



# FOCUS news

mission without borders, Australia

## One Act of Kindness...

### Dear Partners of Mission Without Borders,

At this time of year when we cling to heaters and reach for jumpers, coats and blankets, spare a thought for the families who search high and low for firewood for their humble dwellings...

**For Milenko of Bosnia-Herzegovina his mind never rests... he is always preoccupied with finding a way to feed and care for his family.** They do not have a home of their own. **They live in borrowed quarters- one room, with no electricity and no indoor water supply. Coming from Montenegro they had to flee during the war of 1992. Escaping for what they hoped would only be days, they travelled from place to place for years, in fear of their lives, trying to survive without adequate food and shelter.** Milenko naturally grew up fast and took on the responsibility of caring for his family. He took whatever job he could find. Years on, Milenko and his family braved returning to their home village (no small feat as they were on the side of the aggressors), only to find their home destroyed. Milenko's parent's home has been rebuilt, but he chooses not to live with his parents as his father is an

alcoholic, abusive and volatile as he battles Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Their home is sparsely furnished, but they are thankful it has a roof and four walls, providing some measure of privacy and protection from the elements. Although materially there is little, Milenko

deeply loves his wife and their three children. Milenko is a hard manual labour worker. He is more than eager to work, but work is so scarce in a country on the verge of economic collapse. There is barely enough cash to buy milk, food for the table and essentials for the baby. **Embarrassed hardly describes how he feels. He is deeply ashamed he**



*The prized new firewood from MWB*

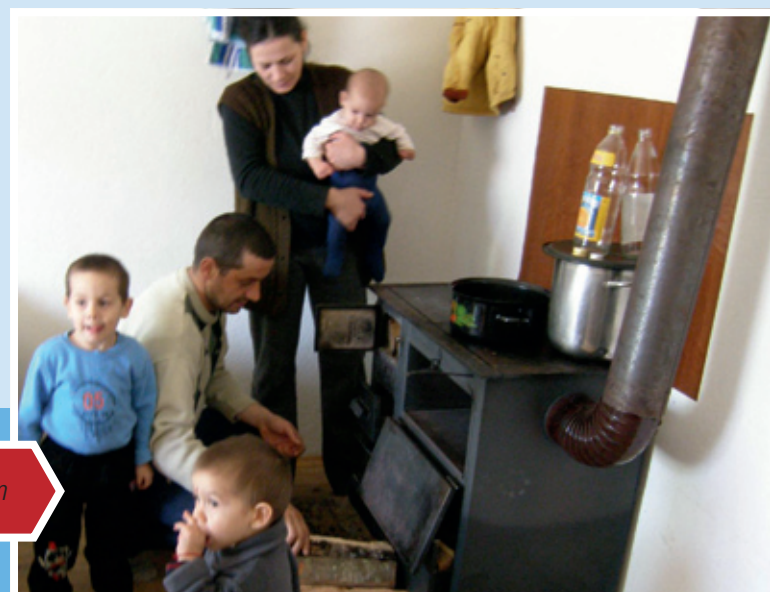
**cannot provide for his family, and yet he displays a quiet dignity.**

He is not one of ours, that is, our ministry does not have the means to take care of Milenko and his family. That is not to say as a Mission we are not compelled and moved with compassion to reach out to him. In the harshness of winter, when the daylight hours were few, snow covered the ground and the

window panes were frosted over, Milenko combed the river banks in search of firewood, intent on providing a little warmth for his humble home. His desperate search did not escape the attention of our Field Staff. Using funds earmarked, 'Urgent Needs', firewood was purchased. When the delivery of thirty pieces of firewood arrived, Milenko was not expecting visitors, nor could he have ever imagined what was to follow. "This firewood is for you and your family" the Mission Without Borders Coordinator simply stated. Milenko's eyes were fixated on the newly delivered wood, then his gaze met the Coordinator and there was silence. Finally a meek voice said, "Dear friends, is this firewood really for us; are you sure? I cannot believe how much our dear Heavenly Father loves us and is watching over us! How did we come to deserve this blessing? I don't know how to thank you enough!" Tears fell and with eyes to the sky, he mouthed the words, "Thank you", to his Heavenly Father.



