



Hand of Help
Ministries

Hand of **HELP**

The Truth for Today



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The Long Hard *Road*



The Long Hard

Road

Some things have to be seen in order to be believed. It's not that you doubt the honesty of the person regaling you with the story, or the veracity of their affirmations, but rather what you are hearing seems so farfetched, so far removed from the everyday, mundane, humdrum ebb and flow of life that you are simply taken aback.

Such was the case with the last trip my father, my brother Sergiu, and I took, a handful of days before I was to fly back to the US. Although the following might seem fantastical, I assure you it did happen, to the minutest of the details I am about to share with you.

It was less than a week before I was to make my way back to the States when a pastor friend of my father's showed up to the orphanage with a pained expression on his face. My father knew this man well enough to know that the pained look was not because of something he was going through, but due to some need he was unable to meet in some village far removed from civilization.

Like us, Pastor Slabu Zamfir was called to minister to the people of Romania. Unlike us, his calling is to minister exclusively to out of the way gypsy villages in our region of the country. As he made himself comfortable in the only free chair available in our small office, my father arched his eyebrows and asked, 'so where to this time?'



'Well brother Mike, since you asked,' he said returning my father's smile, 'there is a real and immediate need in the village of Bahna Arini.'

Since neither my father nor I had ever heard of this village, we assumed it was somewhere very far away, very hard to get to, and with a reasonable expectation of having to push or pull some vehicle or another along the way.



When brother Zamfir got through explaining exactly where Bahna Arini was, my father and I gave each other a look, shrugged our shoulders, and after making sure we could get some food delivered that same day we planned on heading out early the next morning.

The reason the need in Bahna Arini was so immediate was because they had been snowed in for the past few days, and no regular cars were able to get through. Brother Zamfir attempted to assuage our concerns by telling us that the school bus had finally made its way into the village the previous day, but now knowing exactly where the village was, we knew we were in for a long hard road and a trying haul.

The village of Bahna Arini is literally in the middle of nowhere. It is about ten kilometers away from any major road, twenty kilometers away from any other town,



and the only way in and out of this village is a one lane mud alley, any sane person would not hazard to drive in the winter or the rainy season.

Since the snow had already started to melt in our region, we talked ourselves into believing it would be the same in Bahna Arini, and since at least one of our vehicles was four wheel drive, we gave ourselves a better than average chance of making it to our destination.



The next morning we loaded two vehicles with food, clothing, sweets and other things the orphanage was able to spare, and with one final yet passionate prayer, we headed out for Bahna Arini.

Although the first hour of the trip went as well as could be expected, when brother Zamfir said, 'take a right here' and there was no road to be seen, I realized things were about to change very quickly.

Not only had the snow in Bahna Arini not melted, it seems they had gotten allot more snow than we had in the city. To the left and to the right, for as far as the eye could see, there was only snow, and a handful of lonesome trees blowing in the breeze, and that's all. There were no power lines running to anywhere, no fences, no homes, just the sun reflecting off snow, and two lone vehicles trying to make their way to a village most everyone had never heard of at a snail's pace.

It was about fifteen minutes in, when the vehicle my brother was driving began to lose traction. At first he tried to swing it back and forth, then to dig his way out, but the snow gave way to mud, and traction would not be had no matter how hard he tried.

As I turned off my engine, and got out, I realized something my brother had also realized by the look on his face. The only way for us to go was forward. There was nowhere to turn around, nor was there a way to veer off the tracks we assumed the school bus had made. Since forward was the only option, we saw no other choice

but to push. And so, while my brother steered, the three of us pushed the van up a hill, until the wheels finally caught on something and it was able to travel under its own inertia.

On a normal day the trip to Bahna Arini would have taken no more than twenty minutes from where we turned off the main road. On that day, it took us an hour and a half.

There is a strange kind of relief that washes over a person when they arrive at a destination they were doubtful they would ever reach. As we pulled into the village, got out and began unloading boxes, my brother and I both smiled at each other as though we had accomplished some great feat.

