

"We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God." – 2 Corinthians 5:20

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If you missed our Facebook Live event and would like to ask us some questions or get a more thorough update, please reach out to us via any of the methods we post at the end of our newsletter, or email catalina@dckreider.com. Also, if your address has changed in the last year, or if you didn't receive a Christmas card from us last year, please get your address to us soon so we can have you on our mailing list.



"Death to the Gypsies"

That's what the graffiti reads. It's painted on a wall right outside of a popular teenage hangout, and we pass it often as we take our children to the coffee shop for a treat. Thankfully our children can't yet read, but we know that you don't have to be literate to inherit messages and worldviews from society.

"If he would just get a job, then he could buy a window for their house." Elin was grappling with understanding why our new Roma friends couldn't afford to put in a window or door of their one-room shack that housed at least 3 adults and 3 children. When we visited Fran* and Jean Claud's* house on a relatively warm day for a Romanian November, their wood-burning stove kept the closet-sized room warm enough. And we know that when 6 people share one double-sized bed, sheer body heat can help them survive, but we know that once winter really hits soon, it won't be a particularly comfortable place to live. Yet I still can't wrap my mind around their centuries of existence in their separationist Roma culture, especially when I'm confronted by the reality that their bathroom is a corner in their front yard where they simply squat by a fence. Elin has been learning about the poor in our world, but this was the first time she really was

able to experience it. Even for me, it was shocking.

We ought to work hard for God's glory and do everything without complaining and fighting.

We ought to love those who don't work at all and instead choose to beg and make excuses.

How do we teach our children both of these truths? These two lessons seemed to be colliding for Elin that particular November day as we walked away from their shack. Elin knew that Jean Claud was perfectly capable of working and providing for his family. Shouldn't he just go get a job? Aren't there plenty of jobs available in our town for unskilled laborers?

Yes. The answer is resoundingly yes!

Yet, we knew that the lesson couldn't stop there. We don't want our daughter to grow up in this culture seeing them as nothing but irresponsible, lazy beggars. We don't want nasty graffiti to confirm underlying suspicions she may already be thinking. Because we're convinced that's not the way to see them through the eyes of Jesus. So shouldn't we love them even if they're enemies of society? Shouldn't we love and help them even if they don't deserve it? Isn't that what grace is?

Yes. The answer is resoundingly yes!

Elin, how do you know it's important to work hard and earn money for the things you need?

"Because you and daddy work hard and get money."

So you have good parents who teach you to work hard?

"Yes."

And how do you know that God wants us to work hard without complaining and fighting?

"The Bible."

So you know what God says because you have parents and grandparents and

friends and church people who teach you, right?

"Yes."

Fran and Jean Claud didn't have parents who showed them how to work hard. And they don't know Jesus. They don't know what God says in the Bible. They weren't taught to work hard. Their parents didn't let them go to school and learn. They were taught to beg instead. But who made them?

"God."

Yup. And do you think God loves them and wants them to know about Him?

"Yes."

Do you think God loves you more than He loves them?

"No."

Are you better than them just because you've been taught what's right?

"No."

Right. God made them, too. And He loves them just as much He loves you. And they have value because they were made by God. So we want to help Fran and Jean Claud and their family because Jesus wants us to love and help them. We're going to help him get a job if he wants one so that he can buy a window for his family. But always remember that Jesus loves them just as much He loves you. And we always want to show them what Jesus is like by loving them and playing with them and being their friends. We are not better than they are.

This Thanksgiving season we are grateful for so many things. Our children have gotten an even deeper understanding of their many material blessings. And yet the biggest blessing of all is that Jesus came down to save us all. The sign *should* read "Death to the People," because we are all at enmity with God as we have rebelled against Him. We have been lazy and ungrateful and self righteous and immoral. And yet Christ has changed the message.

"Sa va traiasca Tiganilor."

Life to the Gypsies.

And to the rest of the world, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

*Names have been changed for privacy.



Our conversation with our kids about the intrinsic value of all has been helped in large part by our learning of the catechism in our meal-time devotions. We're just beginning an attempt to implement teaching the catechism to the youth in our church.

Take a look at this video of a dry-run or [read the text here.](#)

PLEASE PRAY...

- God has given us a number of opportunities to speak into the lives of others. He has graciously given us wonderful neighbors and wonderful friends while simultaneously bringing many to us who have been searching for meaningful community. Please pray that we, and the church, would demonstrate the loving hands and feet of Christ's community. Pray that we would have wisdom in our conversations and grace in our actions. Pray for all hearts involved, that we would all be drawn closer to God.
- Continue to pray that our church would find a Romanian pastor.
- Please pray for our church congregants, especially the elders, as there are many who are facing some very difficult circumstances. Please pray that God would give them wisdom and endurance, and that he would help them to lean into the body. Pray that we would have wisdom in reaching out to them and supporting them.





Catalina was able to teach a Thanksgiving-inspired English lesson at Elin and Atticus's preschool, and Derek was able to teach the same lesson at the local public school in one of our church member's Kindergarten class. Derek has been teaching every Friday, and Catalina has some new upcoming ministry opportunities! Stay tuned!

We shared Thanksgiving with three other Romanian families. The fun chaos with having eight children together was just as it should be on a Thanksgiving day, and sweet potato casserole is officially the new favorite.

It's getting cold around here, but we've continued to have a warmer-than-normal November. We were in tshirts at the beginning of the month!

Derek and a few of the other men from our church went to a church-planting conference in Bucharest that was very edifying to them. We are praying about how to best implement new ministries in our area.



IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

11/28/18 - [Watching Andreea Work](#) by Catalina

11/15/18 - [Some End or Some One?](#) by Derek

11/8/18 - [Two Roma, a Missionary, and an Ugly Heart](#) by Catalina

11/9/18 - [Catechism Questions 1-2](#) by Derek

11/5/18 - [Why Christians Should Consider Abstention from Voting](#) by Derek

11/3/18 - [A Strange Rebuttal Against the Violinist Argument for Abortion](#) by Derek

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