



1,000 / 40 for 40: Day THIRTEEN



We're mostly unpacked now and the kids are enjoying having their toys, books, and quilts!

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Prayer Requests

Here are our quick, specific prayer requests for August 10, 2017:

- .Pray for our visa applications to be approved. Romania is different in that you have to actually come here and apply once you get here. We can't imagine being denied and having to NOW pack up and leave. Yet we know that if God has called us to stay here long term, then He will not allow His plans to be foiled by a government bureaucracy. Pray that we would rest in His sovereignty in this.
- Pray for us in the continuing heat. There is no air conditioning anywhere including our home, and it's been consistently in the low 90s. I'm boiling a baby on the inside and boiling myself on the outside! Ha! (But I'm sure I'll need even more prayer for my attitude once the winter snow gets here in October!!)

Who We Met

Today we had to visit a notary to get some special declaration needed for our visa applications. Since we don't speak Romanian, the notary had to call a translator from a business close by. Alexandra came and did a wonderful job translating for us, and while we waited on the paperwork to process we got a chance to talk with her.

She told us about the negative birth rate occurring in Romania right now (more people are dying than babies being born). She said that more and more families are choosing not to have children at all, and if they do, two children is absolute maximum. We've heard this several times but I probed a bit more to ask why that is. She said the main factor is the cost of children being so prohibitive. Though women get two years of maternity leave, after that it is next to impossible to survive on a single salary. So the moms have to work. Obviously that makes having more children more difficult. She said that having more kids is seen as a luxury nowadays! Wow! How convicting to feel that simply having the ability to have a third child is a luxury! It helps me see my children as even more of a blessing than I already do!

She also helped us see some of the reasons why some people enjoyed communism and want to go back. She said that while they didn't have as much food back then, they had better, fresher food. Now they've followed the ways of the West where their food isn't local anymore and has all sorts of pesticides and

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discussed that the social structure has changed drastically since communism fell. She said that in the past the elderly and poor were viewed as equals but nowadays it's too easy to stereotype and devalue people based on fortune and life circumstances. We can definitely see that in the States! It's good to be reminded of our blind spots regarding our own political and cultural leanings. I certainly wouldn't advocate for communism returning, but it's good to be reminded that Capitalism is also not the Restored Kingdom!

We have little chance of running into Alexandra again since she's not in our small town of Codlea. But please pray for her nevertheless - that she would find Jesus who is the great equalizer. Who sees no difference in worth based on rich or poor. Who is the great King who brings peace regardless of politics or economics. Who sees the pain of many women who may want more children but aren't able to have more. Who sees and understands their economic struggles. But who also sees US and has mercy on us even when we rely on ourselves and our money because we're not driven to Him as our Provider in the same way that our Romanian neighbors may be. Who forgives us of our self reliance.

"Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.
Blessed are you who hunger now,
for you will be satisfied.
Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh."
-Luke 6:20-21

Pray that we could learn from this type of Christ-centered dependency and that many Romanians would understand this, too!

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