As the families of Bahna Arini gathered, and we began distributing what we had brought with us, all the stress and uncertainty of the morning just melted away. Not only had God watched over us, and made a way for us to make it to Bahna Arini, we realized the need was as immediate as brother Zamfir had intimated it to be.

Though the road may be hard, uncertain, and even perilous at times, all we were promised is that we would reach our destination. It is in this promise that we hope, and it is from this promise we draw strength. As His servants we are called to obey, knowing that in faithfulness God will make a way even when no way is evident.

I thank everyone of you for your prayers, and for allowing us the privilege to be a present help in time of great need not only to the people of Romania, but even to those closer to home right here in the US.

In all things, every day, without fail, God makes a way, and I thank you for allowing yourself to be one of those ways.



With love in Christ,
Michael Boldea Jr.

Provision

This is one article we could readily feature with every newsletter without erring. We are so very thankful for everything God has done, is doing, and will continue to do based on His promises, that we can't help but praise Him and glory in His wondrous works.

Some things stir the heart more than others, and seeing orphans come back after years of independence and living on their own, many from all over Europe, with a sincere 'thank you' on their lips, is one of those things. Whenever something like that occurs, it just gives us all the more reason and amplifies our desire to continue serving these precious children.

We were recently visited by Daniel Hulai, one of the very first children to come through our doors. I had the opportunity to sit down with him and get some valuable feedback on his perception of the orphanage 10 years after his departure, and what he had to say was both humbling and enlightening.

He was very impressed by how the rooms, the play area, and the overall look of the building had improved, but immediately pointed out that one key component was missing, 'tanti Virginia,' as the children used to call her. I quickly agreed, and reassured him that her absence will be a void we will continually try to fill knowing all the while we will never fully succeed.

As we started talking of the various children he remembered, he was shocked to hear that Anca was still

alive after all the neurosurgeries she had been through, that we were able to operate on Costica and free his hand from the scar tissue, and also that we were now able to provide glasses for all the children who needed them and cover all necessary medicine for those who were sick.

Just like in any family, there are children, like Daniel, that are healthy and never need more than a checkup. By the same token, there are also children who depend on monthly medication, and some even require surgery for certain conditions.

As we continue to intercede with a thankful heart, we believe God for all provision, including dermatological treatment for Alexandra's psoriasis, Florin's keratodermia, Costica and Marian's ointment for keeping scar tissue to a minimum, and Iulia, Vasile, Violeta, Alex, Petru and Vlad's neurological medication. Besides these, there are also sporadic medical treatments, optometrist visits, as well as dental treatments we must provide for our children on a monthly basis.

At the end of the day we must acquiesce to the reality that all our efforts are insufficient, and rely solely on God's divine intervention and provision. This is God's work, and we believe, in faith, that He will meet the need of every child in our care.

In Jesus,
Daniel Boldea

Prayer Requests

1. As we approach the end of the school season, please lift a prayer for wisdom to be poured out over our children as they complete their school finals.
2. Regarding our summer camp mission project, we ask that you would pray for the staff, teachers, volunteers and children to be in unity as we work to change the spiritual climate of all involved. May God touch their hearts and minds as they embrace this memorable experience.
3. For wisdom as we expand our radio broadcasting ministry. For further information regarding a station near you, please check our website handofhelp.com, or call our office toll free 1-866-371-7636.

Meeting

Denisa

Although it might not seem like it today, I was a shy and awkward child. Having been sickly as a toddler, and having learned to spend time by myself, I can often pick out the shy children in any given group just by glancing across their faces for no more than a handful of seconds.



As we were revisiting Plopenii Mici and passing out some food and clothing, I scanned the crowd of adults and children alike until my gaze settled upon a little girl.

Although the other kids were anxious to receive some of the sweets we had brought, smiles beaming and hands clamoring, this little girl kept her hands to her sides, and seemed wholly

disinterested in the commotion taking place no more than ten feet in front of her.

There was a sadness in her eyes that I couldn't quite place. In any case, it was a sadness far too profound for a child so young.

As I continued to take a few pictures and hand out some sweets, my gaze kept returning to this one little girl, standing there all by herself, until I finally put my camera down and walked over to her.

