

Reaching and Serving the Persecuted Church

# IN TOUCH MISSION

i n t e r n a t i o n a l

Monthly

1 September 2016

*"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."*

Matthew 18:11

*Exposed*

How "Religion" Steals the Gospel  
...and the devastating results.

## POLAND

"I was very religious," says **Daria Przybyla**, "but at the same time as a teenager, I was suicidal and depressed."

Daria was raised in Poland. Eighty-seven percent (World Fact Book, 2012) of Poland's population are part of the State Church. She spent 17 years believing the only way a person can earn God's approval is through keeping religious rules and rituals.

Reverend Timothy Keller (not to be confused with ITMI's own Timothy Keller) says, "There are two false ways of thinking, each of which steals the power and distinctiveness of the gospel. ... The gospel opposes both 'religion' and 'irreligion.'"

Jesus' parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15: 11) perfectly illustrates this. The younger brother - representing irreligion - rejects the Father to do whatever he pleases. The older brother - representing religion - obeys, but only for what he can get from the Father. (v.29)

While the younger brother blatantly opposes God, the religious older brother's rebellion is less obvious. But just as the younger brother's rebellion lands him slaving away in the pigpen, the older brother's rebellion against

the Father leaves him feeling enslaved, too.

"Religion" - or rules without relationship - crushes us because we attempt to earn God's approval through our own efforts and obedience.

*"They don't  
know they can  
be once and  
for all forgiven  
because that -  
the gospel - is  
heresy."*

It gets us to place our hope in ...us.

Our own worthiness is no comfort because deep down, we know it isn't enough to hope in. And if it goes on long enough, the results can be tragic.

"I would do pilgrimage to Mary - pray to Mary," Daria continues, "it didn't make sense. There was no purpose. There was this sadness that wasn't even caused by anything specific.



### Dying

was a way out. I didn't know or think about whether I would go to heaven. I was so focused on, 'I've had enough, I cannot deal with this. I want out.' There was no hope. No joy. No peace. No comfort."

**Bartek**, who also grew up in Poland as part of the State Church, says, "People go to church and hear a bunch of rules and what they are supposed to do to be a good person. If you make a sin, you're not forgiven instantaneously. You have to go to confession. Then and only then, the priest decides - supposedly working with God - to forgive you. They constantly live in conviction that they are sinful but not forgiven. **They don't know they can be once and for all forgiven because that - the gospel - is heresy.** But there is no guarantee about it. If you go ask people about salvation, they say, 'I don't know,' 'I

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hope so, or 'maybe.' It's been my struggle for many years. They are never given a solution to this problem and ***the guilt eats them up from the inside.***"

The truth that Jesus takes their guilt, forgives unconditionally and pursues a relationship with them is REALLY GOOD NEWS to the many who are bearing that weighty burden.

Gaining trust long enough to share truth has been a daunting challenge for our Polish partners. People aren't expecting hope and freedom from anything that resembles the church. Once you are outside the State Church, you are considered something of a con-artist - tricky, manipulative and to be avoided at all costs.

Several years ago, Daria, who God blessed with a beautiful, rich singing voice, attended a Gospel Music Workshop in Poznan, Poland put on by ITMI's [Gospel Joy Workshops and Evangelism](#).

It was there that she heard that the gospel songs she was learning were inspired by the joy people found in a relationship with Jesus. She learned what He did on the cross in pursuit of that relationship with her. She listened as people from Gospel Joy talked about having peace. She *wanted* that.

Daria began volunteering at the workshops. She read Ephesians. She discovered grace. She learned salvation didn't involve rituals, guilt and confession.

"When I shared my discovery with my Mom," Daria said, "Her response was, 'Watch out! Someone is manipulating you.'"

At a Gospel Joy music camp, Daria was so touched by one of the testimonies given, that she opened up to the woman who gave it, and prayed to give her life to Christ.

After that, Daria went to a Poznan Word Zone, the group meetings Gospel Joy offers anyone who is interested in finding out more about a relationship with Jesus after the workshops. Daria planned to only go a few times, but ended up staying.

When Daria told her mother she wanted to be baptized and join the evangelical church, her mother cried. "It was difficult," Daria remembered.

Now, Daria and her new husband, Bartek, are involved in almost every aspect of the Gospel Joy Workshops and Evangelism ministry, but their main role is leading one of the three Word Zone gatherings in Poznan, Poland.

Before he met Daria, Bartek's story also begins in the State Church. He was in it for 23 years, but his Dad's alcoholism gave him questions.