*The simple Zurovac family home*



*Now they can be warm*

I care about Milenko and his family, and I am certain that they matter to our Lord. I know there are many more families in similar or more difficult circumstances that could use our help. The wonderful thing about Mission Without Borders is our workers are nationals and we are there for the long haul. They therefore can best ascertain those most in need. I also hold the firm belief that you, Mission Without Borders Australia and all our colleagues with Mission Without Borders International are together in partnership with our loving God, to bring Good News to the poor, to partner

together to feed the hungry, clothe the ragged and minister healing to weary souls.

Never think that you are achieving little or nothing by simply praying, or simply giving. The Coordinator, who visited Milenko with the gift of firewood, could only do so because of the faithful generous giving of people like you, who have allowed us to have an 'Urgent Needs Fund'. The Coordinators go bearing practical gifts, but they also go to share the Gospel and encourage the downtrodden, so they covet your prayers...

***Thirty pieces of wood... One act of kindness... One thankful heart... Our God glorified! Friends, it's worth it all! Thank you for sending a gift of support this month – for His work and His glory!***



The Albanian Flag



The Uku family transformed by their new faith and MWB's assistance



Enkeleda with her Bible, reciting 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'

## *"I feel blessed by God"*

### ***How Albania has changed...***

**Albania is a small country that prides itself on its fierce national identity and long Christian history. Faith came early to Albania with Paul the Apostle.**

But Albania suffered terribly during World War II. However its worst horrors arose with the 1946 creation of the Communist People's Republic of Albania. Only the witness of those who resisted, including many Christians who were persecuted to the point of martyrdom, kept the most basic of human ideals alive. **As early as 1945, Enver Hoxha, the communist dictator, vowed that the communist party must fight against religion and defeat it as soon as possible.** In a country that was considered 70% Muslim, 20% catholic in 1967 – to declare it as the first atheistic country in the world was to deny Albanians the right to practice their religion. Because of this declaration and policy, places of worship were destroyed or taken over and turned into cultural centres.

Over the coming decades Albania was completely closed to religion and those Christians that tried to infiltrate the borders to bring Christian literature were met with great persecution and punishment. Albanian Christians and clergy suffered horrendous torture for decades. The government did not think they deserved the mercy of a quick execution, so instead subjected them to the most horrendous torture involving beatings, water torture, hangings, electrocution of body parts, burns, some were forced to live in pits of excrement up to their necks and the list goes on...

However, the Christians remained faithful. When religious services were permitted again in 1990, they immediately drew thousands. The government returned religious properties in 1991...

When one considers the past it is hard to comprehend that this same country is now one of freedom and freedom for Mission Without Borders to conduct a ministry to the glory of God!

## ***A human face to this story of new found freedom for ministry...***

**The Uku family live in extreme poverty. They are ostracised for their ethnic background and often go to bed hungry. Manushaqe struggles to raise her children alone, as she was forced to divorce her violet husband years ago.**

Manushaqe works in the local public service earning minimum wage that is not sufficient to meet the basic needs of her family. Their cultural background has limited their opportunities and most families in their position would never consider big goals for their family; but the Uku family is now different- thanks to their new faith...

Mission Without Border's Summer Camp was their first exposure to Christ and they have never looked back. They are now well grafted into a local church and love participating in church bible studies and prayer groups. Their faith in God is wonderful to witness and we give thanks and praise that one more family now has their eyes firmly fixed on Jesus as their Lord and Saviour!



