testing the heating system and making sure that every room will have sufficient heat during the cold months. Although it might not surprise you to read this, there is a lot of work that goes into making sure everything runs smoothly, and that the transition from the warm months to the cold months goes off without complication. To that end, we've also had to inspect all the children's winter boots and winter coats to make sure that they still fit, since many of them are experiencing growth spurts, and those that no longer fit got passed down to someone else.

Since we have always been, and continue to be as one big family, we were also blessed to take part in

Monica Hulai's wedding, one of our own who had been with us for many years, as well as see some of the other children who have long since gone on to have families of their own come and share in this special day.

With the arrival of the container we have also been busy distributing blankets to the elderly, and the look in their eyes when they receive this unexpected gift is a blessing all on its own. Although a blanket might seem like an insignificant item to some, to an elderly person who can scarcely afford to buy a loaf of bread every couple of days, it is nothing less than a godsend. Small blessings are still blessings, and those to whom we reach out, those whom we help recognize them for what they are. Our food distribution has also grown as more and more families find themselves without any sort of income due to the father losing their job in the flailing economy, and we are thankful to God that we have been able to meet the need and be a blessing in due season.

None of these things would be possible without your prayers and support of this work, and we thank you wholeheartedly for continuing to stand with us, and for being a blessing to those who are suffering and in need. May the God who sees all, richly reward you for your obedience in all things.

In His Grace,  
Hand of Help Staff





## A BLESSING *for Costica*

It's hard enough being orphaned or worse still at least from a psychological standpoint, abandoned at a young age, and having to grow up in an group home, even one as accommodating, welcoming and sheltering as the Hand of Help orphanage. It is doubly difficult if you suffer some sort of physical handicap or physical scarring that is readily seen even by the most unobservant of individuals. Although the emotional scars of having been abandoned or orphaned are more readily hidden or otherwise camouflaged, physical scars are difficult to hide, and they are something that can keep a child from developing socially, interacting with their peers, or forming healthy emotional attachments to other individuals.

Costica Lupusoru has been living at the Hand of Help orphanage along with his sister Madalina for three years, and not long ago he turned nine. The children were abandoned by their father and soon after their mother likewise abandoned them, the mental issues she suffered from making her incapable of caring for her offspring. For a while

they went to live with relatives, but soon enough the relatives, no longer able to care for them either, called child services, and they were brought to us.

Years prior to Costica coming to the Hand of Help orphanage, he suffered an incident which left him without a finger and with severe scarring. The staff here has done their best to steer Costica away from being self-conscious about his scarred hand, but regardless of how much they've tried, and the methods they employed, he still has a hard time interacting with the staff and the other children. Early on, Costica had secluded himself from the glances around him, and though he has come out of his shell somewhat, he is still hesitant when interacting with the other children.

The local doctors told us that there was nothing that could be done, but I found this hard to believe as the scar tissue was clearly holding back the growth and development of his left arm.

Each time I would run into Costica at the orphanage, the image of his scarred hand and the way he attempted to obscure it from view would

stay with me for days on end, until I finally decided to contact the plastic surgeon who operated on my leg after my car accident to get a second opinion.

I explained the situation to him, told him of the severe scarring, and the fact that Costica's limb was not growing as it should because of it, and after seeing some pictures, not only did the doctor say that a procedure could be done, he offered to do the surgery free of charge. I never expected this surgeon to make such a generous offer, since he is one of the best in the country, but God stirs the hearts of men to do noble things, and this was one of those instances.

I believe that Costica's entire outlook on life can change due to this procedure, since the surgeon says he can radically minimize the scarring as well as separate the fused fingers in his hand.

Please pray for Costica's upcoming surgery, and that all the needs for his treatment and recovery are met.

In Jesus,  
Daniel Boldea



EVERYONE

# A Giver



permission to put on a bake sale, the proceeds from which would go to the senior citizen center.

Nothing could have made us happier, seeing that our children had been listening throughout the years, and not only that, they were now ready to step up and in their own way help someone else in need. Having given them our blessing and full support, what started out as a bake sale, quickly spiraled into offering arts and crafts, preserves, fresh fruits and vegetables from

our greenhouse, pastries, cookies and cakes.

If any of the children needed help they asked for it,

Being charitable, feeling empathy for others, reaching out to the hurting are all things that are learned, and therefore must be taught. Ever since we opened our doors, we have strived to teach our children that truly it is more blessed to give than to receive, and that in lending a helping hand to someone we are living out the life of Christ in a practical way. It would seem our children took to the message, since of their own volition they decided to do something selfless for someone else, namely a senior citizen center in town that had just made it known they did not have any money to buy food and vegetables for the winter season.