It took me no less than four tries to get her to whisper her name to me, averting her gaze as she did so, and finally breaking into a smile when I said I thought Denisa was a beautiful name.

Now that I was closer to her I could see the reason for her shyness, and why she did not come up to us clamoring and smiling like the rest of the children.

Denisa had scars on the right side of her face, and as she turned at the sound of her mother calling her, I saw her right hand had also been badly burned and was now scarred over.

After talking to her for a little while, and finding out she liked ponies, and playing 'princess' with her younger sister, I made my way to Denisa's mother to get the details of how she came to be burned.

She was only three years old when the incident had occurred. Her mother had left her sleeping on the terracotta outcropping above the stove – a uniquely European contraption where there are about five feet of brick and terracotta behind the stove unit itself which get warm due to their proximity to it – and she had rolled off the ledge in her sleep and landed on the stove.

If not for her older sister hearing Denisa scream, running into the house, and pulling her off the stove, the burns would have been much worse if not outright fatal.

'She's shy around new people and tries to hide her hand', her mother said, 'but she's just like any other child around people she knows, and the other children in the village. They don't treat her any differently because of her scars.'

Yes, I've seen more dramatic situations, I've been in more emotional circumstances, but some things just have staying power, and meeting Denisa was one of those things. I keep going back to the pictures I took of her, and seeing her smile warms my heart.

With a hug and a promise to return I said goodbye to Denisa that day, thanking God for the many opportunities He has given us over the years to minister, to be a blessing, but also to be blessed and be ministered to, sometimes in the most unexpected places by the most unexpected of people.

With love in Christ,
Michael Boldea Jr.



Faith

Life has not been easy for the Botez family. Hailing from the village of Vanatori, Iulian and Silvia came to Christ early on in their marriage, before any of their eight children came along, and before the hardships of life compelled them to learn to walk by faith and not by sight.

Although Lacramioara, the Botez family's oldest daughter, is in Italy working as a babysitter, the rest of the children are still living at home, with only the father's meager earnings to provide for their sustenance and needs.

Hard as life had been for them, the Botez family had learned to make due, until Naomi was born both deaf and mute, with the doctors telling brother Iulian that she would never walk due to some genetic malformation.

'What could we do but pray?' brother Iulian said as we sat in his home. 'We didn't have the means to get a second opinion, we didn't know where else to turn, so we just got on our knees and cried out to God until He answered.'

The Botez family's answer came by way of a word of prophecy given to brother Iulian while he was working in a city a few hours away from his village.

'I received a word through an old prophetess that I would see a miracle upon my return home. The word didn't specify what the miracle would entail, or how it would come about, but I believed, and I prayed, and I thanked the Lord that very moment because I know what God can do.'

Brother Iulian continued telling us how he was excited throughout the long bus ride home, wondering what this miracle would be, and believing fully that he would see it, and as he

walked through the front door, his daughter Nadia – the daughter doctors had said would never walk – was taking her first steps.

'It was a miracle. For me, it was the greatest miracle I could have hoped to see. My daughter was doing something doctors told us she would never do, and it was not because of them, or because of their treatments, it was because God reached out and did this for her.'

The Botez family has a long way to go, as Nadia still cannot hear or speak, but their faith is strong, and having seen what they've already seen by way of miracles in their lives, they have an unshakeable faith that God will complete the work He has begun in Nadia and restore her completely.

It is a rare thing to see such faith, but it is also refreshing because God does big things when we believe Him for big things. I ask that you keep the Botez family in your prayers, and believe alongside them for God's Hand of power to be upon Nadia, and heal her completely.

As we left, and the family thanked us for the food, clothing and finances we brought them, Nadia smiled and waved as though she knew exactly who we were and why we were there.

I know God can heal, I know God can restore, and it is an unshakeable reality in my heart. I find myself remembering the Botez family in my own prayers each time I come before the Father, and when we do hear an update on Nadia and her improvements, I will be sure to pass the news along.

In Christ,

Pastor Michael Boldea Sr.



