

Hand of **HELP**

September - October 2018



Yes, A Cow!



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Yes, A Cow!

If one has never reached the point of desperation, it would be easy to conclude that when they hear talk of a cow being a life saver, it's nothing more than base hyperbole. Especially now, since we are living in the age of hyperbole, when everything is exaggerated to the utmost, it is one's natural inclination to be skeptical, to question, and to doubt. A cow? Really? How exactly could a cow, of all things, save lives?

If we were talking about heart medicine, sure, I could see that saving lives, or perhaps a life raft during a flood, but a cow? Yes, a cow.

For most of us, and I include myself in this generalization because I've been living in the United States since I was 9 years old, it is difficult to fathom true nothingness. It is difficult to fathom not only an empty refrigerator, an empty pantry, an empty barn, and an empty cellar, but having nothing with which to replenish what has been consumed.

We live in a nation where there are safety nets upon safety nets. No one really starves in America. There is always somewhere one can go, whether a homeless shelter, a church pantry, government aid, or a hundred other charitable institutions that will gladly give anyone a hot meal, a bag of food, or a bed to sleep in.

Even when someone runs out of money at the end of the month because they had an extra expense, there's always the plastic which can be used in a pinch.

In Romania, very few charitable institutions exist that have a food outreach, and even then they don't venture out into the villages, and as far as credit is concerned, the people and families we help don't know the meaning of it, never mind actually having any.

It is a different kind of lifestyle, a different kind of society, and for anyone who has never visited, it is difficult to understand just how desperate some people can become.



I mention this only because we've gotten letters over the years asking why the people we feature in our newsletters don't use their credit cards until they get back on their feet, or why they don't apply for aid, and we've had to explain the varied differences between a nation with a well-established infrastructure such as America, and one which is still trying to find its footing decades after the fall of Communism.

But back to the cows. Over the course of the last few weeks we've been able to bless two families with cows, and yes, in both instances they were life savers.

The first family was the Tinu family, which lives in a small village called Mandresti Borzesti, and both Bianca and Catalin are new believers, having committed their lives to Christ in the summer of 2017.

As is the all-consuming nature of first love, rather than tend to his own homestead and family, Catalin spent the summer working to help build the new church in Mindresti, and as he puts it, there was even a time when his neighbors would mock him openly, and tell him his family was going to starve come winter, because he was



Yes, A Cow!



spending too much time building sanctuaries.

God, however, saw the selflessness of brother Catalin, and placed a burden on our hearts to buy his family a cow. When we arrived with the cow in tow, his joy was contagious. Him and his wife are expecting their second child, as they already have a daughter, and without this blessing, life would have been a struggle this coming winter, to put it mildly.

The second family that was blessed with a cow was the Juravlea family. Before she passed away from pulmonary cancer in May, brother Saul and his wife had six children together. There have been a difficult few months, not only having to deal with the loss of his wife, but also taking care of the children and making sure



they are well tended to. Although the older children help out, life is still difficult, and a cow is just the blessing this grieving family needed, especially as the cold season is just around the corner. Brother Saul and his son Cezar joined us in Tudor Vladimirescu, the next town over, and once we purchased the cow, they walked it home because we couldn't find a trailer to rent on such short notice.

If you've ever lived off the land, you know that summers are easier as far as survival is concerned. Some root vegetables and a pot of water and you have some soup, an apple or a pear will keep your stomach from rumbling, but once winter comes, there is very little on which to subsist. This is why, especially during the winter months, cows are indispensable for families who live in the rural areas.

As a friend of mine is fond of saying, "There's a lot you can do with milk." I didn't really think about it much until I started thinking about it, and once I did, I

realized he was right.

This year, Lord willing, we want to buy fifty cows, for fifty families, before winter comes. I know, it's a high mark, but as the old cliché goes, "if you reach for the moon, even if you don't get there, you might snag a few stars on your way back down to earth."

I know that God is able to do all things, exceedingly, and beyond what we can fathom. I also know that If He owns the cattle on a thousand hills, fifty cows is a drop in the bucket. I would ask that you join with us in prayer for this project, and if the Lord puts it on your heart to help with the acquisition of a cow, two, five, or twenty, know that there are real families, with real needs, that would be blessed by your generosity.