"How could there be a God when my dad acts like this? Maybe there's a different way to connect with God," he thought.

Bartek's experience with his father is a snapshot of a pandemic of alcoholism and escapism tarnishing the idea of "Father" for an entire nation.

During the communist's rule, alcohol was one of the few easy products to get. The emotional and mental torture of falling short of religious requirements combined with economic troubles have incubated devastating results in the lives of many Polish

men.

Many come home from work and head straight to their chair to watch TV and drink.

Bartek said, "I thought that was only my dad, but it is most of Polish people's experience with dads. This feeds problems with God and His Fatherhood. Father is not a comforting figure for Polish people. Many struggle to accept the loving Father persona of God."

As a young adult, Bartek's roommate invited him to Piotr Zaremba's K5N church. He was struck by Piotr Zaremba's preaching. It was straight from the Bible, and that was

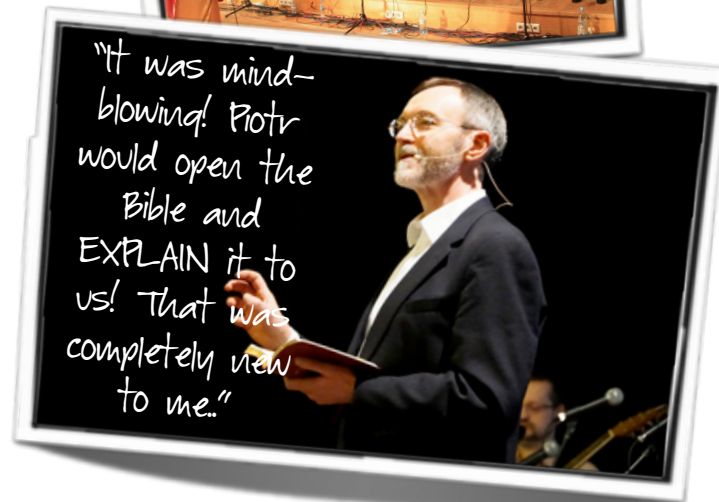
something Bartek had never seen before.

"It was mind blowing. Piotr would open the Bible and EXPLAIN it to us! That was completely new to me. After going to church 9-10 months I got [saved and] baptized," Bartek says.

Bartek's mother cried for days when she found out he planned to be baptized into an evangelical church.

Bartek has been leading the Word Zone group since 2014, and he felt God calling Him to do it full-time in 2015. He married Daria in January 2016.

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# From the Archives

## Casa Dorca Orphanage - 1993 & 1997

*To commemorate your 35-year ministry as partners with us, we're publishing stories from our ITMI Monthly newsletter archives. We're praying with each article, you'll be reminded of all God has done and moved to give Him glory and praise.*



### ROMANIA - 1993

In the late afternoon, Dr. Nick took us to Prilipet (pronounced, "Pray-lee-pit") near Bozovici, to see a building that used to be an orphanage operated by the Baptists.

It was built in 1927. In 1950 the communists closed it down and marched the forty children to the police station where they abandoned them. The local townsfolk were outraged. They cursed the police and threw rocks at them for taking the children out of their home and confiscating their property.

The pastor told us, with tears in his eyes, that as the procession of children moved along they sang, "It's so good to know we have a Father in heaven." The building was turned into a bakery that same year.

Today, the building is not used and has been given back to the Baptists. There is a large piece of property for sale, adjacent to the structure, for \$500. This would be a helpful addition. We had \$540 with us specially designated for orphans. We left it with them to purchase the land.

The believers estimate that it will cost \$15,000 to completely refurbish and repair the building so it can accommodate Romania's innocent little ones.

-Bill Bathman

In 1950, the communists  
closed it down and  
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children to the police  
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### ROMANIA - 1997

Even before I opened the front door to enter [Casa Dorca](#), I could hear the children singing. It was like music from heaven. Our visit was unannounced. No one knew we were coming.

They were having a Bible program. The songs were an important part for these precious children singing about their Savior.

The building is beautiful. Everything is geared to make the little ones feel at home, right down to stuffed toy animals on every window sill.

Loving, Christian house parents, comfortably decorated bedrooms, new shower and toilets, a new well and modern kitchen all combine to make a home for children who would otherwise have none.

They insisted that we stay for lunch. The food was delicious! The cook didn't prepare something special for us. A lot of tender, loving care goes into the preparation of every meal. The robust play activity and healthy look of each child is a testimony to the quality care they receive in this, the only home they have. Casa Dorca, another practical way to invest in Romania's future.

A **big** "THANK YOU" to everyone that had a part in this vital project.