After getting together all on their own and etching out a plan, they chose a representative who approached one of the directors and asked



but not one of them expected the adults to do the work on their behalf. And so, one group went to the kitchen staff who taught them how to make preserves and jams, put them in jars and sealed them, another group went to our resident carpenter who taught the children how to make small trinkets and ornaments, another group learned to bake cookies, cakes and pastries, and another went to pick vegetables then go about cleaning them.

Every group was enthused about their project, and each day after school the children would break off in their reassigned unit and go about preparing that which they would sell. It was only on the day of the sale that we realized just how much our children had done, and how much effort they had put in.

After it was over, and they tallied up what they had earned from the crafts, the cookies, the cakes, the pastries and the preserves, we broke the news to them that we would match whatever they had brought in, then go to the senior citizen center and deliver the money together. Seeing the seniors react to the children, it seemed they were as excited about the company as they were about the fact that we had brought them enough money to see them through the winter as far as food was concerned.

We rejoice, not only because we were able to help feed a group of individuals that would have otherwise gone without, but also because our children have learned to give, whether of themselves, their time, or their resources for the betterment of others less fortunate than themselves. Not all learn this valuable lesson in life, but those who do are blessed, fulfilled, and fruitful.

In His Grace,  
Hand of Help Staff



# Hands That Serve





TO

# Family & Friends



For the last four weeks we have been here at the Hand of Help orphanage. We, (JoAnna and Melody) have come to be with the children and to help prepare for winter. The cellar has to be stocked here, and now holds three tons of potatoes. Soon cabbages and carrots will be added; enough to see the orphanage through the winter.

The Hand of Help orphanage currently has 80 children from ages 3-18. During the school year their time is more structured; some of the children walk to school around 7:30 and return at 1:00 pm, and some go in the afternoon and are home by 8:00 pm. In the afternoon they have study hall and some free time just to be kids. This is actually the largest Christian orphanage operating in all of Romania. They have met every regulation that the Romanian government has put forth, and are very well respected.

We have started a new project here – teaching music! Currently we do not have any instruments, so if any of you have outgrown instruments that you are no longer using we would be blessed to put them to use!

In the meantime, the children are learning how to read notes and rhythm. They are split up into small

groups, this allows for more effective teaching. Every group meets once a week; we are now on our third week of class. Perhaps someday we will have a small band, but all in His time.

A big job while we are here is praying for the inner healing of the children. We have witnessed, over the years, how many have slowly changed as the Lord penetrates their heart.

Even though there are many children and lots of noise at times – there is a

peace in this place that only the Lord can bring.

In the fall much work is done in the surrounding villages taking care of widows and very poor families. We made food packages which consist of: flour, oil, sugar, rice, noodles, biscuits, local Romanian seasoning, tomato paste, tea, liver pate, 4 kilos of cheese, dry beans and margarine. Praise God, along with a food package each family also receives money to purchase firewood. This year Hand of Help had a project to give widows and needy families a blanket. These blankets were also distributed along with packages. We have been knitting scarves and hats as well.

Since we've already been to visit thirty families, we want to tell you about a few of the families we've visited, and some of the experiences we've had.

Two cows were given to two separate families; nine children each! This will give them milk, cheese, sour cream and butter. A cow is an enormous treasure! The first cow is 'Joianna'. She is eight years old and very manageable. This family built a little room onto their house where Joianna will spend the winter. They have feed stocked up for her and a pasture in the back for her to graze.

'Gypsy' the second cow who is black and white, is pregnant, and will have her calf in a month. She found a home with the Popinciuc family. They were so blessed to receive this animal; the mother couldn't stop smiling the whole time! She was so excited to have this cow to help feed her family, she was waiting at the gate for our arrival.

We were also able to bless this family with a washing machine. The father came in later from working in the field. I saw tears in his eyes as we prayed a prayer of thanksgiving. Food packages and two bags of clothes were left here, but we also noticed they were in need of shoes as well.

Money is also given to some village churches to buy firewood, as wood is their source of heat. In one village, they don't have a building so the church meets in a small room. However, this room is not large enough to hold everyone at once, so they take turns coming to meetings.