This is
Our Home



People are quick to remind us we work in an orphanage, and technically they are right. To us however, those who have served the Lord through serving these children for the better part of fifteen years, this is as far from an orphanage, and the images the word 'orphanage' brings to mind, as one could possibly get.



In truth, this is more of a home than it is an orphanage. It is our home. The home in which we raise the children entrusted to us with joy, the home in which we teach the children entrusted to us about the Lord, and the home in which we watch as the children entrusted to us grow and mature and become productive members of society in their own right.



We are a big home to be sure, and a larger than average family, but the love a home ought to possess in order to qualify as being a home is ever present among us, and evident in our daily activities.



We have seen orphanages which live up to the infamous connotations, but this is not one of those places.

This is our home where love abounds. This is our home where smiles are aplenty and laughter is the go to background noise on any given day. This is our home and we treat it as such, and we thank you from the depths of our being for helping us continue to be a blessing and a comfort in this home the Lord has provided.



You may never get to meet all the lives you've touched or helped impact, or you may, as some have chosen to do over the years, come visit, and spend some time with us in our home.



Either way, know that you are loved and appreciated for all you do on behalf of the children here, and that our prayers for you are unceasing to the Father.



In His Grace,
Hand of Help Staff





Greetings in the name of

Jesus

It's been a wonderful experience going out to help the poor, some in town and many in the villages. One family comes to mind in touching my heart. The Prunean family is in great need because of an injury done to the father's back when he was a boy. The wife cares for him and they have one daughter who is a real blessing to them. He got all choked up and cried when we left. We blessed them with food and money and they were so grateful. There are so many that come to mind who I feel so blessed to have met and who were a joy to help.

The people are very expressive there, so I received many hugs, kisses, and handshakes. We saw one family getting a well put in, but a chain broke, so we didn't get to see the end result. However, they did finally strike clear water at about 50 feet. Praise the Lord for this family's blessing.

Another family received a cow. She was a beauty and a gentle one at that.

The needs are great, and Hand of Help is the avenue God uses to help so many.

Romania is blessed with beautiful countryside, a simplicity, and many lovely people. And, oh, the joy of meeting the orphans! I love them all, from the youngest to the oldest. So many stories to tell, just not room enough to write it all. Also, the blessing of all the workers. The entire staff is wonderful there.

Thank you to all of you in Bozeman, Montana and a few other areas who made my first missions trip such a blessing. Romania will be a memorable time for me. I had so many wonderful experiences. God bless each and every one of you. Jesus is exalted!

*Love,
Colleen Andersen*



Dear

Brethren

Over Memorial Day weekend I was scheduled to speak in Lake Havasu, Arizona. Since Las Vegas was the closest major airport and by far the cheapest ticket, Gene and I flew there having planned to spend the first night upon our arrival somewhere in the area, then make the drive to the meeting the next day.

After a four hour flight, some misunderstandings with the car rental agent, and a couple hours to get acclimated to the heat, we checked into our room without further incident.

That night I had a dream.

I dreamt I was standing beside a path leading into a forest, and although snow blanketed the ground, the path was still visible, clear, and well defined. Although I wasn't cold in my dream, I could see my breath and as I looked around trying to understand what I was seeing and why I was seeing it, a beautiful buck made its way up the path toward me.

Although I can't say I've seen many bucks up close this seemed like a fine specimen, regal in its bearing, almost prancing up the path with its head held high.

I stood beside the path unmoving, not wanting to spook the animal in any way. If it saw me it did not let it show as it passed by and continued trotting down the path.

I continued to watch it follow the path toward the forest until suddenly it veered off and began to make its way through the packed snow. Although its pace slowed and it was having a difficult time making headway, once it veered off the path, the buck seemed stubborn in its insistence, and though progress was slow, it continued its march.

I started to look around for something else, not really understanding what I was seeing or why I was seeing it, when a sharp crack drew my attention back to the buck. Although the animal was a good distance from me, I could see what had happened with great clarity.

The buck had stepped into a hole which had been masked by the snow, and had snapped its front left leg.

