

Dear Sponsors,

Thank you for all your involvement before Christmas with so many things. Thousands of Christmas presents were given out from all the things you sent. Thank you for everything you have done and for everything you have given!



Giving out Christmas presents

The children and young people in FCE's family homes took part in giving out bags of groceries and Christmas presents to poor families in the villages around Marghita. Claudia and Renata from Casa cu Flori told us about their experience:

"We wanted to do this to see how the poor people live and to understand and appreciate what we have. They were happy and grateful for so little and we take everything we have for granted. We sang Christmas carols outside their houses and they invited us in. They are many living in a small place and there were many children. The children opened their presents and were very happy for what they received. The houses looked really bad but it was warm inside. We prayed for them. We thought about these poor people when we got home and we

want to try to take more care of what we have. If we get sick, we receive help and we have medicine but what do they have?"

A new year

"A new year, a new beginning, new plans, new hopes and new dreams. For some of us, dreaming and making plans may be easy but for others hope has no meaning. If you are receiving this newsletter, it means that you are already touched by the needs of others and are interested in spending time, energy and money to ease the suffering. This is a wonderful thing which brings a wonderful reward.

In 2017, FCE wants to be the hands of Jesus whos bring healing to the soul and hope to the heart. In addition to continuing the existing



projects, we will increase our focus on helping disadvantaged, Roma communities through building a hygiene centre in the community, creating possibilities for training and employment and implementing informal education for children and parents.

We also want to continue to help our young people, who have proven to be responsible and are willing to make an effort towards their own development, to have a small house of their own and finally feel safe and at home.

Thank you so much for staying involved. Together we make a great team and are able to bless many and bring a spark of hope in people's lives."

Lidia Micula

Passion

A group of project leaders from FCE were at a management course in Oradea led by 'Summit Global Management' who leads courses in more than 125 countries. Maria Barothy has worked in the After School project since 2014 and as a teacher at the special needs school since 2010. Since the end of last year, she is responsible for the contacts between After School and the town, the school and the children's families.

"For me the course was a new and exciting experience," said Maria after the two-day course and she continues, "The lectures and videos about people's life stories became strong examples for me and I will take with me how important it is to believe in myself, in what I do and that we need to have passion in our mission!"

Maria is convinced that the After School project is a great opportunity for the children who received this chance. Together with her co-workers, she dreams about seeing these children taking the opportunity they have been offered, managing to finish school and being able to get a job which is very important. "If we succeed, which I hope and believe we will, the children will have an education, be healed emo-

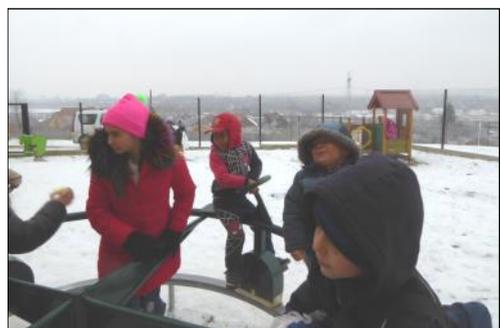
tionally and be integrated into society," Maria says with conviction. She admits that this job hasn't been easy for her but nowadays she is calm and feels safe knowing that God is with her.



Maria Barothy with pupils from the After School project

The After School project is run in partnership with Eric's, a Swedish organisation. Forty children aged 3-15 years come to FCE's building 'Brândușa' every day after school. They receive a hot meal and the opportunity to wash as well as support with emotional problems. They are 'seen' and above all they receive help with their homework so they can manage in school.

After School also provides the school materials, stationery and other things which are necessary for children to be able to attend school. Since the children's parents live below the minimum means of subsistence and don't have any education, the children wouldn't be able to manage in school without the support the After School project provides.



The playground at Brândușa for the After School kids is finally finished and the kids love it

A wish come true

Since last year, Magdalena “Duci” Halasz is project leader for FCE’s family homes, foster homes and homework tutoring for these children. She tells us that she and her husband had to wait a long time to become parents. After a traffic accident, she was told she wouldn’t be able to have any children but after longings and prayer, she gave birth to a little boy.

“When I saw our child, I started to understand how vulnerable and dependant a little child is and how much love and care every child needs. A strong longing to take care of abandoned children was born in my heart.

I knew about FCE and during this time I met Frank and Heleen Vos from the Netherlands, who had started a foundation called Lidia. When they asked me if I wanted to work with them, I knew my wish had come true. They encouraged me to get an education and at the age of 38, I started university.

Before I started working with abandoned children, it seemed a very nice thing to do but when I met these wounded children with their behaviour issues, I realised that I would not be able to do this if God hadn’t put it on my heart. I would have given up. Even today, when I am faced with difficulties, it helps to know that I didn’t choose this, but rather God led me into it and He gives me the strength and wisdom that I need to carry on.

I have worked at the Special Needs School, helped children from Casa Albă with their homework and for a while I worked at FCE’s day centre. When Erikshjälpen partnered with us in running the After-School project, it was decided I would work there. Unfortunately I fell ill with breast cancer and it was a difficult time. I was off sick for a year, I was longing for the children and got depression. I was glad when I could come back to work and then I started helping the children in the family homes with their homework and worked instead of the parents

when they had their weekend off.

Today I am a project leader and I am happy for the team of co-workers who look after each child. We co-operate well and together we fight for the children to learn to be wise in order to make good decisions in their lives. Unfortunately, the authorities require a lot of paperwork and we would rather be directly working more with the children instead of doing all these reports. I can say that the children have potential and all the possibility in the world to get an education and succeed in life. Materialistically they have everything they need but the pain and the wounds they carry are hard to understand. The reactions that can occur come from what they have experienced as small children.

I am with them at the times they meet their birth parents and I can understand the children’s desire to belong, so when parents get in touch and want to bring their child home, the child in its lability might believe all the promises they hear. We want to protect these children from danger and we want to provide them with good grounding so they can choose the right way in life.”



“Duci”

"Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."

Jesus, Matt 25:40

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Maria is now employed at the Daycenter and it makes her proud and happy. Florina is eight years old and she lives in one of FCE:s family homes

Thank you once again
to all our supporters.
Wishing you a light
and bright spring

FCE

Gifts

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