This last Saturday we spent a day visiting families that have disabled children. One family had seven out of eight children mentally handicapped. They are all grown now and all still live at home. Their parents provide the most loving care. We visited five families total this day – each with at least one handicapped child. We saw this in all the parents; they had a Christ like attitude of love 24/7. Amazing! Some of the children

couldn't walk or talk. As we entered each house we saw that each child had different kinds of handicaps. This trip marked us, and we rode home in silence.

During this trip we also met Viorica, and want to take some time to share her story. Viorica is a 79 year old widow who has given birth to seven children, three of which were born with disabilities. She lost one of her disabled children, then last year another son drowned.

As we were sitting there visiting, one of the daughters, about thirty years old, came out of the bedroom scooting herself along the floor with her hands, and as she reached us she looked up and said, 'Pacea Domnului' (the peace of the Lord.)

Viorica tenderly cares for her two children left at home. Looking at her no one would guess she is 79 years old. When we mentioned this to her she simply replied, 'only the hand of God gives me strength.'

We brought a food package to two elderly women who live alone, Maria who is now 87, and Eugenia who is 81 years old. I have been visiting them for the last five years. Five years ago Eugenia had had a stroke and was in a coma. She was in such a critical state that the doctor told the minister not to leave town. Maria



took excellent care of her sister, and with the help of the Lord Eugenia is now able to walk and sit up. During our visit Eugenia even spoke a few sentences, praise God!

When we arrived, Maria was out in her garden. It is amazing that at 87 years of age she is still planting and harvesting a large garden. This is one of my favorite places to go. These godly women live in a small house, (doll house really) which has an entry way that doubles as a kitchen and one room; they keep everything immaculate. People from the nearby church come and split wood for them. Both these sisters have a big heart for the Lord, and give their all for Him, some years ago having given their family land to the local believers to build a church on it.

In a neighboring village we met the Cirdei family. When we arrived, the children were busy with chores outside, the little ones herding the chickens in the yard. In 2007 the



mother died of cancer, leaving her husband with nine children. Eight of the children are 5-12 years of age, and the oldest is now 25. At first when I saw the Cirdei family's oldest daughter, I thought she was the mother.

Nicoleta has taken up the role of being a mom to these children; dedicating her life to raising her brothers and sisters. This is a beautiful family and their love for each other is evident.

Three of the children have cleft palates, both the five year old twins, as well as an older brother. They have each undergone surgery but will need further help, and possibly additional surgery. With all the people we have visited, Daniel Boldea was the one who was with us on this day. Nothing happens by accident. Since Daniel is a dentist, he was able to assess their mouths and take pictures of each to send in to a professional. We are looking into what can be done for them.

We dropped by the home of Dina Popa, a thirty year old mother of five. Dina has four boys and one girl, and her husband abandoned her some time ago. Regardless of the hardships, Dina has a beautiful heart, and she is praising God in her situation. We were able to leave her a food package, money for wood, and two grain sacks full of clothes. After our time of prayer together we came away praising the Lord for Dina and how she is adjusting to her situation.

The first person I ever visited five years ago was Gabi. She is a widow who lives in a house that needs a lot of repair. She spends most of her day interceding. She seems so happy whenever we come. Even though it is a steep incline to her home, she does go up and down to go to church, so she does have some contact with other people.

She loves to speak of the Lord's return. I remember the first time I went, I looked at her barn and thought it was going to fall down on us any minute. It's still standing five years later. She always greets us with a radiant smile showing one tooth. We

had heard that she needed a bed, and when we asked her about it she said, 'give the money to someone poorer than me.' This really touched our hearts, and the next week we went back taking her a mattress.

Praise God! A young man who had been working in Italy came back home to marry his sweetheart. Before the wedding, Benjamin, had repented of his sins and wanted to be baptized. This, being so short notice had to be done in a large tub in the orphanage laundry room. Here the twelve of us gathered among the clothes and washing machines to witness a brother's desire to walk closely with the Lord. Michael Boldea Sr., who is the minister at the church and oversees the daily operation of the orphanage, performed the service. Melody played the violin, and Nicu the guitar. It was such a sweet, special time in the basement.

One of the dearest homes we were in was the home of the Gradinariu family here in south Botosani. So full of the Lord; there was such peace in that place it stayed with us for days. The father worked for a Christian company that went under, and he has not been able to find other employment. They have 11 children, nine of which are still at home. Because of her outstanding grades, the oldest daughter who is still at home was offered a full ride scholarship to attend college in another town. However, she could not accept it because the scholarship did not include money for room and board, and there was no way for her to acquire it. As we sat there, the mother

explained that she loved school as a child, but was only able to attend until the eighth grade. She vowed to help her children go beyond what she had learned. A food package was left for this family as well. The father said, 'your visit is an answer to prayer', as we parted ways. We praise God for these brothers and sisters.

