

*"For my father and my mother have forsaken me,  
but the Lord will take me in."*

*Psalm 27:10*

**ITMI**  
*Monthly*

**1 JULY 2023**

[intouchmission.org](http://intouchmission.org)

## Behind the Scenes at Casa Dorca Children's Home

### ROMANIA

Giorgiana came to Casa Dorca Children's Home when she was 14 years old.

Giorgiana had a troubled and painful past, so that after spending Christmas of 2016 at ITMI's [Casa Dorca Children's Home](#), she chose to stay at Casa Dorca rather than go home. Her caseworkers and the staff at Casa Dorca agreed, and she became a member of the Casa Dorca family.

### Behind the Scenes at Casa Dorca Children's Home

Casa Dorca is now one of the largest buildings among the small red-roofed residences that make up the rural dwellings of the townspeople of the rural village of Prilipet, Romania.

The building, which ITMI supporters helped expand over two decades ago, has 13 rooms and 25 beds.

There is a kitchen, a relatively large common room for gathering, a garden, and a courtyard, where

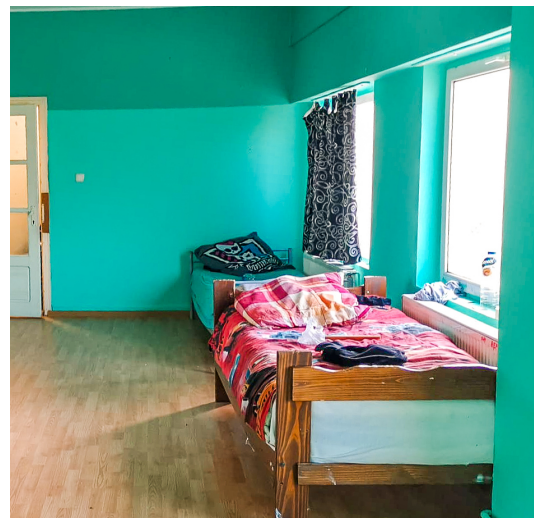
*(continued on p.4)*



ITMI's Casa Dorca Children's Home in rural Romania.



A view of Prilipet, Romania from the second floor of Casa Dorca.



Casa Dorca has 13 rooms and 25 beds.



# TRAGEDY STRIKES ON THE ZAMBEZI



Johan, Johnny, Joseph and Rose (right to left) in Mahina village with the Zambezi River behind them in June 2021.



Johnny discusses the Mahina Forward Base garden and the challenges faced with visitors.



Two-man evangelist teams reach remote villages by canoe.



An aerial view of Mahina, the mission outpost where Johnny ministered with his family.

## ZAMBIA

It was a late May afternoon when word of the tragedy reached ITMI's Johan and Lesley Leach.

They were at their home and mission base near Chavuma, 20 miles downriver from where it happened.

The Zambian southern-hemisphere summer was turning to fall. Morning and evening temperatures were cool, dropping into the 50s (F), but daytime temperatures were mild.

Johan's friend and co-laborer in mission, Johnny, had set out in a canoe that afternoon with another fellow from his village on a routine trip to set fishing traps across the river.

The outing ended suddenly when Johnny's dugout canoe capsized in the river. Both men drowned. There was a reliable witness who had seen the whole thing.

"He was my best friend here in this neck of the woods. I'm going to surely miss him," Johan told us.

Immediately, Johan set out with his motorboat to recover the bodies. He searched late into the night and again the following morning but was unsuccessful.

Johnny lived with his wife, Rose, two children, and many grandchildren at the Mahina way-station mission, nestled into the elbow created where a tributary meets the Zambezi. (Astute ITMI readers may recognize Mahina as one of the locations we helped provide access to clean, safe water.)

Johan shared, "Johnny was



seventy years old. An upbeat, joyful character, Johnny was someone I could sit with for hours. In his broken English, sometimes needing his son, Joseph, to assist with translating, he would share his heart, vision for his family, and his love of Jesus. When I would arrive at the village, there was much fanfare. Being a smaller and lighter fellow he would run into my arms, and I would pick him up as you would a small child, to the delight of all the children present. I would, at times, tell him to get into the wheelbarrow and push him around the yard. My friend and brother in Christ was a big loss to me, but as I committed to the Lord recently, the work will proceed, and our dreams will be pursued, making Mahina a place where many of the further afield village folk can come to for supplies as well as medical treatment. I salute my friend. Rest in peace ol' buddy!"

