

Noreen's Kids



Supporting the work of FCP in Romania

Christmas Newsletter from Romania 2019



Crăciun fericit și an nou prosper
Happy Christmas to all our wonderful supporters

To all our dear friends and Supporters

The festive season is almost here and we wanted to take the opportunity to say a huge heartfelt thank you to you all, for your continued support and friendship. The Christmas season brings families and friends together and reminds us here that you are all truly part of our little family. We value the generosity and kindness you bring to us and without you we simply could not achieve all we set out to do, or surmount what sometimes seems like impossible odds. Our children and young adults have a home where they are loved and protected and we are able to give that gift because we are blessed to have such wonderful friends in all our supporters. As we approach our 20th Christmas it is remarkable to us that we are still here taking in and caring

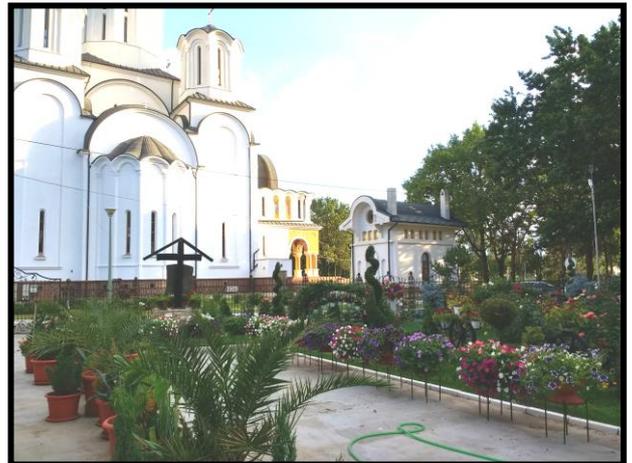
for children in our residential unit as well as in the wider community and that is only because of your unwavering support.

What has been and what's to come...

This year we have continued our work in the residential unit looking after children who are terminally ill or have life limiting conditions. Sadly two of our children passed away after long illnesses but thankfully we were able to arrange for them to be buried in their families' home villages. It is always so sad to say goodbye to these children but we have to pick ourselves up and be ready to accept new children into the unit. There are so many cases of sick children in need we do not have to go far to find them.

January 2019 as always was a harshly cold month and sadly we were not able to fund the distribution of extra fire wood. We are striving this year to get enough funds together to resume wood deliveries this winter as it is often a life line to the many very poor families in the community. We always pray and hope the winter will be as short as possible.

Springtime is always a welcome sight as it means we can get out and about in the community where families are waiting for our help. These families are referred to us by various agencies but we also have families who have no assistance and come to us for help directly. We are the only charity in the area which provides care in the community and looks after sick children or young adults in their own homes. Their families are the very poorest in the community and have very little other support. We are a lifeline for families who barely survive even in normal



Cathedral Garden in Spring

circumstances so without extra help the added burden of a sick child in the home is something with which they simply cannot cope. The community work is at the very heart of our philosophy and it is vital that we are able to meet as much of the demand as is humanly possible. We are only able to support the community work through your generosity. We receive no government assistance or funding for this vital work. The distances we travel and the situations we find ourselves in can be daunting but we will always rise to the challenge.

We always look forward to the summer and the children in the community are very excited by the prospect of the summer camp we provide for them. For one week in August we took 20+ children with varying challenges and illnesses to a holiday camp on the Danube Delta along with an accompanying parent. This purpose built facility is run by the Sunflower Fellowship of Romania and enables these children to play and interact with their peers in a safe environment with lots of outings and daily activities. Unfortunately this year we could not afford to sponsor more than one week of summer camp for the children but would like to be able to offer 2

summer camps, as we have in previous years, so we can take more children.



Christmas came early for these 2 youngsters

In September we had a visit from a wonderful new supporter Charlie James from Lambourn. Charlie was keen to see what we do and to bring some toys for the children. He was able to deliver toys to quite a few families personally – we are so grateful to him for all the work he has put in to collecting the toys and hope he will come again. Robin also bought a whole lot more of the toys Charlie collected at his recent visit.

Now we are getting ready for Christmas and this usually entails a list of vital supplies that need to be bought and taken to our community families. We also spread Christmas cheer, with the very welcome Christmas boxes donated by churches, charities and individuals both overseas and locally.

This year we intend to distribute much needed fire wood, funds permitting.

Looking forward to 2020, We want to increase the support we give to patients, both children and adults, in the local community, who are nearing the end of life. Currently we provide the only substantive palliative care programme available in our area and there is an urgent need for us to reach out and support where we can. This work is so important to the community, without it people will unfortunately die in pain and poverty. We hope with your donations to reach as many sufferers as possible.

We always need to reassess how to make the best use of our resources. We had an apartment belonging to Noreen which was previously used to transition our young adults with AIDS when they were well enough to return to their families. It was a very useful tool for increasing their independence and preparing them to cope with life away from institutional care. Thankfully new cases of AIDS are now relatively uncommon in this age group so there has been less need for the apartment. It was decided to sell the apartment and the funds have been donated to FCP.

Costs are rising all the time as basic wages increase to European levels, so we are always having to “paddle harder” just to keep up, and these funds will be vital to keeping our head above water!

Children's update

Sadly, we have lost 2 of our lovely children from the residential unit. After a long struggle with his illness and having spent almost 5 months in hospital little Marinica died peacefully on the 18th March back home with us. During the four years he was with us, his quality of life had improved greatly with the love and care he had had from our staff. For a while he more than held his own putting on weight and beginning to flourish, but because of his condition we always knew that he might not be with us for long.