In Tudor Vladimirescu, a village about two hours from Botosani, we stopped in to see the Solcan family. Mariana, the mother greeted us in the Lord. Her husband and some of the children were in the fields harvesting corn when we arrived. They have eight boys and one girl. This family has many needs. The father has tuberculosis, the kitchen is unfinished, there are no windows upstairs, and the foundation of their house needs repair. However, with all these needs they continue on. This is a very hard working family, and Mariana has a large and meticulous garden with which she is able to feed her family. It warms our heart to see someone trying, and being faithful with what the Lord has given them.

This was just a glimpse of what the Lord has done here in Romania this fall.

Blessings,  
JoAnna and Melody



# Babel Unraveling

History continues to repeat itself because man is utterly and hopelessly unoriginal. We possess about as much originality as jackals do social graces, and so, even though the small details might differ from generation to generation, at the heart, and the root of our actions, at the basic level and foundation of our undertakings we are our ancestors, those of old whom we so readily dismiss as backward, unthinking brutes who had no purpose other than their own survival.

Admittedly the tower we have attempted to erect is not as the tower of Babel in antiquity. Instead of brick and mortar we have chosen to use other materials but the underlying desire for building our own version of the tower is the same as those of old.

Today our brick is excess, and our mortar is independence from God. We have built and hurriedly so within the past few years, and with each brick we lay, with each pestle of mortar we lather on our self-importance only grows, and what we only dared to think in the dark of night concerning being the masters of our own destiny we now declare openly for all who would hear.

'See, we have done this! It is we who have built and erected, it is we who have progressed and achieved, God is an antiquated concept to which we offer undue glory and undeserved thanks. It was never Him, it was always us.'

We have come to convince ourselves that not only could we achieve the greatest nation the world has ever known in and of our own prowess, but that we could maintain it for generations to come. We glibly told ourselves that the hardest part was behind us, that the difficult part was the building of this society, this nation, this ideal, this democracy, and maintaining it would be a walk in the park, a piece of cake, something that could be accomplished in our spare time and without much effort.

In the throes of hubris and our own self-importance

we chose to dismiss and discount the lessons history would teach us, that it is in fact much more difficult to maintain an empire than to build one, that every empire that has existed since the beginning of history had a zenith then a decline, or that the downfall of every empire began with the downfall of morality and the destruction of family.

'Others may have made those mistakes in the past, but we are wiser and more evolved, we will not repeat the mistakes of the ancients, we will ascend and ascend until we pierce the heavens, then go a bit further for good measure.'

Alas our Babel is unraveling, and the cracks in the edifice we've erected are already too deep and too pronounced to ignore. The God we thought was just a figment of our imagination, the God we thought we could forget, ignore and declare our independence from wasn't sleeping after all, He was not on vacation or busy with other things, but in His infinite goodness, mercy and patience He waited to see whether we would perhaps awaken from our self-delusion and seek His face once more.

Instead of turning our hearts toward God however, we have accelerated the pace with which we are attempting to wipe clean the very memory of Him, we have accelerated the pace with which we glory in perversion and mock and scorn and abuse those who would cling to Him, who would worship Him, who would serve Him, and who would follow after His precepts.

As our Babel unravels there are some who insist that the remedy is to use more mortar, to further and in more violent ways declare our independence from God, because only when we are rid of Him for good, only when all those who still serve Him are thoroughly silenced can our Babel remain standing.

Little do they know that all it took for our Babel to come crumbling back to earth, all that it took for all that

we built to disintegrate before our very eyes was for the God they scorn and mock and reject to remove His hand of blessing and protection from upon our nation.

What we are seeing is neither wrath nor judgment, it is not an angry God doling out justice with righteous indignation, these have not as yet commenced. All we are seeing presently is the removal of blessing, the removal of favor, the removal of protection, and the removal of peace.

When judgment comes and wrath is poured out it will be another matter entirely.

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DEAR

# Brethren

Since we have come upon that time of year wherein we consider the many things we ought to be thankful for, I thought it appropriate that in my letter to you we would discuss thankfulness, and how we go about having a grateful heart. Although more could be written on the topic, I've decided to limit myself, and break down the process of coming to that place wherein we are thankful and grateful to God for His many blessings into three steps.

