

GIVING IS THE TRUE MEASURE OF LOVE

Starting each October, catalogs begin to fill our mailboxes advertising clothing, appliances, shoes, candles, books, music – more than we could ever need or want for ourselves or for our loved ones at Christmas.

But one catalog, which was sent to many homes last year, was a refreshing change. It was filled with ways people could give to orphans, the poor, the hungry, the sick, and the disabled through an international Christian ministry. The note in the front of the catalog read: **“Share the light and love of Jesus Christ with people whose lives are filled with darkness and despair.”**

In Paul’s days the Christians of North Greece were an example of generosity. They gave themselves first to the Lord, then to the needy in Jerusalem. Paul used their generosity and love in order to encourage the Corinthians to follow their example, and Christ’s, who gave Himself and **“became poor, that [we] through His poverty might become rich”**.

The poor and the needy were not only in the days of Paul. All around us are always people with special needs for whom Christ died too and wants from us to show His love in very practical ways.

Do you want a refreshing change this Christmas? Consider new ways to give to the Lord and to those in need like the refugee men, women and children in Athens Greece.

Here in Athens, Greece we face daily the challenge to find ways in order to help hundreds of refugees who live on the streets of Athens or in abandoned houses having almost nothing. They need physical help but also Jesus who is **“the indescribable gift of God.”** **And we at Helping Hands need you to partner with us in order to reach out to the refugees for Christ.** _

Rev. Nikos Stefanidis

A DREAM BECOMES REALITY

We are very happy to tell you that we have finally opened our medical center, after going through a long legal maze full of red tape. On Sunday Sept. 11th our first patients came to see the doctor. A generous amount of medicine and supplies has been donated, and our doctor is legally able to write

prescriptions. We are hoping and praying that more doctors will donate their time and resources now that we have our clinic set up in our old Nest.

SUMMER CAMP FOR REFUGEE CHILDREN

During the month of August we were able to send **7 children for 21 days** to a Christian camp of the Greek Evangelical Church, outside of Athens. The children had a great time and the leaders were amazed how well the kids adapted and got along with the other kids. The kids had a blast, and they got to hear the Gospel and memorize scripture.

For the refugee kids that were not able to go to the Greek camp we organized a special camp. **Thirty-five refugee children were treated to a three-day camp** filled with games, song, swimming, and good food.

Brant Community Church from Canada sponsored the camp and did a great job with everything. It was hard work, but all were blessed by the experience. Some comments from the parents:

“We will never let our kids go with anyone else, but we trust Helping Hands”.

“Thank you for taking our kids. This was the first time we were alone as a couple in years”.

ENCOURAGING TRUE STORIES

Almost two years ago we were blessed to see a whole Iranian family accepting the Lord and being baptized and attending the Bible studies for new believers. They were growing in their faith and witnessing to many other refugees. After staying in Athens for few months they moved to Norway. We gave them any recommendation letters we could in order to help their case. When they arrived in Norway they met many refugees who knew of Helping Hands because when they were in Greece, they were coming to our Tea House and they heard about Jesus.

This Iranian family started witnessing to them and explaining why they became followers of Jesus. About 10 of them accepted Jesus and started a small fellowship. They went to a pastor in their city and asked if they could have a room in his church building to worship God. The pastor with enthusiasm agreed to give them a room with one condition, that they will be present at the morning Norwegian service and sing a couple hymns in Iranian.

But God had a greater encouragement kept for us. One morning my mobile phone rang and it was from the Norwegian Embassy. They wanted to see me and talk with me. So one Thursday noon a lady came at my office at Helping Hands to talk with me. In asking her how they found my mobile number and what connection do we have with the Embassy, the lady said, “Here is everything you want to know”, and handed me a file full of documents.

I opened the file and I found my recommendation letter with my signature, my phone numbers, address, photos, etc. It was the file of the application for asylum of the Iranian family who were already in Norway.

As I was looking at the documents I heard the lady asking me, “Do you believe that they are Christians”? I said to her, “If they are not Christians then neither me nor you are Christians”!

Then we talked about many things concerning their case and after meeting Nader too and talking with him about them, the lady from the Embassy left.

As she was opening the door...she stopped...turned to me and said: “ They must be true Christians because wherever we put them they make the rest of the refugees Christians”.

They heard the Gospel at Helping Hands. They shared the message with others in Norway. They witnessed even to government employees.

WHAT A TESTIMONY!

INVESTMENT

If you want to invest in this ministry you can make the check out to: **INTERNATIONAL TEAMS**, clearly indicating that is for the **“HELPING HANDS” ministry in Greece and sent it to:**

INTERNATIONAL TEAMS /USA

411 W. River RD.
Elgin, IL 60123-1570
USA

OR

INTERNATIONAL TEAMS/UK

PO box 11
Brecon, Powys
LD3 9WJ
UNITED KINGDOM

OR

INTERNATIONAL TEAMS/Canada

1 Union Street
Elmira, Ontario N3B 3J9
CANADA

OR

INTERNATIONAL TEAMS/Australia

PO Box 1123
Baulkham Hills
NSW 1755
AUSTRALIA

All financial donations in the above locations are TAX-DEDUCTIBLE
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If you want to invest time you can do so. We are thankful to God for many Short Term Teams, which are coming and providing great help in this ministry. If you are interested to come to serve the Lord among the refugees in Athens for any length of time please write to us for more information.

You can write directly to Kate Cami who is the contact person for the Short Term Teams. Her e-mail is: ilir.cami@iteams.org

For any other reason you can write directly to me:

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