Then on the first of April we also lost Lucica. Although she was blind and deaf, she responded to touch and sensed the loving care she received. Noreen's wonderful team of carers were uniquely able to offer the one to one care that was so necessary for these children. Although they may not have had long lives we tried to ensure that every day was the best it could be.

May they rest in peace our little Angels.

David

David, a lovely smiley lad of five years old, was born with a degenerative illness including some problems with his spine and other medical conditions. He came to us in September and has settled in well, responding to the attention he gets. He lets us know if he feels 'neglected'! He loves being bathed and washed and has all the carers giggling with him.

He will need a specialised wheel chair which we are going to source from a Romanian company. Its a different type from the standard one and although more expensive, we feel the design will enable him to make the most of his abilities.

Cristina is 11 years old and has started going to the local school for children with special needs. She has settled well but she likes to be the centre of attention and can occasionally be a bit of a handful. Mostly, though, she is a loving happy child and enjoys dancing to music, interacting well with the other children.



Doinitsa and Christina with Ana

Doinita

She is now 10 years old. She has had somewhat of a setback recently and can get very frustrated, but is a little better currently after some changes in treatment - we feel we can balance things still better for her and have arranged her admission to hospital for a full assessment this month. She still loves to push the other smaller ones in their chairs and is walking and running well. She loves the music session outside in the garden, and is another one who competes to be the centre of attention!

Monica

She is her usual happy self - can be very vociferous! She still loves to use the swing in the garden and is outside whenever it is possible. She enjoys the company of the staff and does concentrate on playing games with them.

Claudia

She is another one who loves music and is always happy to be taken out with the others for a "dance" in her wheelchair. She is most happy when she is taken into the park where she can see lots of children playing. She is a great example of someone who makes the most of her abilities but would never be able to cope without all the help she gets here. Claudia's parents live in England, they visit regularly and always make sure that every fridge in the residential unit is full of food for all the children



Claudia on the wheelchair swing

Iuliana

She is turning into a great little character. She has been with us just over a year now and although she is not speaking, she is very good at making her requirements known. She likes to hide under her hood so favourite clothes need a hood. She is an enchanting little girl with a strong character and is quite clever continuously observing her surroundings. Her parents are regular visitors and she has a good relationship with them.



Iuliana and George

Andana:

Andana, although unable to sit in a wheelchair, enjoys being out in the garden with the other children in her 'special trolley'. Life is difficult during the cold weather especially during the winter because her 'trolley' does not fit in the play room consequently she is confined to her room. However, our staff spend quality time with her each day reading to her and just keeping her company. She enjoys Claudia's company and sharing her room with her.

Adrian is also confined to bed because of his medical condition. His room is directly opposite the kitchen and with his door open he enjoys 'all the comings and goings' and people popping in to him constantly during the day. The highlight of his day is having a massage each evening. He is a bright and cheerful young man.

Fundraisers

A huge thankyou to those who have worked so hard to collect the money which is the life blood of our work in Romania.

We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to all those who contribute regularly, those who organise one-off events to support the charity, and indeed to those who go to these events, as well as those who contribute in kind i.e. clothes toys medical equipment etc.

I know what a lot of slog goes into the fundraising but without it, the work of FCP in Romania could not continue. We are always looking for new ideas for fundraising and do please contact the charity if you would like to share an idea for fundraising or want help with publicity material photos, literature etc. Contact details are below.

The Future

We have until recently been storing a lot of our equipment in a disused hotel – they kindly let us use one of their rooms, but the hotel is now sold so we have lost this space and are very short of storage to keep equipment – beds, wheelchairs mattresses nursing aids walking aids commodes, dressings, nappies etc. etc.

We have permission from Child Protection to put up a storage facility in the land adjoining the residential unit. This will be quite expensive but there is really no alternative if we are to continue our community work. We need to store the equipment, where it is secure and protected from the weather. We have seen one such storage facility made from a converted "Eurocontainer" in a nearby care facility.



The Inside of the Eurocontainer

As you may remember a few years ago we vastly improved the area the children play in with all-weather surface instead of the muddy patch that was there before. We installed a wheelchair swing, and a shelter. Independently of us the authorities in their wisdom have decided to take



View of the playground before the trees were cut down

down many of the small trees which grow next to the play area – somewhat of a mixed blessing because these provided shade and privacy to the children, so we are now seeking permission to extend the play area into the area which has been cleared, and probably put up a fence on the boundary to increase privacy. The current play area has been very successful and is in use every day but it is now quite crowded with wheel chairs and trolleys when the children are out in the fresh air every day.

FUTURE APPEAL;

We are always grateful for all donations no matter how large or small, every penny means so much to us, and we try to make sure it goes a long way. In 2020 we are aiming to launch a sponsorship programme so that individual donors can support a child through a monthly sponsorship subscription. Early in the New Year, we will provide information about each child needing sponsorship and would love to hear from of any donors who would be interested. All the money we collect goes directly to Romania, to fund our work of there.

**From all of us here in Romania we send you our heartfelt thanks.
Happy Christmas and God bless you and your loved ones.
Wishing you prosperity and good health in 2020.
Noreen, staff and children.**

Contact details for Noreen's Kids

(Charity number 1123407) - supporting the work of FCP (Romania)

**Dr Robin Dunn.
Sadlers, Sadlers Road, Inkpen
Berks RG179EB
Tel. 01488 668310
e-mail: robin@noreenskids.org
website
<http://www.noreenskids.org>**

**On-line donations
<https://www.goldengiving.com/secure/donation/noreenskids> To donate by standing order or by BACS follow links from
<https://www.noreenskids.weebly.com/donate.html>
You can also download a gift aid form or standing order form through this link**