



SCOTTISH AID TO EASTERN EUROPE
(A Christian Development Project)

Dear Friend

This year Nigel Yates and I made our visit to Oradea, Romania. This was Nigel's second visit to the country. Once again we had the opportunity to see our co-workers in Emanuel Hospice. We also visited Caminul Felix and PULS, the two other charities operating in Oradea which we support.

I hope you find our report for 2024 interesting and challenging.

What did we do this year?

As announced last year, we have stopped the collection, sorting and packing of aid and we used our funds to purchase the aid in Oradea where things are now available. In this way aid was targeted more accurately buying exactly what the three charities wanted.

What did we donate to the Hospice?

We bought lots of nappies of various sizes, baby pants, medicines and fortified drinks. We also bought Romanian and Hungarian Bibles, books and cards to help patients discuss their illnesses.

Some of the Bibles, books and cards were stocked in the hospice's new building for future use as valuable resources.

We gave PULS nappies of various sizes.

We bought Caminul Felix rice, shampoo, washing powder (15kg bags!), fabric conditioner, toothpaste, shower gel, liquid soap, bleach, kitchen spray and insect repellent. Most of these items were expensive for the locals to buy. We purchased enough of every item for the families in the sixteen homes - six in Village 1 and ten homes in Village 2. Every home received an identical delivery!



Above: Nigel and Dan from Caminul Felix loading the rice.



Above and below: Dan and Nigel load up with washing powder and toiletries.





Above and Below: Nigel and Dan load the van.



Once we purchased the items and loaded the van, we were then able to deliver them directly to the recipients in Village 1. The remaining things for Village 2 were delivered later.

Below are some pictures of the setting around Village 1 and some of the mums at home taking delivery of the goods.



Above: A safe and spacious park for the children to play.

Every time we visit Caminul Felix we are struck by the tranquility of the place. Any traffic is very slow-moving and the whole environment is completely safe for children and adults alike. Of particular importance is the spacious park and play areas.



Above and Below: Goods are gratefully received.



Above: Our van makes another delivery.

A key feature of Caminul Felix is the variety of training opportunities for young people growing up and wishing to gain paid employment. Unless such opportunities can be provided, young people can lose motivation.

Over the years, we have witnessed such situations across the country where the potential of youth is not harnessed in meaningful and productive ways. People can easily become disillusioned.

When it is used positively, it represents a valuable resource to the individual in gaining paid employment. It also gives a sense of purpose to the individual and brings benefits to the wider community.

Caminul Felix provides this hope for the future.



Above and Below: More goods delivered!



Above: Another basket of goods safely delivered.



Above and Below: The tranquil setting of Village 1.





Above: Space and facilities for the children to have fun.

Thirty years ago, there was major concern for street children. Several years ago, Caminul Felix staff were asked if they could house vulnerable adults, some who have disabilities. This had emerged as a challenge for local officials requiring funding and other resources. Caminul Felix staff embarked on a major project to support these adults by providing accommodation and employment. A safe and stable home is a major asset.



Above: Bright windows look out towards the office building and the workshop block.



Above: Progress is good in the completion of the new accommodation block.



Above: A view of the corridor as the building nears completion.



Above: The full-length windows provide bright rooms.



Above: A bright and spacious area.

This area will be the communal meeting place for residents from both sides of the building. Here they will have the opportunity to meet and socialise in a relaxed environment.

Having home close to their workplace means no travel costs or time-consuming commutes!

We met our colleagues from PULS and renewed our in-person contact with them after a year. It was lovely to see them again.



Above: The bustling entrance to the store.



Above: Gabi and Nigel keep a careful note of our purchases.



Above: Loading our supplies ready for immediate delivery.

This year we were particularly grateful that once the aid had been purchased, we were able to deliver it directly to the point of need. Under the previous system, the goods were transported by truck. This would take almost a full working week or more due to border delays.



Above: Safely back to base with the first load.

Later in the week, Gabi and Mihaela arranged for an informal meeting with the mothers to give them the opportunity to discuss mutual concerns. They provided a relaxed and loving atmosphere where their children were cared for during the meeting.



Above: Gabi and Mihaela created an informal atmosphere to meet and chat.



Above: Mihaela listens intently to the mums' concerns.



Above: Experienced staff were on hand to give support and encouragement.



Above: A balloon is interesting when mum's busy!



Above: New sights and sounds are interesting at this stage!



