

Hand of HELP

August 2022



Harvest!

Everyone likes to talk about the harvest, but very few take the time to discuss the laborious and time-consuming process that must occur to bring it in. Even Jesus hinted at the fact that plenty of people would show up for the photo-op, but few and far between would roll up their sleeves and put in the effort it takes to make sure that at the end of the process, there is something one can look upon with satisfaction and no small measure of accomplishment.

Well aware that if not for the hand of providence and the favor of God, even if one does everything right - is diligent in planting good seed, weeding periodically, watering faithfully, and watching over the process intently - things can go awry, those who labor dare not take credit for the outcome, or pat themselves on the back as if they were the cause of the transformation.

Laborers know the limits of their abilities and are content to faithfully carry out those tasks within their purview. Glory hounds, on the other hand, believe that if not for them and their two-minute altar call and something about waving a Bible in the air as if you don't care, none would be saved.

Anyone not trying to sell you magic beans or shortcuts to heaven will tell you that it's a process, a long, drawn-out process, with peaks and valleys, with moments of exaltation and disappointment, and

throughout it all, much prayer. Prayer is the constant. When it seems as though your words are hitting a wall of granite, you pray for strength and patience. When it seems as though every word hits its mark, you pray for continued wisdom and growth.

Water baptisms among the Hand of Help family are a special time. They signify the good end of labor, and the beginning of a new journey for those who have repented, received, and proclaimed that Jesus Christ is Lord of all. It is a time when we can look upon the culmination of years of sowing, praying, teaching, pleading, encouraging, correcting, comforting, and edifying, and be assured of their fruitfulness.

Since the onset of this work, we have strived to nurture the spiritual as well as the physical man, and it brings us to tears each time one of our children chooses to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, forsaking all others.

It's moments like these that make all the labor, the sacrifice, the sleepless nights, and the moments of grief worthwhile.

May you rejoice with us, as we would not have been able to do what we do without your prayers and support. Behold the fruit of your labors! May your reward in heaven be commensurate.

Hand of Help Staff

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Harvest!

My name is Narcis, and I am finishing my studies to become a social worker.

When I first came to the Hand of Help Orphanage, in my hard heart, I swore I would never step foot in a church. For the longest time I was one of the few children who refused to attend the worship services. However, the Lord providentially brought people into my life that challenged me to seek out the truths of Scripture, promising that I would never be the same again! They were right! I will never be the same again!

I can honestly say that only God can change an individual as no person can, and that one is complete only if they follow after Him.

My favorite verses that I wanted to include in my short testimony are from Proverbs 3:5-6 *Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.*

My name is Edera Vaculisteanu, and I am excited to start nursing school this fall.

I had a desire to have a relationship with God, and in His goodness, He opened my eyes to see the truth. Before, I often felt empty inside, but I have decided to leave my past behind and follow Him.

I was born into the Romanian Orthodox religion. I was blessed to be raised by the Hand of Help family since I was seven months old. Our proxy parents at the orphanage

took us to church and instilled in us the foundations of faith. Growing up, I struggled with temptation and sin and soon found myself a slave to my sins. But God worked an incredible miracle in my life and helped me look to Him.

God used Dumii, the young man who also grew up at the orphanage and died at 21, as a living testimony of God's divine work of salvation. Dumii often shared the gospel with me, but I seldom listened or truly understood what he was saying.

God reminded me of those truths and granted me the faith to believe! I wish Dumii were here today to see me getting baptized!

Sebastian Stoian, 19

I grew up at the Hand of Help Orphanage from age 3. Since I was a little boy, I was taught that we must attend church and listen to God's Word. At the time, I didn't understand why. As a teenager, I wandered into things that were not pleasing to God, spending time with many who were a bad influence on me. Even so, God showed His love toward me. After attending church regularly for a season, I realized I was on a destructive path and needed to make changes.

I prayed and prayed, and finally, He answered, opening my eyes to the truth and putting a genuine desire in my heart to follow Him and serve Him for the rest of my life.

May God protect us from life's obstacles, or may He give us the strength to overcome them.

Alex Anghelachi



Sebastian, Edera, Narcis and Alexandru

I grew up in a large family, having four biological siblings and sharing life with over 150 "brothers and sisters" through the years at the Hand of Help Orphanage. My twin brother and I were abandoned at birth, and though the doctors didn't think we would make it, God had other plans. So, at just six months, we became a part of the Hand of Help family, a place we would call home for our entire childhood.