The current price of a good milking cow, many of which are with calf, runs around \$1,000.

**With love in Christ,
Michael Boldea Jr**





A Need Unmet

Life with a family to provide for is oftentimes a struggle even during the best of times. Throw in a child suffering from pulmonary asthma, and living in a country where jobs are scarcer than an honest politician, and calling it a struggle, would be understating the facts. Still, Daniel Molocea is tireless in trying to provide for his wife and four children, and though working as a day laborer is the best job he could find thus far, it has not dampened his drive, or his determination to make sure that his kids have food, a roof over their heads, and David who is their youngest at eighteen months gets the medical care he needs.

“At least nobody promised it would be easy”, Daniel said as we visited. “If they had, I’d have to call them a liar at this point, but



we must be thankful for the good and the bad. Anyone who tells you they’ve had a trouble free life isn’t telling you the truth, but it would be nice if it were a little easier at times.”

Even with the scant and meager resources available to him, Daniel has started building a small home for his family, using whatever he could get his hands on, mostly what others chose to discard, and doing the labor himself, the home is coming along quite nicely.

“Somebody gave me an extra window they didn’t need anymore, I purchased some bricks last summer, I buy a bag of cement whenever I can, and it keeps coming along.”

What we would like to do is help Daniel, his wife Mihaela, and their four children, Stefan 15, Emima 7, Avram 3, and David 18 months old, finish their home before the winter months come blowing through.

We know it will be an impossible task for Daniel to finish it on his own, especially since they have to make periodic trips to the city with



A Need Unmet



David, due to his condition. Please pray regarding this project, and the completion thereof. It would not take much to bring this home to completion, and we know it would be a great blessing for brother Daniel and his family.

**In Christ,
Pastor Mircea Boldea Sr**





A Telling Perspective

It is a lot easier to be poor in a rich country than it is to be poor in a poor country. Even the poorest of the poor in a prosperous nation are richer than what would be considered middle class in impoverished ones, seeing things others would call a luxury, like a color television, a car, running water, and electricity, as the bare-bones minimum one could subsist upon.

In certain nations owning a car is a sign of wealth, and when I say car what I mean to say is anything with a steering wheel, four tires, and an occasionally running engine. Even if it has no windows, and you can see the pavement rolling by through the hole in the floorboards, it's still a car, and you're still rich, and that's that.

In certain nations when someone says they have absolutely nothing,

nor know anyone with the wherewithal to help them in any substantive manner, they don't mean they had to buy dented cans, or generic macaroni at the local grocery store. What they mean is that they have nothing. Full stop, no addendum.

All the food was gone, the little money that had been saved was likewise gone to buy the food that had already been eaten, and now all they had left was much prayer and patience.

The Nichita family had reached the bottom of the proverbial barrel. They had nothing. All the food was gone, the little money that had been saved was likewise gone to buy the food that had already been eaten, and now all they had

left was much prayer and patience.

There was nothing else they could do. Marian Nichita is a sheep herder, working at a sheep farm, and he, along with his wife Alina, have been living with their in-laws for the better part of seven years. The home, if it can be called that, consists of a summer kitchen with a rickety roof and drooping walls lacking insulation, which make it very difficult in the winter months. That's it. One room, four people, and not much else.

"The day we ran out of food was the day I prayed harder than I've ever prayed in my entire life", Alina said. "There was no one we could approach and ask for food, and there was nothing we could sell or barter in order to get some. And so, I prayed, and prayed, and the next day a man showed up with food saying he'd had a dream about



A Telling Perspective



our need, and God had sent him to provide food for us.”

The man was from the city of Vicov, which is approximately 110 kilometers away, which translates to roughly 65 miles. He brought enough food for the family to subsist on for a prolonged period of time, enough of a buffer for Marian to get paid for his sheep herding services.

When we visited the Nichita family, the joy they possessed in spite of having no earthly possessions is what resonated with us. It's easy to be joyful when everything is going well, when the skies are blue and the birds are chirping, but it is a far more difficult thing to possess

joy when every day is a struggle for survival, and need is an ever present companion.

