



Progress and Opportunity!

I Hit the Ground Running!!

In spite of two flight cancellations, two flight changes, and arriving a day late I and all my luggage arrived safely at Sofia Airport on Wednesday, January 21. I had meetings scheduled with some of the foundation board members and the accountant on Thursday and Friday, and would head back home to Sevlievo on Saturday. On Thursday afternoon we received word that our application for a license to operate our first children's home was approved, and we should receive it this week. Praise the Lord! That was great news to come back to! Bad weather, flight cancellations, and even jet lag cannot stop what the Lord has planned for us!

So what comes next? Now we are busy looking for an appropriate house or apartment in the vicinity of Sofia where we can open our first of many family style children's home. We have already been looking and have some options open to us, but we are looking for the best that we can find. We need a large two or three bedroom home with a kitchen and living room, and at least a bath and half. If we find a three bedroom we can have eight children, but if we can only find a two

bedroom we can only facilitate six. (The staff parents will stay in the living room.) I know that seems quite small by American standards, but it is quite normal for Bulgaria. Please help us pray that one of the municipalities will give us a reduced (or free) rent in one of the apartments they own. Next week we are meeting with the mayor of one of the municipalities around Sofia. It looks very hopeful!

When we furnish the apartment, and get it approved by the Ministry of Social Services we can apply to have children appointed to us. If all goes well, we should have children in six months!



This is Balabanza, typical of poor Gypsy neighborhoods found all over Bulgaria. I live only a five minute walk from here.

Double Your Money!

In times like these people are looking to stretch their money as far as it will go. Thankfully, God's economy is not limited by recession. He has even made a way to double your money! Some businessmen in the Clarion area have decided that they want to get behind our work in Bulgaria. They have decided that they will match dollar for dollar every donation made through May 1 up to \$13,000. There are

other businessmen interested in becoming involved too!

What does this mean for you? Your donation will be doubled through this matching funds challenge. For every dollar you send to Obedient Life Ministries we will receive two. \$25 becomes \$50, \$50 becomes \$100, \$500 becomes \$1000! Consider making a donation to OLM today!

Don't Miss the Second Page!

There is so much to tell, and so little space in this issue, but I must say that I am thrilled to be back in Bulgaria! I got to preach my first Sunday back. I didn't know it was going to happen, but the pastor had called away, and when the singing was over the worship leader asked, "Marty, do you have something to say?" It was a surprise, but I loved it! I have missed my church family and friends after being gone for four months. Continue to pray for the church, the foundation, and our work here. But there's more!

PRAYER POINTS:

- That we find a the best place for the children's home.
- That we reach our budget of \$50,000 for our projects this year.
- That we have favor as we go before the different governmental authorities.
- That we have the mind of Christ.
- That I have good health and strength, and that I lose weight. (Self discipline and exercise.)



O B E D I E N T
L I F E M I N I S T R I E S



How to make a donation.

If you would like to support Obedient Life Ministries, and our work in Bulgaria you may send your tax exempt donation to:

Obedient Life Ministries, Inc.
P.O. Box 267
Clarion, PA 16214

OR

Make an online donation through the PayPal link on the Make A Donation page of our website found at

www.obedientlife.org

Many people have asked me, “Martin, why Bulgaria?” My answer, “God showed me the need was great.”

Facts about Bulgaria

1. Bulgaria has the highest percentage of its children in institutions in all of Europe. The official government count is 10,500 in its institutional children’s homes, but charities insist the number is closer to 34, 000 for children who are orphaned or lack adequate parental care.
2. There are 50,000 children in specialized homes in Bulgaria — 35,000 of them are handicapped physically and/or mentally.
3. Only 2% of the children in the Bulgarian system are actually orphans and adoptable.
4. Being forced to leave the system on their 18th birthdays many girls turn to prostitution, and the young men to crime.
5. 25% of the youth that leave the system on their 18th birthday are dead or in prison within five years.
6. Bulgaria is one of the top ten countries of origin for human trafficking for sexual exploitation in the world.
7. Around 20% of human trafficking victims in Bulgaria are children.
8. The child death rate in Bulgaria is 13.8% as opposed to 0.8% in the USA.

Jesus said, “When you have done it to the least of me, you have don it unto me.”

Will you help us save these children?

Testimony of My Mother’s Healing

As most of you know, I returned to the U.S. in mid-September. My mother was very ill, and I went to help her. In July she they thought that she had viral pleurisy, but then they found that she had a large tumor (a thymoma) between her heart and sternum. It was not cancer, but it behaves like cancer, and often must be treated in the same manner. During her month long stay in the hospital she was also diagnosed with chronic leukemia, and fluid kept building up around her lungs.

Many people were praying for her, and in October she went for open chest surgery. The doctor came back to us four hours earlier than we were expecting, and told us that the surgery had gone well. He said, “The tumor was not attached to her heart, and is much smaller than when we looked at it last time. I cannot explain it.” I told him that I could! “People all around the world have been praying for her!” There was no need for radiation or chemotherapy.

The pathology report came back on her tumor, and it showed that there were no thymoma cells, no cysts, no necrosis. It was only some fatty tissue! Was this the same tumor that they had biopsied in August, and had sent to Italy for the world’s leading expert on these kinds of tumors?

There was another hospital stay in No-



My mother, Priscilla Sutton, and I on Christmas Eve, 2008.

vember, because of fluid building up around one of her lungs, and they wanted to biopsy a lymph node, but all went well.

After that she made remarkable progress. The week before Christmas she had follow-up appointments with her surgeon, the oncologist, and the lung doctor. All of them were amazed at her recovery. There wasn’t even any sign of the leukemia any more—and no treatments were even given! One said, “Priscilla, you are an enigma. First we couldn’t figure out what all was going on, and now we can’t figure out where it went.”

For twenty five years she worked with these doctors in the cancer center. You could tell how much they cared about her. She openly shared her faith, and as she retired she was able to live it out in power before them giving all the glory to God! Praise be to the Lord Jesus our Healer!