The mission outpost, and Johnny and Rose's ministry working to supply it through fishing, gardening, and other work, allows evangelists to reach people from the Luvale tribe living further into the bush with the Gospel.

The mission outpost provides evangelists a place to re-stock and carry the Gospel farther into the bush, to villages of Luvale people living where the Gospel's influence is thin or non-existent.

Like Johnny and Johan, these evangelists take significant risks living in and traversing the river and wilderness so that the Gospel can reach these isolated people.

But they are dedicated to bringing the Gospel and follow-up discipleship to this forgotten and remote area.

Once the evangelists share the Good News, a Hub Leader follows up. Hub-Leaders are shepherds that take spiritual responsibility for all the village churches within a one-day walk from their homes.

Johan's ministry facilitates a comprehensive four-year training course that equips Hub Leaders with theological and church leadership training. Hub Leaders learn to prepare sermons Biblically. When they return to their area, they implement what they learned in their teaching the following Sunday. Then the Hub Leader produces a two-hundred-word report on the impact of their message, which Johan or one of his closest ministry associates, Davy, evaluates. Hub Leaders receive instruction to plant village churches, which includes establishing and training someone from the village to lead locally. Every six months, Hub Leaders attend training sessions, then return to the field to implement what they've learned.

"These men of faith are always grateful for these workshops," Johan says of the Hub Leaders, "With your consistent prayers and support, we are able to equip them with audio and visual literature, Bibles, sleeping bags, tents, paper, and backpacks, ensuring thoroughly trained and equipped disciples of Jesus. They do this in obedience to the Great Commission and purely for the love of the Gospel and seeing God's salvation touch the lives of destitute people, physically and spiritually changing them. Seeing the change the Gospel brings to the villages' atmosphere and being a part of it further inspires them to continue. There's a new joy, love, kindness, and goodness that just comes alive in the lives of the new

believers."

Hub Leaders participate in this training for about four years. This month, Johan kicks off Hub Leader training for a new group. Three hundred fifty-one pastors from Zambia are now committed to beginning this comprehensive training.

In August, Johan plans to visit various places in the States to meet with and encourage supporters. If you're interested in helping further this cause - the spreading of the Gospel on the Luvale floodplains - this is a great chance to meet Johan, gain a deeper understanding of his ministry, and encourage him at the same time. [Contact our office to learn how.](#)

In life and in death, Johnny gave his life to spreading the Gospel to the Luvale people in northwestern Zambia and bordering Angola. Now, he is with Christ in a joyous reunion.

Johnny's wife and son remain dedicated to operating the mission outpost on the river that took Johnny's life.

Praise the Lord for their dedication and faithfulness; the Mahina mission outpost will remain operational, continuing to assist with the evangelism and discipleship of the Luvale people.

ITMI honors Johnny's life and these dedicated servants of Christ. Their sacrifice for the sake of Jesus and His call to share the Good News is an example for all of us seeking to follow Jesus. Oh, may we be as dedicated as these Zambian believers!

*-Summer Kelley, Steve Evers*

(continued from p.1)



Giorgianna and Ionel after her baptism.



Ionel next to the Casa Dorca boiler.



The boiler's side was damaged as a result of burning wood that wasn't fully dried out.

the kids enjoy outdoor activities when the weather allows.

The facility is heated by a wood-burning system that heats and stores hot water which is then pumped through many wall mounted radiators. Wood is the most cost-effective way to heat in this rural area.

Coal would be cheaper, but regulations severely limit coal burning, and it can only be used occasionally in small quantities.

Each summer, Casa Dorca needs to collect all the wood needed to keep the home warm through the winter. The wood needs 6 months to dry out before it can be used.

The staff, with help from the children staying there, as is appropriate, chop the wood and prepare it for use during this time.

Last winter, Casa Dorca was forced to burn wood that hadn't fully dried yet. The green wood gives out moisture, which combines with other elements present in the boiler, creating a gooey residue that sticks to the walls of the boiler and corrodes it.

This caused the inner wall to be compromised, and the boiler had to be shut down in the dead of winter.

During that time to deal with the very cold temperatures, they attempted to use some portable electric heaters to heat a minimum of the rooms. This was extremely expensive. It was also crowded. There was still no hot water to wash dishes or shower, either.

