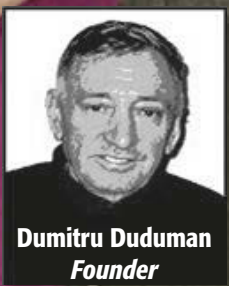
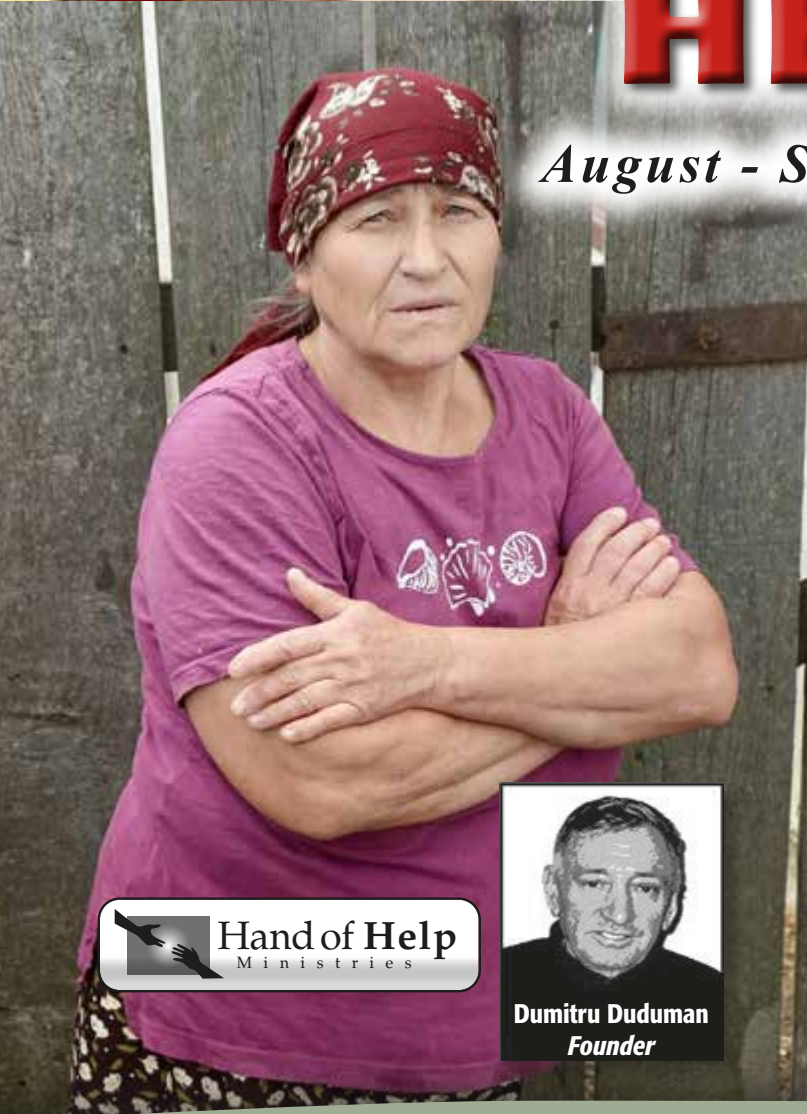




Hand of **HELP**

August - September 2023



Dumitru Duduman
Founder

HAND OF HELP

PO Box 496719 • Garland, TX 75049

HAND OF HELP OFFICE

1012 South Third Street • Watertown, WI 53094

 handofhelp.com/facebook

Toll Free: 866-371-7636 Ph: 920-206-9910
www.handofhelp.com info@handofhelp.com

 handofhelp.com/youtube

Generations

It's hard to describe emotions, especially deep, profound ones that crash upon you on waves of nostalgia and memories thought long forgotten. I'd dropped my daughters off at the orphanage in the care of my father and went to gas up the van we would be taking to the nearby villages to distribute food packages for the day. Since everyone in town had heard from a friend who'd heard from a friend that diesel prices were about to inch up again, there was a line, and it took me longer to fuel up than I'd previously thought. By the time I returned, the work had been done, and my girls and dad had put together all the packages we'd be taking.

I walked into the hall and saw them standing in front of a dozen or so packages, my dad trying to communicate in his rusty English, my daughters, in turn, trying to use the handful of Romanian words they'd learned from their mother and me. That singular moment, the tableau of them standing, talking, smiling, and laughing after an hour of filling bags with various sundries, took the breath out of me not so much for what it was but for the memories it brought to mind, fresh and crisp, from decades past.



It was in that same hall that I helped my mother put together similar packages, and before that, my grandfather in my aunt's apartment in the old center of town. All told, three generations doing that to which they had been called to do, helping the poor, feeding the hungry, and doing it joyfully.

