



Light for Children Autumn 2020

UK Registered Charity Number 1120680

Thank you for all your support during **2020**, not to mention the extra concern that you have shown during the **coronavirus pandemic**. Romania remains in a national state of alert, with the weekly number of positive cases and deaths from coronavirus continuing to rise. Restrictions were relaxed somewhat during the summer months and the schools did open very briefly in September. However, all schools, restaurants, theatres, cinemas and play areas are currently closed. Masks and social distancing are obligatory in all public places and there is now a complete lockdown during the night. Schools are operating exclusively online, with children being required to connect to their lessons via Zoom for 4-6 hours a day.

Due to the restrictions, we haven't been able to spend quality time with the children living in state care since March but we have still been able to support them by paying for any **medication, dental work, optician appointments, glasses, school books** and other items that they have needed. The children and staff in the state run apartments have been tested for Covid-19 regularly and we have been asked numerous times to provide gloves and protective clothing for the nurse doing the testing. Until September, all the children and staff had been safe and well but over the last two months, a number of children and their carers have tested positive. Whilst some have had symptoms and required hospital treatment, others have been asymptomatic. Thankfully, everyone has **recovered well**.



An incredible effort has been made by everyone involved to protect and invest in the **mental health** of the children living in state care. Initially, they spent two months indoors, before being allowed to enjoy daily exercise outside from 15th May onwards. Indoor games and craft activities of every possible description were enjoyed by all. The level of commitment shown by the carers and the level of cooperation and acceptance demonstrated by the children has been outstanding.



Looking back at the **last twelve months**, we were able to celebrate **Christmas 2019** with the children living in state care, by inviting them to a local restaurant for a festive meal. Little did we know then how different things would be as we approach the upcoming festive season. Due to the restrictions, we won't be able to invite the children to celebrate Christmas at church or in a restaurant in December 2020 but we do intend to prepare treats for them, which we will deliver to the doors of their apartments.

Although most **university** courses are currently being run online, we were delighted to be able to support a number of **students who started at university** this autumn. These include young people from both state care and local families, whom we have known since birth or very young children. It is so encouraging to witness what they have been able to achieve both academically and in terms of their resilience in these difficult times. We also continue to offer monthly support to the young man who is studying at a **bilingual Christian sixth form** and are delighted to follow his amazing progress.



We are so thankful to report that the **two girls** who have overcome leukaemia in recent years are doing well. It gives us great pleasure to see them both enjoying life.



Having played a lot over Christmas and during the first two months of the year, unfortunately, we had to stop rehearsing with the full **church orchestra** in March. From June onwards, we did manage to organise weekly activity afternoons for a group of six of the younger members of the orchestra, which enabled them to rehearse their instruments outside, read the Bible together, play games, enjoy crafts and generally benefit from each other's company. Water games proved to be a particular favourite in the heat! For the time being we have had to stop meeting again, but we continue to play our instruments at home.



Our **thirteen and a half year old** foster boy has coped reasonably well with the lockdown, although he would much prefer to go to school than to study online. At the start of the lockdown, we were very blessed to have access to a garden and two beautiful dogs, which belong to friends in Dorohoi. Many happy hours were spent there, playing with the dogs, bird watching and learning how to barbecue! On wet days, we tried to exercise regularly in our very own "gym"!!

As the summer continued, although we weren't able to travel to the UK, we did manage to spend a weekend in the Romanian mountains with friends and to enjoy using an outdoor swimming pool in Dorohoi.



Just over twelve months ago we applied to **adopt** our boy. Despite all the difficulties that 2020 has presented, we have made considerable progress with our application and we are very hopeful that the adoption process will be finalised within the next few months.

Our love and thanks to you all for your ongoing support!

Keep safe and well!

Helen and Costel Cosman.