Like all foster homes, Casa Dorca must maintain its facilities and environment to meet government regulations in order to remain open and legal. If Casa Dorca were to fail to meet these regulations and, for example, not provide heated rooms during the winter, it would risk the government relocating the kids

who are staying there.

This would disrupt the "normalization" that is in progress for each of these children as they take steps toward healing from trauma, learn to re-engage socially, and learn to trust others through relationships at Casa Dorca.

"It would be really bad," Ionel Iovescu, the Director of Casa Dorca, commented.

## Group Children's Homes (Like Casa Dorca): The Last Stop

In recent years, some of the laws and procedures have changed in Romania. When a child enters the system, case workers will first try to find a foster family for the child. If a child is over 7 and has a history of behavior issues or problems, that is when a child gets placed in a "group home" like Casa Dorca. A younger sibling can come to Casa Dorca with their older sibling if the older sibling gets placed somewhere like Casa Dorca, but in general, kids under 7 aren't being placed in group homes.

Ionel explains, "When a family splits, the kids are neglected, but it doesn't happen instantly. It takes years. The first thing that goes is school, then hygiene. The authorities only step in when things get really bad."

So, by the time a young person reaches a place like Casa Dorca, they have likely been repeatedly traumatized by abuse or neglect, are grievously behind in school, and often believe there isn't hope or a future for them.

Re-engaging with the world is difficult; normal social interactions probably feel almost impossible. Re-entering school after years away is an additional challenge that is often seen as insurmountable.

(continued on p.6)



# From the Director



## DEAR TEAM: Reaffirming Our Commitment to (Real) Success

I was both amazed and saddened at the same time. Last month, I was reading a question-and-answer article on the philosophy of Toyota's leadership on EVs (Electric Vehicles) or now called BEVs (Battery Electric Vehicles). Coming from a family in the car business back in Georgia in the 1950's-1980's, my interest in mechanical vehicles has always been keen. It seems Toyota purchased a Tesla and disassembled it to see if their version of the BEV would be competitive. The Toyota engineers and upper management marveled at the progress and "internals" of the Tesla and stated it "...was a work of art." That was high praise from a seasoned competitor.

What saddened me was a specific term that the author, Nick Fiekowsky, used to describe Toyota's decision-making in response to this observation: "...my experience with disruptive technologies suggests that Toyota is under-estimating the inconvenient BEV tsunami that has already risen to their ankles." Nick goes on to say, "History may view this decision as the time when Toyota reaffirmed its commitment to failure. Similar to when the Titanic's officers under-valued their spotter's iceberg alert and continued forward at full speed. Or Kodak made desultory digital photography efforts on their way to oblivion."

Throughout the Bible, we see this reaffirming of a commitment to failure from Adam and Eve to Cain, Esau, the wandering children of Israel, Judas, and Lucifer himself. Toyota is, in effect, relatively healthy...today. But reaffirming their past decisions may have set a direction that will lead to failure. Each of these Bible characters allowed themselves to make choices that ultimately led away from God's Word and His plan. Pain and devastation were the ultimate result.

Our government reaffirmed its commitment to failure when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that "state-sponsored prayer in public schools was unconstitutional" in *Engel v. Vitale* on June 25, 1962. The country didn't implode on that day, but the foundation on which this country was built was now thrown out as unacceptable and unconstitutional. *Engel v. Vitale*, combined with many other small and steady transitions away from Biblical truth, has guaranteed a country in bondage to ungodliness and darkness.

Godly wisdom is God's protection against making decisions today that, unbeknownst to us at the time, would reaffirm commitment to failure in our lives, relationships, ministries, and futures. Today, whether a ministry or a person, failing to repent from doing what is "easy" and line up with real Biblical truth is reaffirming commitment to (future) failure.

Our Indian partners, **David and Taru Raj Kumar**, reaffirm their commitments to success by faithfully carrying God's word to the blind and needy of rural southern India. Even with health challenges and despite difficult transportation and teaching accommodations, David presses on with his monthly remote mission trips to touch many of the rural churches and their leaders with the truth of God's love for the lost Muslim communities. Taru stays home and cares for the many new children and their families living in the Modi Road "Little Pakistan" slum.