I didn't know what else to do, so I just stood and watched as it forced itself up, and though evidently in great pain, it began to continue on its journey away from the path. Its progress was slow, and I could hear the echoes of its bleating, but wounded as it was, the animal was insistent in its purpose.

After some time the buck stopped suddenly and began to sniff at the air. An instant later the mournful sound of howling wolves reached my ears, and I understood what the buck had smelled.

With renewed vigor the buck tried to run, but hampered by its wound, its progress was slow.

I was so focused on the buck that at first I did not acknowledge the movement in my peripheral vision, but as they drew closer I shifted my focus and I could see the source of the howls approaching swiftly. At first it was one wolf, then two, then five, then an entire pack, all in a semi-circle chasing down the wounded buck as it tried to flee.

I was anxious to see what would happen, I strained to see every detail, but as the wolf pack drew closer and closer to the buck, I woke up.

Troubled by the dream I'd had, I prayed a prayer and tried to go back to sleep but no sleep would come.

The next morning we made our way to Lake Havasu, and after having our evening meeting, and a late night dinner, I went to sleep only to dream the exact same dream again. Everything was the same, from the path and the snow, to the buck and its broken leg, to the howls and the wolves, and to waking up fully alert just as the wolves were closing in on the buck.

Once again I prayed and tried to go back to sleep, and once again sleep would not come.

... *Continued on back*

The next morning we had church, then drove a couple hours to a place called Aguila, Arizona where we had some wonderful fellowship, then drove back to Las Vegas where we would catch our flight home the next morning. It was already past midnight when we got in, and having preached twice and driven for about seven hours that day, I was as exhausted as a man can get.

I was asleep as soon as my head hit the pillow, and once again the same dream began to play out. Just as the wolves were ready to attack and take down the buck I was awoken by a loud noise coming from the pullout sofa in the room. It was Gene. He was snoring.

I was halfway to throwing a pillow at Gene and telling him to roll over, when I saw a man standing at the foot of the bed, arms crossed over his chest, and a half smile on his face.

'Ask your question,' he said.

'Why can't I see what happens? Why can't I see the end of the dream?' I asked.

'Because it is inconsequential,' he answered.

'The instant the animal wandered off the path and wounded itself, its end was a certain and foregone conclusion. It matters not which wolf fells it. Once it is felled, they will all feast. The same can be said of this nation with one exception. The animal had no one to help it, this nation rejected the help offered it believing it could heal its own self of the wounds it had inflicted upon itself. The wolves have gathered. They sense the weakness, they smell the blood, and they are confident in the outcome of their endeavor.'

In an instant the man was gone, and I found myself standing halfway out of bed with a pillow in my hand pondering what I had just heard.

We reject repentance at our own peril. We reject righteousness, sanctification and the pursuit of holiness to our own detriment. Though there is safety on the narrow path, we've taken it upon ourselves to blaze our own trail, indifferent to the untold perils and dangers awaiting those who stray.

I wish, with all my heart, I could write happy things in my letter to you today. I wish I could tell you the sun will come out tomorrow and the storm clouds will pass, but our refusal to accept God's help, our refusal to submit and humble ourselves before Him only hastens judgment.

The wolves have gathered, the hunt begins, and this weakened nation is the prey.

I will now repeat what I preached on during one of the aforementioned meetings because I believe it is relevant, timely, and apropos. The level of your relationship with Christ today will determine whether you stand or fall by the wayside tomorrow. Know that you are resting in Him, know that you draw your strength from Him, and know that you have placed your hope and trust in Him.

On Christ the solid Rock we stand, for truly, all other ground is sinking sand.

Psalm 124:6-8, "Blessed be the Lord, who has not given us as prey to their teeth. Our soul has escaped as a bird from the snare of the fowlers; the snare is broken and we have escaped. Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth."

With love in Christ,
Michael Boldea Jr.



Coming Soon:

A Hand of Help App for your mobile devices. It's our desire to equip you with tools to encourage, teach, challenge, and comfort; from our 24/7 live radio station, "Joy Stream Radio", to our "Truth for Today" teaching series and current daily features by Michael Boldea on his "Homeward Bound" blog.