In this precious Christian environment, we learned about God's love, how Jesus died for my sin, and that He is preparing a place for all those who repent and believe. Although I knew all these things, during my teenage years, I was drawn by the sins this world had to offer. I got to the point where I even denied God existed; I stopped attending church and continued down sin's spiral.

I was feeling more and more alone and felt that life had no meaning. I was dealing with all these emotions, but I did not have the strength to fight myself out of those situations.

Later in my teen years, I was diagnosed with a serious illness for which I needed special treatment and regular doctor's visits. Going through this trial made me ask myself if I were to die, where would I end up?

I prayed and asked God to heal me, and He did! Finally, after three years of treatment, I was healed!

After my physical healing, I surrendered my life to Jesus Christ, desiring to serve Him all of the days of my life.

I still have bad days when I struggle, but the difference is now I have the strength to get up, by the power of the Holy Spirit, and an earnest desire to be more pleasing in His sight.

The world could never offer the peace and joy I have found in Him.

Some of my favorite life verses are:

2 Corinthians 5:17 *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

Psalms 68:5 *A father of the fatherless, a defender of widows, Is God in His holy habitation.*

First, I would like to thank God for the miracle of salvation in my life, for His forgiveness, and for now having a purpose in life, to serve Him!

Secondly, I would like to thank all those who taught me the foundations of faith and guided me along the way here at the orphanage and those who made my time here possible by financially supporting the ministry.

Vlad Chelimandra



Vlad



If you would like more information on our orphanage sponsorship program, please go to

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Dear Brethren,

Ephesians 6:12 *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

Although it's not a guaranteed victory, knowing one's enemy increases the chances of a favorable outcome exponentially. When you know who you are facing in battle, you can prepare, adjust, recalibrate, and formulate a battle plan that will invariably exploit your enemy's weaknesses and nullify his strengths.

Long before Chinese military generals decided to pen their musings on war and warfare, the God of all creation knew the truth of it. Throughout His letter to His own, God reminds us of who our enemy is, his intentions, and his ultimate goal since the moment he fell like lightning.

The tableau the Word of God paints is stark and vivid, so much so that there can be no interpretation as to our enemy's intent. His ultimate goal is to kill, steal, destroy, devour all he can, and pervert God's creation to the utmost whenever possible. That's the baseline. Those are the first handful of traits that

I realize I'm bordering on being overly graphic, but seemingly the household of faith needs to be reminded who their enemy is and what he would do given half a chance.

One of the biggest and most effective weapons in the enemy's arsenal is to destroy and decimate hope. If he can't kill hope outright, he will settle for the children of God, placing their hope in something or someone other than God, something temporal, fleeting, flawed, and fractured.

Rather than be about the Father's business and focus on the Kingdom and how many souls we might help usher therein, we get caught up in this endless loop of hoping for some future event to turn it all around. I call it the 'if only' game, and it keeps the children of God immobile and watching from the sidelines as they await that event six months, a year, or two years down the road.

If only this would happen, then that could happen, and if that happens, then the other thing. It gets so convoluted

and improbable that it makes grasping at straws a preferable alternative. Then again, perhaps it justifies our inaction, and that's all we're really looking to do.

It's akin to amassing an army but never marching them onto the battlefield, even though the enemy often sneaks into the camp and takes a handful of prisoners or burns a few barracks. I don't know if you've noticed, but while the church is waiting for the stars to align, the enemy has made inroads, mercilessly decimating all he can.

You can't win a war without breaking a sweat. You can't claim victory over your enemy without having struck a blow. Our enemy is not interested in an armistice, a truce, or sitting down to negotiate. His hatred of all who call Christ Lord and Savior is all-consuming, and his blood lust can never be satiated. If he can distract us from the reality of the battle we're in for long enough, if he can keep us waiting for one thing or another to happen in perpetuity, the enemy will never be challenged, rebuffed, or pushed back.

In their minds, some in the modern-day church might be perfectly comfortable with that outcome, a bloodless war and one they were not called upon to participate in. Still, I can't help but wonder what the price of our cowardice will be for our children and their children, should the Lord tarry.

1 Corinthians 16:13 *Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong.*

With love in Christ,
Michael Boldea, Jr.