Now that Manushaqe's eldest daughter Enkeleda has finished school and her life has been transformed by her faith in Jesus, she spends much of her time in ministry with her local church. "One of the great privileges believers have as they seek to live the Christian life is prayer,"

she says with sincerity. **"When I pray, I speak directly and personally with my Father in Heaven. I feel that nothing can come between my God and me.** I have realized that when I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, I do not need to use special words or a special tone of voice. All that is needed is a sincere desire to bring the deepest feelings and desires of my heart to God for the prayer to be powerful and effective. As a family, we are blessed when we go to

church every Sunday. During the week, we participate in bible studies and prayer meetings. God has done miracles in our lives. Some years ago, the future seemed dim and hopeless, but when I read Matthew 11; 28-30: 'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light', **I realise that when a person has faith, life is meaningful and God gives us strength to face our difficulties. It is true that we are living under difficult economic conditions and often go to bed hungry, but God always provides for us. I am extremely grateful to God for what He has done for us. I feel blessed by God and my relationship with God lights up my life"**, Enkeleda said.

The entire Uku family have given their lives to Christ, regularly attend church and are full of joy. They have discovered that happiness is not connected with wealth, but to having peace with God.

Please join us and give thanks for the miracle of religious freedom in Albania and all our 6 field countries. This freedom has allowed us to share our faith to the children in Summer Camps, Children's Homes, to families and to the elderly in endless situations. We covet your prayers as we minister to the hungry, the lonely and the lost. If you can manage it yourself, or can in partnership with family, friends, your church or groups, we would love to welcome you as a sponsor of a family (\$35/month). We find 4 sponsors for each family to ensure we have the resources to meet their comprehensive needs – Spiritually, Emotionally, Educationally and Materially. With the current world wide economic crisis we have more families in need that ever before...



*Donika loves how faith has transformed her family*

## **TAKE NOTE - WE HAVE NOW MOVED**

**Please use the following new details for all phone and mail to our new office. We would love to show you around our new office/warehouse, our office hours are: Monday-Friday 9am-5pm**

### **Mission Without Borders Australia**

**Phone:** (02) 9647 2022

**Fax:** (02) 9647 1899

**Email:** [australia@mwbi.org](mailto:australia@mwbi.org)

**Website:** [www.mwb.org.au](http://www.mwb.org.au)

**Office Address:** 10 Stubbs St AUBURN NSW 2144

**Post Office Address:** PO Box 7533 SILVERWATER NSW 1811

# 'Gift in Kind - Operation Cover' Update

## WE NEED YOU!

Do you live in Sydney and have some spare time? Would you like to enjoy great fellowship while contributing practically to our ministry? We have a great new warehouse and air-conditioned packing room, and lots of 'Gift in Kind' that needs sorting, packing and organising so we can send our containers of aid to Eastern Europe. If you are interested we also need help in the warehouse itself - we have pallet-raking and a forklift to make it easier – give us a call – we would love to hear from you!

## What is needed:

With companies providing large quantities of their excess stock, we will be restricting donations to the following list

### Knitted, Crocheted and handmade items are needed:

- **Blankets – large and small.** (large blankets can be knitted by: Size 8 needles, 8-ply yarn, 40 stitch x 80 rows to make 56 squares, for a blanket 1.6m x 1.4m)
- **Jumpers** – the older children, teenagers and adults are in greatest need.
- **Scarves, beanies, bed socks and gloves.**
- **Knitted Teddy Bears**
- **Please note we are not able to accept the tiny sleeveless jumpers known as 'Aids Baby Jumpers'.**
- **Knitting patterns are now available** - contact Jenny Grainger, our office or visit our Website ([www.mwb.org.au](http://www.mwb.org.au)) if you would like some guidance and ideas.
- **Patchwork quilts**

### All items for sewing, embroidery, knitting and craft activities - material, wool, needles etc.

(for the Vocational Training courses as well as for the poor families and elderly who would love to sew or knit for themselves, but cannot afford the materials).

## COORDINATORS AND COLLECTION POINTS

This huge country of ours presents some challenges of how to get your wonderful hand-knitted items to us in Sydney or our 'Workshop' in Melbourne. We have the most up to date list of collection points in our office (it changes daily) so please contact us and we will try our best to offer you a good solution. Alternatively, contact the nearest Coordinator/Collection Point below. If you are able to act as a Collection Point, please contact us.

### David Turner is the Australia-wide Coordinator of our Gift in Kind

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In His Service,

*Michelle Dorey*

Michelle Dorey  
National Director