



Serving the suffering church around the world



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By Anghel and Florina Mincu  
[edited by Pastor Richard Shaw]

*"I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus."*

Philippians 4:18b,19 (NIV)

*The Mincus recently attended a conference for pastors and wives in Romania where Praise participated. Read this first hand account of how your gifts to the Raven Fund are helping people in the most difficult circumstances!*

In the name of the Lord Jesus we would like to thank you for what you have done for us. My name is Anghel Mincu, and I live in the city of Zimnicea in southern Romania, where I serve the Lord by pastoring two churches, one in Zimnicea and one in nearby Nasturelw. Please pray for the Lord's work in our part



**Pastor Anghel and Florina Mincu serving in Zimnicea attending a recent Pastors' Conference in Romania.**

of Romania. We are also doing mission work across the border in Bulgaria, reaching Romanians who live there.

Through the grace of God my wife Florina and I have three boys. Emanuel is 10, Daniel is 5 and Josph is 3. Please pray for our children because of their special needs. Emanuel suffered from severe siezures when he was younger and has been diagnosed with ADHD; he displays aggressive anger and distractions. This is very difficult for all of us. We pray the Lord will heal him, and we believe that the Lord can certainly do this.

Daniel, our second child, also has problems, as does our little one, Joseph.

Daniel will have plastic surgery because he had an accident which left one of the fingers of his right hand bent, and he can't straighten out the finger. The accident left him with an abnormal scar on his finger and forearm, and this scarring

because the bone is growing, but the scarring does not allow the finger to grow.

Through the grace of the Lord the operation is possible because of your kindness. We just did not have enough money for the operation. We had already scheduled the surgery, and we had been praying for the Lord to provide for our need. We continued to pray for the Lord's provision when we came to the conference, since there was only a short time before the surgery was to be done. It is wonderful how the Lord works through His children, and He has met our need through you. Through your generosity we can have this operation. May God bless you and may He reward you.

Daniel and Joseph will also have to have eye surgery because of problems with the tear ducts in their eyes. This problem with the tear ducts results in the eyes constantly tearing up. Joseph has

necessitates plastic surgery to correct the problems with his finger. He has begun to suffer pain in his finger

the problem in one eye, and Daniel has the problem in both eyes. These surgeries will be scheduled after Daniel's plastic surgery.

We ask you from the bottom of our hearts to pray with us that the Lord will provide for the boys' eye surgeries as well. He is the only One who can do all things.

The money you have given us is a true blessing, as well as an answer to our prayers. May the Lord bless you and repay you, as well as your families and churches. We love you, and we pray for you.

With brotherly love,

*The Minceu Family*

[Note: The pastors and wives were able to attend this conference with their expenses paid through the gifts of Praise, Inc. and other Christian friends.]

## **Pastors' Conferences in Romania impact the Romanian Church**

By Pastor Richard Shaw  
General Director, Praise, Inc.

*"Greet all the saints in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me send greetings. All the saints send you greetings...."*

Philippians 4:21,22b

In 1948 Communists took control of a united Romania and created the Romanian People's Republic.

The rigid Communist system continued under Nicolae Ceausescu, who became party leader in 1965 and ruled with an iron fist for 24 years. He was one of the most repressive Communist dictators of the time. Christians were often jailed for normal practices of faith, and many church buildings were destroyed. His brutal regime collapsed when he ordered troops to fire on a group

of protesters, and he and his wife were captured by the armed forces. He was executed by firing squad on Christmas Day of 1989.

Since then Christians have enjoyed growing freedom to practice their faith. However, there is still great opposition to the work of the gospel.

The first comes from the Orthodox church of Romania. In many villages and towns, the local priest holds social and religious authority over the people. Even though people rarely attend services, they depend on the Orthodox church for baptisms and burials. Often, the local priest forbids people to attend gospel services. He threatens them in various ways, both spiritually and physically.

The second level of opposition comes from spiritism and superstition. There is a temple to spiritism in Campina, Romania, and Satan tries to keep a firm grip on the lives of his victims through occult practices.

In many towns and villages the work of the gospel is painfully difficult, but God has his faithful servants continuing the work of the gospel in this nation that has suffered so much.

This fall Praise had the privilege to partner with Greater Europe Mission's EuroTeam ministry to participate in two conferences for pastors and wives, with pastors coming from Romania and Moldova. One of the couples from Moldova has a cutting edge ministry conducting pastoral training in that country. Each conference hosted ten couples, and all their expenses for the conference were provided by gifts from others, including our own Raven Fund.

Bible teaching for the conference was provided by Pastor Chris Taylor from Centerton, AR; Cheryl Marini

from Irmo, SC was the women's speaker, and I had the privilege of teaching on Biblical principles of marriage and family.

The balance of the team was made up of Freddie Harris and Larry and Sue Schmidt, who serve with EuroTeam and live in Germany; Jack Mount from Garden Valley, Idaho, retired missionary from Iran and American Missionary Fellowship; Tara Parks, who is working for an international corporation in Bern, Switzerland; and 75-year-old Marilyn Knapp, a retired school teacher from Grand Rapids, MI, who has served on 10 Euroteam shortterm teams and many other mission projects over the years.

Our team was also assisted by Dr. Richard Mauney and Susan Strohschein, who serve as missionaries in Romania with Jubilate, a music ministry to the Romanian church. Jubilate has produced a Romanian hymnal which includes traditional hymns and newer worship songs to incorporate into worship services.

Dr. Mauney conducted workshops on authentic worship, reminding the participants that worship is a matter of the whole life, not just singing on Sunday mornings.

In the context of Biblical teaching on the subject of marriage, I instructed the couples to work on their own, writing a personal love letter to their spouses. After that exercise, one couple came to me, tenderly gripped my hands, and thanked me profously for the exercise, saying, "Sometimes we can put into writing what we find difficult to speak." They were greatly impacted.