“I prayed, and prayed, and the next day a man showed up with food saying he'd had a dream about our need, and God had sent him to provide food for us.”

The need of the Nichita family is so vast that there really isn't anything they couldn't use, but upon seeing the situation, and hearing how horrible a time they have of simply surviving in the winter, we would like you to

prayerfully consider helping with the construction of an add on room to the home they are currently residing in, as well as adding some insulation to the current room they are inhabiting.

It would be an unspeakable blessing for this family, and we know that it is no great task for a God for whom all things are possible. Please remember the Nichita family in your prayers, and if the Lord leads to help in any way with this project, it would be greatly appreciated.

**In His Grace,
Hand of Help Staff**



Then There Was Nothing

It's not as though the Muraru family had much to begin with. A small, dated, mud brick home passed down from generation to generation, but they were thankful, knowing that some didn't even have that much. For the Muraru family it had always been home, even with the constant need for patching the crumbling walls, or reinforcing the sagging roof.

On a given Thursday night, while brother Radu was at church for an evening of prayer, Iulia was at home cooking a meal she would share with her husband when he got home later that evening. Suddenly

there was a loud pop, and although the house made strange noises regularly, this was all too new, all too different, all too disturbing for Iulia to just pass it off as the house settling, or expanding, or doing one of a dozen thing old homes tend to do.

If not for brothers and sisters in Christ, if not for ministries such as ours, then the Muraru family would likely be despondent, and on the verge of hopelessness.

The smell of something burning was a further indicator to Iulia that something was very wrong, and she called the fire department immediately. Even with her quick thinking, the moment the short circuit occurred in the old wiring, the fate of the old home was set in stone. The fire spread quickly, devouring everything in its path, and long before the fire department arrived there was nothing left but ash, and some singed, smoldering beams.

If not for brothers and sisters in Christ, if not for ministries such as ours, then the Muraru family



Then There Was Nothing



This family has lost everything, through no fault of their own, and their faith persists, and is strong because they know the people of God are still about, and they still have open hearts to do good.

The Muraru family needs our help. It is as simple as that. We could dress it up, make the plea longwinded, maybe even tug on heartstrings, but we have never been that kind of ministry, and we're not about to start now. This family has lost everything, through no fault of their own, and their faith persists, and is strong because they know the people of God are still about, and they still have open hearts to do good.

The Murarus are blessed with an incredible church family, the pastor being the first to take them in after the fire, and they have all pitched in to get the construction underway during the favorable summer months. We know that a project of this size is overly ambitious for a

would likely be despondent, and on the verge of hopelessness. Wherever there are believers, however, wherever the children of God still have a presence, there is always a glimmer of hope that God will use His servants in order to reach out and comfort, console, help, and restore.

There could be no bleaker, darker a world than one without God's servants in it. As long as we are present, light exists, and as long as there is light, there is hope.





Then There Was Nothing



small village church in Romania so we would like to come along their efforts and support them as the Lord provides.

We ask that you remember the Muraru family in your prayers, and if the Lord leads you to help in any way, it will go toward helping them rebuild their lives, and start building their new home.

**In His Grace,
Hand of Help Staff**



Child of the Month



Sorin D. (born in July, 2006) is Denis Iulian's older brother (our last featured child). They became a part of our large family in August 2018.

We are grateful that God answered our prayers and despite long bureaucratic procedures, Sorin and his brother were able to come to our center just before the beginning of the new school year. In September 2018, Sorin started the fifth grade and Denis the first grade. It was a happy first day of school for both children, equipped with all the school supplies they needed, with a packed snack and ready to meet their teachers and classmates – for the first time knowing that they have a family to come back to after school and that no beatings were to be their companion for the evening.

The brothers grew up in a distressed family environment; their mother had numerous relationships resulting in four children. Unable to receive the stability so much needed at their age, the siblings were not only forced to move around different homes with each new relationship of their mother, but they were

oftentimes completely abandoned, with no food, clothes or any other assistance, having to beg for the neighbors' mercy. Whenever she was back home, the mother verbally and physically abused them, forcing the local authorities

Child Protection Agency.