**Charl van Wyk**, ITMI's South African partner, touches spiritual and physical needs in many of southern Africa's most broken and devastated areas. Currently, Charl is asking all of us to help he and ITMI's **Mark Parris** and their other partner **Dr. Bradley Kuhn**, be God's hand of help and provision for the flooded Stone Hill (Klipheval) settlement of 50,000 waterlogged and forgotten squatters. Charl, Mark, Bradley, and their team have given us another opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to success. We can do this by responding to the emergency with help, earning the opportunity to speak the truth once again into the lives of Stone Hill families that have lived lives filled with decisions that reaffirm their commitments to failure. Commitment to God's truth is a commitment to success in all walks of life. May we all seek the path of obedience to the Lord's leading and, in doing so, reaffirm our commitments to success in obeying the Great Commission.

(By the way, I believe the jury is still out on whether the BEV is the answer to our world's transportation needs.)

In His Service,



Rural believers as they are equipped to share Jesus by ITMI's David Kumar.



Homes in Stone Hill are unable to keep water out when inclement weather strikes.



(continued from p.4)

The staff at Casa Dorca embraces these tough cases with open arms, diving headlong into the trauma and pain and offering hope and healing through Jesus.

When they walk through the Casa Dorca doors, that “case” is no longer a “case” - it's a beloved family member.

In 2021, Giorgiana graduated High School. Later that summer, she made her faith her own and was baptized at the local church. Ionel wrote,

“It is a very encouraging time for us at Casa Dorca when one of our kids decides to make their faith their own. We do everything we can to teach them the Gospel as they grow up here, we try to exemplify Christlikeness for them, but ultimately the decision is theirs to make. Sometimes these decisions for Christ come later in life for them, but occasionally we are blessed to celebrate a baptism before they leave our care.”

Later that fall, Giorgiana started

nursing school about a 2.5-hour drive from Prilipet.

Now 20, she lives on her own but remains a member of the Casa Dorca family and under their care and provision. They continue to interact with and pray for Giorgiana and her walk with the Lord. In her first year at nursing school, she made good grades and adjusted well to living in an apartment on her own. She enjoys baking, coffee shops, and reading.

Casa Dorca has an immediate need for \$1910 to purchase the rest of the firewood they will need to get through this winter. It is already July, which means the wood purchased by any funds given this month will not be ready until January or February.

ITMI supporters have already made sure Casa Dorca can continue providing a safe place and a loving family environment for kids in need by giving \$14,705. That wood has already been purchased and is drying out, but they need to purchase the rest very, very soon.

-Summer Kelley, Steve Evers

Let's  
meet up!

ITMI partners  
**JOHAN LEACH**  
and **CHARL VAN WYK** are both  
planning visits to  
the US in August  
and September.

They'd both love to meet  
with you over coffee,  
encourage your small  
group, relieve your  
Sunday School teacher  
for a week, fill a pulpit or  
an interview slot...**as  
long as its an  
encouragement to  
someone!**

**Contact our  
office for  
details!**

## FOR PRAISE

1. Romania - Casa Dorca - The opportunity to love and share Jesus with hurting children in rural Romania.
2. Zambia - Leach - Villagers coming to faith and getting baptized by Evangelists and Hub Leaders.
3. India - Paul and Molly - Provision for and safe passage taking all 23 children to the mountains. Four of their girls were accepted into a Christian school against the odds.

## FOR PRAYER

1. Zambia - Leach - Comfort for Johnny's friends and family.
2. South Africa - van Wyk - Stone Hill residents whose homes aren't standing up to unpredictable winter weather.
3. Romania - Casa Dorca - Provision of funds to purchase wood soon, in time to dry out before next winter.
4. India - Paul and Molly - Christians in East India, including pastors from Paul's pastors fellowship for equipping pastors, experiencing persecution, forced church closures, threats and police summons.
5. Poland - Gorski - Safety for the Ukrainian family the Gorskis hosted for 6 months who made the difficult decision to return to Ukraine even though it is still a war zone to be reunited with their father/husband.
6. Ukraine - Evers, Ban - Steve and Adi's upcoming trip to serve and equip Ukrainian pastors.



PO Box 7575, Tempe, AZ 85281 (480) 968-4100 (888) 918-4100  
intouchmission@intouchmission.org | fb.com/intouchmission  
@intouchmission | instagram.com/intouchmissioninternational



A higher standard.  
A higher purpose.



Scan to Donate