Working through each member of the team, each of the precious pastor and wife couples was refreshed and encouraged.

# A Symphony of Praise

By Rev. Ron Warren

*“Because of the proof given by this ministry they will glorify God for your obedience to your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for the liberality of your contribution to them and to all...”*

2 Cor 9:13-14 NAS

To see God’s word come to life in front of you is an amazing experience, but an especially rewarding one when you know the participants are spontaneously praising God for His provision. Scores of ministers in northern Nigeria were martyred by Muslims when they attacked churches and the homes of the ministers living there. Others died as well, but the families, especially the widows of the martyred ministers were the focus of efforts to encourage.

I had arrived in Lagos to participate in the dedication of a children’s home that is to provide schooling and a home to children who have had at least one parent martyred. While I did not realize it at the time I was there, many of the widows I would meet would have a child living at this home. While I was an official guest of the dedication, I set up a video camera on the children and just let it run. I also took video of the new children’s home so supporters back home could see what these children had to look forward to. So when I left the dedication to head north to visit work focusing on the widows, I had a lot of footage with me.

Driving in Nigeria is unlike any experience I can relate to you in the U.S. Lizards big enough to be



Hotel Paltinis, where both weeks of the pastors and wives conferences were held. On the outside of the hotel, there is a plaque which reads: “In memory of the American prisoners who received care in this building during World War II. Glory to those who fought for their homeland and the freedom of Europe.” We give glory to God for those pastors who are fighting for the spiritual freedom of their homeland today.

Each was deeply appreciative of the sacrifices which made the conference possible. Each will take the impact of the conference back to the churches where they serve.

The local pastor who partnered with us for the conferences was Ion Vasile, who along with his wife Elena provided wonderful Romanian hospitality for our team. Pastor Vasile oversees four churches in Campina, Romania and the surrounding area.

While we were there, one of his elderly members was called home to heaven. Her family members were not believers (evangelical believers in Romania are called ‘repenters’ by outsiders), but they allowed us to come to the home for a brief funeral service. Traditionally, believers were able to preach openly at funerals during the communist era, and that opportunity continues today. Our team and members of Pastor Ion’s church gathered in the tiny room

of the home where the body of the dear departed sister, covered with fresh flowers, was lying in an open casket.

We sang the Doxology in Romanian and English; Scripture was read. I had the privilege of sharing the gospel from John, reminding the family of the necessity of being born again, summarized by saying that if we are born once, we die twice, but if we are born twice, we die once.

After the service the family expressed their deep thanks for our coming, and had many questions concerning the gospel. Please pray for this family, that the seeds of the gospel planted that night will bear fruit for the kingdom of heaven.

Your gifts have made this ministry possible. Thank you for your sensitivity to the needs of God’s precious servants who live and serve in difficult places. The Romanian and Moldovan pastors send their love and appreciation!

a road hazard were just the least of issues to deal with. In one two hour stretch, there were 15 roadblocks where police and military personnel had used abandoned car parts and various available tree limbs. They sat by the roadblocks with automatic weapons “watching for bandits”. I guess we didn’t fit the profile as we were waved on at each stop. However, I was told that just a few weeks earlier there had been so many robberies on the road that 21 road blocks had been necessary to slow down the banditry on the highway.

Arriving at the next stop turned out to be no small feat. When we drove up to the work center, there were about 20 ladies sitting out on the concrete waiting for us. We were there to share with them our plans to develop ways for them to produce products that can be sold outside of their village areas. When we pulled up, they all got up and came to greet us. The knew our host, Isaac, very well. He had long been a servant to the persecuted church in Nigeria.

He walked up to them and began telling them how well their children were doing and they would soon be living in their “new” bedrooms. They

ladies all smiled and applauded. He turned to me and asked me to share with them. I told them I was privileged and honored to meet with them and to simply add to Brother Isaac’s good words, “Their children would be living in one of the nicest homes in all of Lagos City”. I continued to share with them that I had unknowingly taken video of their very children and they would be given a chance to see not only the new home but their children dancing at the dedication of the home.

With that statement, the women spontaneously got up and started singing and dancing. I wasn’t expecting that so I turned to the translator and asked, “What are they saying?” He said, “They are just singing praises to God. They are so happy.”

They continued to sing for some time while we got a projector hooked up to the video camera and prepared to show them the video I had shot just a few days earlier.

Watching those ladies smile and laugh as they watched their children do the same was one of the most heartwarming experiences I have ever known. At the moment the translator told me what they

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were doing, the passage from II Corinthians 9 came to my mind. What a wonderful picture! People had given to their heartbreaking need and it had resulted in praise and thanksgiving to God!! In the midst of the darkness, God had produced a light that removed even the shadows.

This year has been a tremendous year of change for my wife and me, and the challenge of change continues daily for us as we continue our transition to Voice of the Martyrs. We so appreciate the prayers of our friends and those who have supported the ministry of Praise, Inc. for so long. May God richly bless you for your giving this year and may this next year be the most rewarding you have known. God’s grace is seen through your gifts and your prayers. His kindness breaths life into others, because you were thoughtful enough to be a part of someone else’s life. On behalf of so many, just like these widows and their children who do not know you, thank you.



Laughter and joy lightened their burdens for the day. Thousands of Christian women in Nigeria have been widowed due to Islamic violence directed against Christians. These women are enjoying the sight of their children celebrating the dedication of the new Martyrs Children’s Home in Lagos, Nigeria. The women had not seen their children since they had left to attend a school established for children of martyrs in Lagos. Some were so overwhelmed at the sight of the new home their children were now living in that they got up and spontaneously started dancing and singing praises to the Lord for His provision to their family’s needs.