The children were in temporary Child Protection Agency housing for the entire previous school year until they were able to be placed in our care. Even in less than ideal conditions for close to a year, Sorin finished at the top of his class with honors.

It was that day in September seeing the children leaving the orphanage off to school that we were reminded again of how blessed we are to be able to do this work.

Heart-wrenching and almost unimaginable stories like these humble us, and at the same time, give us a renewed determination to do whatever we can, no matter the work or sacrifice, to save children like Sorin and his brother and bring them "home" – a place where our Lord's love is manifested in every moment and where the fatherless are given hope.

No more beatings, no more suffering, no more lacking – to know that a child steps out the door with hope and eager to learn and grow is what keeps us moving forward and we thank you for changing the lives of the Romanian fatherless. They are the testimony of your sacrificial work and eagerness to help, no matter how difficult the circumstances!



to intervene numerous times to protect the children. On one last occasion, while also being intoxicated, the mother treated her children so badly that the neighbors decided to call in the



Dear Brethren,

Psalm 90:12, “So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.”

It's hard to believe it's been seventeen years. Harder still, is how little has changed during this time, and how much worse certain things have gotten. Sure, I have less hair and more gray since that fateful day, as well as two beautiful daughters and a pronounced increase in creaky bones, but by and large, things have remained the same.

One would think that the further away one got from an initial event, the harder it would be to summon the memories. For me, it is as vivid today, as I write these lines, as it was in the aftermath of the chaos and uncertainty. I can still hear my then new bride's pleas to return to Romania once I had landed back in Zurich, as well as having to fight my own natural inclination and instinct to abandon my plans for returning to the United States.

America had been attacked, over three thousand people were dead, all airspace had been shut down throughout the nation, and I was in the Zurich airport having been diverted after our plane was less than an hour and a half from landing in Chicago.

Perhaps I was still innocent or naïve enough back then to hope for something good to come out of the destruction, for a national repentance to take root, for churches to overflow and for men of all ages to drop to their knees in prayers of repentance.

Granted, for a while it looked like that was exactly what was taking places. The first Sunday after the

attacks churches were packed, families were huddled together in pews grateful to be together, and praying for the families of those who had lost their lives. People who had otherwise not contemplated the need for God in their lives were looking for direction, for ways to be comforted, and for truth that lay somewhere beyond themselves.

For an instant, for a breath, men understood, and starkly so, the true measure of their impotence, and how frail and fragile this human existence is. Then the next week rolled around, and the week after that, and with each passing day it seems the reality of what occurred became less and less real, less and less vivid.

Seventeen years later, it seems very few still remember the lessons they learned following those uncertain days, and the idea of unity, of brotherhood, of steering in the same direction, and wanting the same outcome is a long forgotten dream.

It seems rather than take a breath and see what is happening in the world, everyone, on both sides is too busy pontificating and hyperbolizing. It seems that rather than seek common ground, everyone's too busy driving bigger and bigger wedges between individuals who otherwise would have gotten along.

Not that it matters to some whose personal animus has blinded them to everything else, but I do not find it coincidental that Russia launched the biggest war games since the cold war on the anniversary of one of America's greatest tragedies, nor do I find it coincidental or particularly

irrelevant that China joined in.

These are things far more relevant than trivial irrelevancies, but try telling that to individuals who seem rabid in their hatred for this person or that and see where it gets you.

If a lesson goes unlearned the first time, man is doomed to repeat it over, and over again until it finally sinks in. We've had far too many lessons, and have learned far too little, and I fear forces are being brought to bear which will catch us wholly unaware if we continue this docile, submissive trudge toward what many have deemed inevitable.

One thing is certain, and is beyond dispute: once we get beyond the rhetoric, the bloviating, the hyperbole, and the divisiveness, once we peel back the layers and the barest of truth remains, the words of Jesus echo through the millennia “Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation.”

There are no carve outs, there are no exceptions to the rule, there are no special dispensations, Jesus said that every kingdom divided against itself will ultimately be brought to desolation. Likewise, every city or house divided against itself will not stand.

Proverbs 4:7-9, “Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting, get understanding. Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her. She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.”

With love in Christ,
Michael Boldea Jr.