I have often wondered, if only to myself what makes some individuals perpetually unthankful and ungrateful, always searching for more of this world, coveting everything their neighbors possess while simultaneously declaring to all who would hear that they themselves have nothing, and what makes others thankful and content with the blessings God has already bestowed upon them.

I have had the privilege of knowing thankful people throughout my life, those who perhaps were not what we would consider 'blessed' from a worldly perspective, but who were rich in the Lord, and I have also had the misfortune of knowing ungrateful and unthankful individuals who having more possessions than the average person still considered themselves stricken, underwhelmed with the bountiful blessings that God bestowed upon them on a daily basis.

So how do we come to have a grateful heart? How

can we be thankful to God for the little things, the things we take for granted, or the things we feel as though we are entitled to?

The first step toward having a grateful or a thankful heart is to recognize the dangers of being unthankful and ungrateful.

Romans 1:20-21, "For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts and their foolish hearts were darkened."

Yes, there is a danger in having an ungrateful and unthankful heart, because these are not destinations in and of themselves, but road signs toward becoming futile in our thoughts, and having darkened hearts. Being unthankful, being ungrateful are symptoms of an underlying disease that turns men's hearts away from God once it reaches maturity.

When we do not acknowledge that all things come from God, we begin to believe that it is by our ingenuity, prowess, excellence or will that we've accomplished, achieved or accumulated all that we have in this present life, and so we no longer glorify God, nor are thankful toward Him. Our thoughts become futile, we start believing that we



can readily declare our independence from God without consequence, that we can turn our backs on Him without any aftereffect, and so our hearts are darkened, and professing to be wise we become nothing more than fools.

There is a strength that comes from the constant acknowledgement and recognition that God is the source of all blessing, there is a strength that comes from having a grateful and thankful heart, and in the difficult days ahead, this knowledge and certainty that God is in control will keep us from growing fearful, uncertain or reactionary like much of the world will be.

If God is my provider, what have I to fear? If God is my provision, what have I to worry about? It is from His hand that all blessing comes, and knowing that He is a good Father I know that He will provide.

The second step toward having a thankful or grateful heart is learning to thank God for the little things, those things we take for granted or overlook on a daily basis.

One of the greatest examples of a thankful heart, even when being thankful wasn't easy, was Job. Here is a man who had everything, then lost everything, and eventually ended up sitting in the midst of some ashes, scraping himself with a potsherd, and it is at this lowest moment of his existence that his wife comes to him not only mocking his integrity, but encouraging him to curse God and die.

Job 2:10, "But he said to her, 'you speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?' In all this Job did not sin with his lips."



Here was a man who understood that all things come from God, and whether blessing or adversity there is a higher purpose than what we can presently see. In all that he endured, Job did not sin with lips, he did not sin against God because he had a thankful heart, he had a grateful heart and he understood that the source of all he'd had and lost was not in himself, but rather in the God that he served.

The third step toward having a thankful or grateful heart is to understand and perceive the ways in which God uses adversity and difficulty to grow us spiritually.

Admittedly this is the most difficult step of all, because none of us like adversity, and in the midst of it, it is difficult to see the plan of God, but we must believe with all our heart that God has a plan nevertheless. Yes, in our adversity, in our hardship, in our lack, God has a plan, He sees beyond today into tomorrow, and sees what we will become once we traverse the valley of hardship with faithfulness and steadfastness. God's desire is to mature us as individuals; it is to grow us spiritually that we might be useful to His kingdom and His plan for our lives.

Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."

Yes, this is an often quoted verse, but just because it is often quoted it does not take away from the truth it possesses. All things work together for good to those who love God, and this we know. We don't assume, we don't think, we know that all things work together for good, and this gives us comfort, and peace, and a thankful heart even in the midst of hardship and affliction.

Being thankful, being grateful, possessing a thankful and grateful heart is not an obligation but rather a privilege. Yes, possessing a thankful and grateful heart is possessing the privilege of seeing this present reality, this present life from an eternal perspective. We are passing through this life, and whatever chiseling and molding we might have to endure in order to obtain the life to come is necessary, and as such we must be ever grateful to God for loving us enough to mold and chisel us.

With love in Christ,  
Michael Boldea Jr.

*Just a note regarding your year end contributions, please have your donations post marked no later than December 31st, 2011, to ensure it's inclusion on your Annual Giving Statement.*