All the memories of long days and unslept nights, the aching muscles and protesting joints as we hauled the packages down rickety flights of stairs to waiting cars, all the faces and places and tears of joy, they all came flooding back in one surreal moment that brought tears to my eyes.

Now, here I was with children of my own, showing them the way they must go just as I was shown it and my mother before me.

It was then that I realized many of the fears I'd harbored were unfounded. I didn't know if the girls were old enough to understand what we were doing or why we were doing it, but they did, clearly and unequivocally.

"We're doing this to help hungry people, Daddy," my youngest piped up when I asked why they thought we'd woken up earlier than they were used to and come to the orphanage ready to work.

Many things have changed over the years. The work has grown, our reach has broadened, and God has blessed the work in greater measure, but the core purpose of the ministry has remained the same from decade to decade and generation to generation. We started out preaching the Gospel, and we still are. We started out caring for the widow and the orphan, and we still are. We started out feeding the hungry and clothing the naked, and we still are.

When I am gone, and my daughters have children of their own, I pray that this ministry will still be doing what it's always done because there will always be someone crying out to God for help in their hour of need.

With love in Christ,
Michael Boldea, Jr.



One Day

After several false starts and repeated inquiries as to whether anyone needed to use the restroom before we left, we were well on our way. It took me a minute to explain to the girls that where we were going, there were no gas stations, no indoor restrooms, or indoor plumbing for that matter, but since they'd never seen it firsthand, they were skeptical.

Our destination was the villages around Trusesti, some twenty miles from Botosani, and we planned on visiting a dozen families. Since there's always some immediate need that arises when we're out in the field, we took a couple of extra food packages along just to be sure.

I'd asked my dad to, if possible, focus on families with children since one of the reasons I wanted to bring my girls along was for them to see how others live and interact with children their age, the language barrier notwithstanding.

Our first stop was the Grijinscu family, Samuel and Beatrice, who have six children. The local pastor, whom we'd brought along as a human GPS, told us their ages, and since they were all under the teenager threshold, I excitedly told my daughters that they were about to make some new friends. That would not be the case. All of the Grijinscu children had come down with chicken pox, and since neither of my daughters had had it, they were relegated to waiting outside and trying to coax a standoffish puppy out of his makeshift dog house.

What was certain is that our visit was not accidental, as sister Beatrice told us they had no food left in the house and no money to buy anymore. We left a package and some finances and were on to our next destination.

Our second stop was the home of Teodora Pauca, a widow who lives with and cares for her special

needs son. Having just turned eighty-two, Teodora is slowing down a bit, but since she's the only person her son has, she said she has no choice but to press on. Gheorghe, her son, is 56 and requires crutches to get around. Teodora has not had an easy life; then again, very few in the rural areas of Romania have.

The girls wanted to know how Gheorghe had hurt himself, in that he needed the crutches, both being the highly empathetic sort, the older more than the younger one, and I had to explain that he's needed them since he was very young. Victoria, my eldest, started to cry. There would be a lot more tears on this trip.



The next home we would visit was that of Cornelia Hantescu, also in the Trusesti area, who, after having worked in Italy for fifteen years, returned to Romania and bought a house that she shared briefly with her son, and was summarily kicked out of her home by her daughter in law shortly after her son got married.

Not wanting to be a burden or stay where she wasn't welcomed, Cornelia left, and when a brother from the church found out about her situation, he allowed her to stay in a home he'd bought earlier that year for as long as she needed to.



Continued on Page 4

Since I figured the girls were a bit young to understand the intricacies of interfamilial squabbles, I didn't go into the details of Cornelia's story with them, explaining that she was crying because she was happy to receive the help we had brought.

From there, we visited the Dembroschi family, a family well known to this ministry, as we have helped them on numerous occasions. Since Viorel and Ana Dembroschi have fifteen children, some of whom are still young and at home, we spent more time there than we'd intended. After three or so ten-minute warnings, with the requisite hugs and goodbyes, the girls were almost ready to move on. They would have stayed the day and into the night had they been allowed, but it was well past noon already; all they'd had was a small breakfast, and we hadn't packed a lunch.



Then came the Mazareanu family, an elderly couple in the neighboring village of Buhaceni. The girls were fascinated by Mircea, who was born without fingers, and seeing him smile as he wriggled the stumps of his palms, they giggled along. Both Mircea and Viorica said they prayed for us every day, as the ministry was the only one that ever came to visit this far out of the city.



We then visited sister Anisoara Popovici, a widow whose husband died three years ago. She is sixty-two but still takes care of everything around the house, including tending to her garden. She offered the girls fresh strawberries, which Malina graciously accepted, but Victoria begged off as she isn't much of a fruit connoisseur unless it comes in ice cream form.

From there, we visited another family, also in the village of Buhaceni, who is praying for the resources to finish remodeling their home, as it needed some structural supports, windows, and a new roof if there was any hope of it remaining standing. Since they had no children or grandchildren, the big draw was the goats grazing on their property.