-Bill Bathman



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Leading a Word Zone doesn't just involve leading the gathering once a week. The couple meet with people individually throughout the week. They spend a lot of time listening and building relationships.

"People are broken and they come and they feel safe, so we make them feel welcomed. They want to share their life story with us," Daria says.

"Daria has this amazing gift of getting people to open up," Bartek added, "Polish people aren't very open, so them opening up to Daria is amazing."

Faith is a private matter in Polish culture. Giving a testimony in public can even be offensive!

Every aspect of the Word Zone meetings are tailored to make people feel comfortable and safe. But changing a lifetime of beliefs is not a quick process. "It can take 20-50 weeks of hearing the gospel before someone becomes a believer," Bartek said with authority that comes from watching many travel the road to saving faith.

Daria added, "When they do [understand the truth], they often are angry, 'Why hasn't anybody told me this before?!'"

Daria and Bartek spoke about the leadership of Word Zones with ease and comfort. The young couple has been well-prepared for multiplication by ITMI's [Andrew Gorski](#), Gospel Joy's Director.

They've been trained in translating, logistics and even how to train other instructors. Andrew personally trained Bartek on leading the Word Zone group, caring for people and equipping them to lead. Bartek meets with Andrew every day, continuing to learn how to multiply disciples.

"Every step of the way they would tell us to do stuff and model it. Andrew gives a clear vision," Bartek said.

Now Bartek and Daria provide support for other Word Zone leaders. When Gospel Joy plans a workshop in a new city, Bartek and Daria are involved with finding and training local leaders in those cities to execute the follow-up Word Zone groups.

Bartek and Daria encourage the new leaders frequently throughout the opening weeks of the group, and maintain regular contact with them.

ITMI's Andrew and **Anna** Gorski are taking the impact they've had through Gospel Joy and training many more to make the same impact. Their impact is widening.

Jesus is using Gospel Joy to call "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest," to a nation weary of carrying the heavy burden of sin without forgiveness.

Now, Gospel Joy needs our help to honor Andrew and Anna's investment into Bartek and Daria by allowing them to put all of their energy into doing what they've been trained to do.

The message must go out! We don't want any more hurting souls asking, "Why haven't I heard this before!?" Bartek and Daria are trained, ready and willing to take it!

The young couple needs 12 supporters to commit \$50/month in order to be able to serve in Gospel Joy full-time. Several have already committed to help Gospel Joy multiply disciples who will tell people they can be forgiven and free.

We're praying seven more supporters will follow the Spirit's leading and become part of this amazing thing God is doing in Poland.

-Summer Kelley, Steve Evers

*The World Factbook: POLAND. (n.d.). Retrieved August 18, 2016, from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pl.html>*



The guilt  
eats them up from the inside.



## From the Director

### Dear Team,

Being a missionary sure exposes you to a lot of strangeness. Strange cultures. Strange customs. Strange perceptions. Strange ethics. Strange multiplied. It's true even for the missionaries in big city areas. The strangeness multiplies exponentially as you move further from the densely populated areas into the bush.

For the last couple of years we've hit the "STRANGE" wall over and over in attempt to give safe and clean water to the far western Zambian people on the western side of the massive Zambezi River.

There is no destination whose travel starts so strange as the 14-hour drive West-Northwest from Lusaka through small two-lane roads, dirt one-lane roads, wild animal game reserves that stretch for miles and miles, and mud hut communities that just seem to float aimlessly in the barren Zambian bush. After that long drive, you have to maneuver your 4-wheel drive vehicle down through the knee-deep river sand to a small, one or sometimes two vehicle, flat barge that hopefully will keep running until it gets you safely across the 200-meter wide, crocodile infested Zambezi River.

Once across the river, you need a running start off the barge to get enough momentum to - hopefully - plow through the deep white river sand. If you make it through the sand, the water-filled lows, up and down the sand hills, you make it to the alternating flat patches and reeds that cover much of what these isolated and forgotten people call home. The river creates such a barrier to these survival-only people that they have almost no access to what we would call clothing stores, food stores, doctors, schools, churches and that daily need - clean water.

ITMI, with your help, has been able to [revolutionize villages west of the Zambezi because we drilled water wells](#) - or bore holes - as they call them. The bore hole project was one of the most rewarding projects that ITMI has been involved in, due to the overall impact that is made in the physical and spiritual lives of these very simple people. It's also been one of the most difficult.

