



**FGCI April 2021 Ministry Update**

by Jeremy Befort, FGCI Associate Director

Dear Friends,

I hope you had a wonderful Easter celebrating the resurrection of our Lord and Savior! Romania and Moldova go by the Orthodox calendar for Easter, so they will be celebrating on May 2nd. As Easter approaches in Romania and Moldova, we will be reaching our kids online and in-person (through our local staff) this year with the Easter message of hope. Please keep our FGCI kids and young adults in your prayers these next few weeks, and please pray for us as we share the message of Christ.



Vlad delivering food to a deaf family.



Providing for a girl with Down Syndrome.

**SponsorLink**

Our SponsorLink program continues to provide for the dire needs of struggling families and individuals in Romania and Moldova over this past year. With the coming of the new year, we had hoped that Romania and Moldova would be slowly lifting their restrictions so that the economy could open up again and so that we could make it over. Instead, Romania, Moldova, and several countries throughout Europe have decided to lock down again. This is really hurting the poor, who are unable to work and provide basic needs for their families. Thanks to many gifts to our SponsorLink program, we have been able to continue our food relief program and to provide much-needed relief for many families. This has especially opened many hearts and doors in Moldova, where Vlad and Carolina Pogor (our FGCI houseparents) have been able to find families in need, provide for their needs, and then share the Good News of Christ with them! Almost weekly, Vlad sends us stories of a new individual or family he has found. And Mama Nootsie continues to help a group of villagers in Eastern Romania who have been hit hard by the lockdowns. As the pandemic and lockdowns drag on, we will continue to provide food relief.



Alex teaching English to Artur and Renata.

Another exciting part of our SponsorLink program has been our ability to sponsor tutors and English classes for many kids in Romania and Moldova. Currently, we are supporting 11 Roma (Gypsy) teenagers from Vulcanesti to attend English lessons in Nisporeni, taught by Alex Ulinici, the pastor of the church in Nisporeni. The classes are going well, and we hope that this will also encourage these young men and women to attend high school and college in the future. Our 11 students are: Samson, Renata, Samrad, Sonia, David, Erusalim, Timur, Gherman, Olia, Raia, and Silvica. In Romania, we provide a tutor for three students (two from the government orphanages) to help them with some subjects they are struggling with in high school. Currently, we are sponsoring Daniel (the son of one of the mothers who used to live at our Little Lambs of the Lord Maternity Center), Mamut, and Gabi.

Lastly, through you, our sponsors, we have also been able to assist with dental needs. In Romania and Moldova, many of the kids and young adults we work with suffer from dental pain, as they rarely see a dentist. Most of the time, this lack of dental care is due to the high costs of getting their teeth cleaned and fixed. So far, we are helping Stefan (former resident at a center for adults with special needs) and one of our former Home of the Good Shepherd kids (now a young adult), Mihai Mihailenco. We plan on helping more of our FGCI kids in the future. Thank you for your support! To find out more about SponsorLink, please go to <https://www.fgci.org/sponsorlink>.

**Reaching our kids.**

Mama Nootsie still is not able to enter the government centers, even though she has received the Covid vaccine. Still, she continues to take several of the teenagers to an outside restaurant to talk, and she visits the adults with special needs we work with in Eastern Romania. When she is not visiting them, she is in contact with our kids by



Stefan (left) and Mihai showing the teeth they need to have repaired.



Mama Nootsie & Nicoleta delivering food relief bags.

phone, as they are constantly calling her to ask for advice or to share what they are going through. As I said in my last update, she is like a mother to them. This will never change, even when she retires later this year. All of our FGCI kids love Mama Nootsie.

Nicoleta, our InSNC Sunshine (therapy) Room employee at Zebil, continues to work with the Zebil residents daily. She was allowed back into our room in January. Mama Nootsie says that Nicoleta is doing well and has a continual flow of residents (adults with special needs) who enter the playroom daily. Nicoleta does a variety of activities with them, including games, writing, crafts, and exercises.



Mama Nootsie (center) and Nicoleta (right) at a center for adults in Zebil.

### Making disciples in Romania and Moldova.

Last year I started holding online Bible studies and mentoring the kids and young adults we work with in Romania and Moldova. I have hundreds of our FGCI kids, teenagers, adults, and even parents of the Roma kids on Facebook and other social media platforms. This ministry keeps growing as I add more kids and spend more time discipling them. At the beginning of the year, we decided to start producing short Romanian Bible videos for them, as well.



Jeremy recording a Romanian Bible devotion for our FGCI kids.

So far, Beti Keller (one of my long-time Romanian friends and wife of FGCI board member Matt Keller) and I have recorded and sent out several of these Romanian devotional videos along with weekly Bible memory verses. Jared and Elena Neher (Elena is Romanian and used to work for us) are also working on an animated video where Matt Keller is creating the illustrations. Elena is reading the Bible story in Romanian, and Jared is editing the video. I am also reaching out to our Romanian and Moldovan volunteers to have them create videos. We hope to release several videos every month.



Beti recording a Bible lesson for our FGCI kids.

While we wait for the European Union to determine what regulations they will place on travelers, we are now producing these Bible videos to reach our kids inside the orphanages and in their homes. Our prayer is that we will be able to reach and encourage our kids and teenagers with the Good News of Christ through the Romanian Bible videos, devotions, and materials we will be sending them online. So far, the response has been really good, and the kids and teenagers we are reaching have told us they like the Bible lessons and devotions. My hope is to turn this new ministry into a long-term one-on-one discipleship, mentorship, and Bible study program for the hundreds of kids and young adults we have been working with these past 25+ years. As our FGCI kids and young adults grow up and transition into adulthood, our goal is to always be there for them, helping them learn to follow Jesus and to make wise decisions that will help them succeed and honor God.



Meeting online with Andrea and her mom, Estera. They live in Zizin, Romania.



Meeting online with Laurentiu (left) and Ghita. Both live in state-run centers.

Thank you for your faithful prayers and support during these strange times. Please pray for the borders to open up this summer so that we can send our summer teams and hold our summer Bible camps in Romania and Moldova. Thank you, and God bless!

Your brother in Christ,

Jeremy Befort

FGCI Associate Director & Missions Teams Coordinator