Also, in the village of Buhaceni, we visited the Deliciuc family with five children. Petrica, the head of the household, was gone as he worked as a day laborer, but the children and Maria were home. They are building a home, and although it's slow going, Maria's spirits are high, and her hope in the Lord is strong. After a drawn-out game of tag and the girls sharing their secret stash of lollipops with the Deliciuc children, we said our goodbyes and drove on.



It wasn't a long drive, as two doors down, we stopped to bless another Popovici family, this time Daniel and Marina. Marina was busy trying to get a wheelbarrow out of a rut as we drove up, and when she became apologetic for being dirty from the garden, we waved off her objections and told her why we were there. After dropping off a food package and leaving some money, we had three packages left, and the day was almost done.



Our next stop was the Stanciu family, who lives in the village of Pasateni, and although the children weren't home, their puppies were. While we spoke of the hardships of trying to have a service in your home twice a week while maintaining the home, the girls played with the puppies. The laughs and giggles told us everything was going swimmingly, and soon enough, it was time to move on.

From there, we visited Liliana Stanciu, also in the village of Buhaceni, who could not use her left arm due to a botched surgery twenty-five years ago. "It's the best thing that could have happened to me," she said with a faraway look. "I used to be one of those people who mocked Christians openly and loudly," she continued. "One night, I got drunk and fell out of the wagon on my way home and broke my arm.

In the hospital, while having my arm looked after, I took stock of my life and broke down weeping. I asked God for forgiveness in that hospital bed, and as soon as I was discharged, I sought out the people I used to mock, was saved and baptized."



Our last stop was the Ciubeica family. Pantelimon and Niculina have nine children, all still living at home, and seeing as it was our last stop, we left two food packages with them. They live in the village of Buimaceni, and since there is no church in the area, the Lord put it on their heart to start one. For now,



it's just their family and a couple of widows in the village, but we know not to despise small beginnings and ask that you keep the Ciubeica family in your prayers.

We gave the last of the food packages to the pastor who accompanied us and, feeling the weariness of the long day, began our drive back to Botosani. The girls were quiet in the backseat, and once in a while, I snuck a peak in the mirror to see if they'd fallen asleep. They hadn't. After going through the day's events and coming to a conclusion, Victoria said, "I like helping people, Daddy. I didn't know if I would, but I do."



I smiled and glanced sideways at my father sitting in the passenger seat. He was smiling, too.

With love in Christ,
Michael Boldea, Jr.



The Work Continues



The Ends of the Earth

Although whether or not He would find faith on the earth was left an open-ended question, Jesus was declarative about the poor always being among us. Jesus was confident the poor would always exist, and two millennia later, we see He was right. We knew He would be. He is right about everything.

As with many things in the world, the notion of poverty is a spectrum, and what's poor in someone's estimation may be downright affluent in someone else's. I've come to realize that the truly poor, those poor by any objective standard, are found away from the cities, far out into the villages, and usually at what my father likes to refer to as the ends of the earth.

Of the homes we visited on our trips, over half were the last house at the end of the road, and after that, nothing but fields, forests, marshes, or ponds. Those who are hurting have neither the time nor the resources to travel to the city and seek help. They are too busy surviving to think about taking a day off and trying to find someone to listen to them, never mind helping them in their hour of need.

As a ministry, we've known this for decades now, which is largely why we are proactive in seeking out those who need help rather than waiting for them to come to us. It is also why we employ local pastors in our searches because if anyone knows the needs of a community, specifically who is in need, it is the local pastors.

We are privileged to be able to be a blessing to those who would otherwise weep in despair, alone and isolated, far from the ear of anyone who could hear and help. We are likewise blessed by the knowledge that the God who sees and hears all is not deaf to their cry and uses this work to be the answer to their prayers.

We could not do what we do without your prayers and support, which is undeniably necessary work.

This calling is not for everyone, but it is our calling, and I am ever grateful to God that He continues to stir your heart in making it a reality. While it is day, we work. It is what God has commanded, and we will not shrink away from it, difficult as it may be. If you want to fish, you must go where the fish are. If you want to help the poor, you must likewise go where they are, even if that happens to be the ends of the earth.

With love in Christ,
Michael Boldea, Jr.





Yellow, Cats

In lieu of a child of the month for this edition of the newsletter, we have decided to share a great need in the family of Madalina Uriesu, a young lady who grew up in our care among the first generation of children raised at the orphanage.



We have now had over 500 children live with us through almost 30 years, some for a brief few months while their family situation improved, others that spent close to two decades with us, well into adulthood. Of the 500-plus lives that the Hand of Help Orphanage has impacted, there are only a handful of children I struggle to remember; those that were relatively well-behaved and stayed with us briefly, my aging memory has relegated to a foggy room with dirty windows that I try to peek through once in a while but rarely see anything of substance.