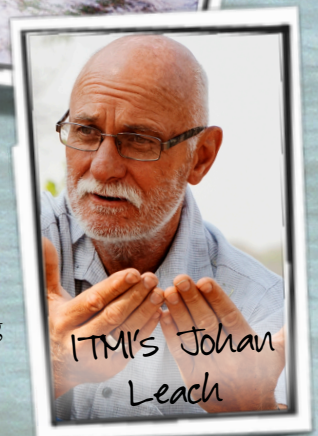
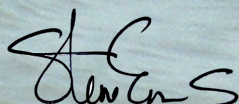
No well driller really wanted to go that far from Lusaka, away from the safety net of spare parts and mostly paved roads, to the west side of the river - where the need for clean water is most needed. We tried to be the best stewards possible. To keep our costs down. But that didn't exactly ensure we were working with drillers who would do what they promised. The main thing we needed was a trusted, experienced partner who could be onsite, run things from there and hold everyone accountable for their commitments and work.

I am excited to say, after a hiatus in our water well project, we are now back in the sand, so-to-speak. Our new ITMI partners, [Johan and Lesley Leach](#), have 20+ years of ministry experience. They've also been called to live on the river and evangelize those hundreds of small villages west of the Zambezi!

Johan is ecstatic. He knows what putting a water well in a village does to open wide the doors to bring the gospel of Jesus' salvation and discipleship to these unreached and uncared-for people. There is not enough paper here for me to type the number of "Thank yous" Johan has spoken and written to me since we agreed to allow him to run and oversee our revitalized water well project.

Lord willing, I will be with Johan in early October, encouraging the village people that are the recipients of your gifts of water. Pray that through the translators, I can share the love of God and the truth of your care and concern for them, as evidenced by these water wells. Thank you for your priceless help and encouragement.

In His Service,





# WHAT'S DIFFERENT ABOUT CASA DORCA?

## ROMANIA

Cipi (pronounced "Chipy") was 12 when he came to ITMI's Casa Dorca Orphanage in Prillipet, Romania with his brother and sister.

One of his earliest memories was crying as his mother left them at a state run orphanage when he was just a toddler.

Life in most Romanian orphanages is just hard. "I remember coming home from school, knowing I would be punished. For absolutely no reason. You knew after school, you had to go to the supervisor and put out your palms while she hit them with a stick." She wasn't the only one who abused them. The older kids terrorized and bullied the younger ones, too.

When the psychologist asked them if they'd like to go to Casa Dorca, they said, "Yes!"

Immediately, Cipi noticed a big difference between Casa Dorca and the other two orphanages he'd been at. Instead of threatening and intimidating him, the older kids took care of him! They showed him around and helped him adjust.



"This place feels more like a family than an orphanage," Cipi said. Brother Daniel, Casa Dorca's administrator at the time, called Cipi his friend.

Cipi was eager to learn, so he did well in school and participated in church activities enthusiastically. "I remember liking it so much," Cipi said of church, "It was so different from what I'd heard and knew."

As he read the Bible, he understood that he needed Jesus and became a believer.

Brother Daniel observed Cipi's love for learning and saw that he was able to attend high school and college, too. "They treat us like we are theirs," Cipi said of the Casa Dorca leadership.

After finishing college, Cipi returned to Casa Dorca. He wants to give back. To help and serve the kids who are walking the road he once traversed himself.

What does Cipi have to say to ITMI supporters who gave sacrificially to support him and the others at Casa Dorca?

***"There are no words for me to thank you, but I want to as much as I can."***

*-Summer Kelley, Steve Evers*

## For Praise

1. Zambia - Lusaka Bible College's 6th successful graduation means more leaders equipped to lead God's people.
2. Romania - Casa Dorca Orphanage celebrated being re-open 20 years (90 years since its original opening) in August.
3. Zambia - Johan Leach - new water wells being dug and new opportunities to evangelize and disciple.
4. Poland - Gospel Joy - faithful partners, new and old, helping multiply disciples and share Jesus with many in Poland.
5. Zimbabwe - Charl van Wyk - "A very BIG thank you to the ITMI partners who, through prayer and faithful giving, made this [boys] camp a milestone for the furthering of the Gospel and discipleship of the Zimbabwean youth."

## For Prayer

1. S. Africa - Onseepkans Mission - healing for Elmane from an infection after surgery and healing for Loretta's eye.
2. S. Africa - Smith Family- Kelly and Chrease are leading a team from South Africa to China.
3. Romania - Bethesda Home - Provision for the full-time care of 6 disabled Romanian widows.
4. Romania - Casa Dorca - the provision of funds enabling them to welcome more children into the family.
5. Bill and Harriett Bathman - facing ongoing health challenges.



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