Above and Below: Children relaxing with their mums.



Above: The chance to play with different toys is always welcome.



Emanuel Hospice

It was lovely to renew contact with our co-workers at Emanuel Hospice. After receiving a briefing and our schedule we set off on a visit to the new building. It is planned to have a phased start beginning in early 2025.



Above: Marinela, Executive Director at Emanuel Hospice.



Above: Nigel, Estera and Gordon arriving for a visit to the new building.

A striking feature of the building's design is the use of natural light and the simple, yet effective benefit which this provides. This is of particular benefit in the hospice setting.



Above: An external view of one of the buildings.

It was very encouraging to see the progress made in the construction of the buildings in the months prior to our visit.

Planning changes required by the authorities and the inevitable delays due to the COVID pandemic resulted in frustrating holdups. An extension to the scheduled completion time of any project inevitably leads to increases in costs as well as limiting patient care.



Above and below: Some of the rooms nearing completion.



Above: A brightly-lit corridor.



Above and below: Examples of floor to ceiling lighting.



We made eight separate visits to shops for the hospice in less than two days. We bought a range of nappies and baby pants. These were the items which were required urgently and we were delighted that the stores carried a large stock to meet our requirements. We also purchased other items.



Above: At the checkout with our purchases.



Above and below: Goods purchased were taken immediately to the hospice.



One of our overall aims as a charity is to provide our co-workers with the tools to do their work.

Each year we provide support to the hospice for the purchase of medicines which are critical to their activities. We made two separate visits to different places to purchase medicines and fortified drinks for the patients.

When possible we also provide funds at other times of the year.



Above: Buying valuable medicines.



Above: Checking and storing the medical purchases.

One of our tasks of special interest is to visit some of the hospice's patients and their families. This allows us to find out firsthand the work involved by our co-workers. Estera, the social worker, Dr Beni, one of the medical doctors and their colleagues travel hundreds of kilometres every week visiting patients throughout Bihor county. This can be very tiring in hot summer weather and also in poor driving conditions in winter.

We visited the Berti family in the village of Leş. Csaba (16) and Alex (8) both suffer from Tetraparesis, a condition in which the patient's four limbs suffer



Above and below: Csaba and Alex.



from muscle weakness. Their mum invests a lot of time with her sons and has built a loving bond with them. The family is devoted to the boys.

More Shopping

We visited several bookshops and purchased a range of items. We bought Bibles in both Romanian and Hungarian. We also bought books and cards. Some were of immediate benefit to Estera while working with her patients and many items would also be used to create a stock in the hospice's library and resource centre.

We bought resources to help patients discuss their problems. Some are anxious about their future and their illnesses. Others are concerned that their carers are worrying and they wish to shield their carers from the truth. We bought books with titles such as *The Teddy Bear and the Worry Box*, *How do you Increase Your Emotional Resilience?* and *The Colours of the Rainbow* which is a book to talk about feelings.

We also bought specially produced cards, another means by which patients can discuss issues which are of concern. Sometimes a patient in hospital wakes up in the morning to discover that the person in the bed next to them has passed away in the night. This can be very alarming when they share the same illness.



Above: A Romanian Christian Bookshop in Oradea.



Above: Estera selects suitable books for the children.



Above: Estera selects books in the Hungarian Christian Bookshop.



Above: Check-out at the bookshop.



Above: Gordon kept a close check on expenditure.

One of the challenges when purchasing the aid is to maintain a close check on expenditure and stay within budget. It was necessary to record the costs at all twelve places when we made purchases. We did this by estimating the day's rate of exchange between the pound sterling and the Romanian LEU.

Heading for Home

All too soon, it was time for us to say “*Goodbye*” and to travel home.

Thank You

Once again, I'd like to say a very sincere “*Thank you*” on behalf of my fellow-trustees and the widows, orphans, sick and poor of Bihor County, Romania.

Each year we endeavour to provide the aid needed by the hospice and others. This was achieved more easily this year by asking in advance the items of immediate need. With the donations we had received, we were able to make the purchases and they were available for immediate use.

We plan to visit Oradea in June 2025 as usual. We will go with our co-workers and buy the aid as we did this year, a move which will help the local economy. We will then help to distribute some of the items when we hope to see some of the patients.

I hope you feel a full partner with us in this challenging but rewarding work. Thank you for visiting our website.

Dr Gordon Lyon, Chairman of Trustees.