I recall the oddest things about the children: nicknames, food preferences, behavioral issues, of course, quirks, ticks, the way they pronounced certain words, and so much more. If asked about the Uriesu children, I would immediately respond yellow and cats. The five Uriesu children, Daniela, Marius, Ionut, Anca, and Madalina, came to us after their father suddenly passed away from liver failure at age 37. Their mother was overwhelmed and unable to care for the children, so Hand of Help welcomed them and gave them a home.

I was a teenager at the time and remember talking to every child at the orphanage and filling out a questionnaire. Apart from the general info, we had a section where the children would share their favorite colors, animals, activities, etc. At the time, though

the Uriesu children were asked individually, all five said their favorite color was yellow, and their favorite animals were cats. That oddity stood out, and I remember it to this day - hence the title of this article.

Though we hope that our children will never have to endure hardship again and that the chains of poverty be broken for good, that is certainly not our primary focus.

Our greatest desire and prayer for them is found in John 17:3: "...that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent," that they may have life eternal.



They are taught from the earliest age that if we "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," the Lord will keep His promises, "and all these things shall be added to you." They are also taught that in this world, we will have tribulations (John 16:33), but we can have peace and be of good cheer because He has overcome the world. Hallelujah!



We are overjoyed that Madalina and her husband are walking with our Savior and are bringing up their children, seven precious gifts from God, in the training and admonition of the Lord.

If it weren't for the expenses piling up to provide their youngest with specialized medical treatments, currently over \$600 per month, they would not require any financial support.

They asked if we could stop by for a visit without sharing the burden they have been carrying regarding the debt amassing.



Their joy and contentment in the Lord had hidden from us the extent of their plight. Once there, one look around their home revealed that they desperately needed a new roof, new insulation, and a complete bathroom remodel in order to resolve the black mold that they were living with and dangerously exposing their children to.



The emergency phase of the required assistance is budgeted to be around \$5,000, and Lord willing, we would like to tackle this immediately. The vehicle they rely on to drive their youngest to treatments over 50 miles each way, three times a week, also needs \$700 worth of repairs.



If the Lord decides to bless this project in a greater way, we will move forward with building a small addition for them.

Thank you for partnering with us through the years and making a difference in so many lives! We not only see the fruit of salvation, by God's grace, in the lives of the little ones that grew up with us but also the impact on the second generation being brought up in the Word.

No cats were dyed for the writing of this article.

Together for the Kingdom,
Daniel Boldea



Dear Brethren,


Sheep without a shepherd make for easy prey. Likewise, sheep with shepherds who aren't willing to stand between them and the wolves and put up a fight. There are still some, though fewer than we might like, who preach the truth and oppose the darkness, who stand for righteousness and are unafraid of the snarling wolves. Those are the ones the enemy is targeting and has been for the longest time.

Passive Christianity isn't a danger to the enemy's plans. Active Christianity is what he fears because he knows he is powerless against a fearless body of believers who stand on the truth of the Gospel and push back against the darkness with every chance they get.

While fables may be entertaining, the truth sets free and feeds men's souls. The enemy isn't troubled by entertained folks, but he is bothered by spiritually mature souls who know what it is to wage war against the wickedness encroaching upon every facet of today's culture. Even things that have no rational connection to the current push for lewdness and perversion seem to have been drawn into the vortex, and the average person is scratching their heads, wondering what a Ford truck has to do with the alphabet, folks.

There is a scarcity of truth in today's contemporary church, and we can't blame supply chain issues for it. It's not as though everyone who desires truth couldn't get their hands on a Bible in a country like America; it's that the desire for truth itself is waning in the hearts and minds of many.

The reasons for this are plentiful, but the primary one is that men have come to believe that truth is subjective, and their truth can be different from mine, and my truth different than yours. The moment the church stopped teaching that there is only one truth, the slide into lukewarmness began in earnest. The moment we replaced the Gospel of Christ with the Gospel of self is when evil seems to have gone into turbo mode because there was no longer a hedge against it.



A house built upon the rock and one built upon the sand can seem identical until the storm comes. It is in the midst of the storm that whether you build your house on a foundation of truth or not becomes evident, and one need only open their eyes to see that the storm is here.

Because the children of God know the foundation upon which they've built their spiritual home is Christ Jesus, the storm does not concern them as it does those who've built on shifting sand. Our reaction to the things taking place in the world is not the same as those who know not the One True God because while we have His enduring promise of being with us through the storm, they have nothing but themselves.

Though the world might be falling apart and chaos abounds, we walk humbly with our Lord toward the promise of eternity that is now within reach. We must resist any distraction from the singular purpose of growing in Him daily because nothing other than full faith and confidence in Him will keep our hearts free of fear and uncertainty.

With love in Christ,
Michael Boldea, Jr.