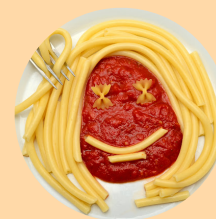


# Annual Report 2021



## Behind every number hides a destiny....

On 12.01.2001, the doors of our Day care Centre on Dneprpetrovskaya Street in Odessa opened for the very first time - at that time for 12 children from families facing great challenges due to poverty, illness, housing shortages and addictions. Since that time, not only has the name of the street changed in the wake of "decommunisation", but more than 550 children and young people have been able to spend a significant part of their childhood in now 3 centres providing a safe, love-filled place. This makes us humble and grateful. In this annual review, we would like to look back at what we have experienced together over the past 12 months. This letter contains more numbers than usual. Especially from authorities, we are often only asked for numbers to assess how important our ministry is. This is deeply contrary to our motivation and our understanding of living Christian neighbourly love. In such moments I often think back to a moment in 1996 when I was just starting my work with the street children in Kiev.



### Lunch

We have eaten lunch together more than 240 times. A total of more than 4000 portions have been eaten - not to forget the joy and fellowship that table fellowship brings.



### Foreign language courses

50 children and young people made use of the offer to learn English or German for free.

I was totally disappointed by the behaviour of a boy. I was sitting in a cold flat and in fact I would have gladly given up everything. After a time of prayer, I made a decision that has remained an important personal conviction to this day: "If my commitment ultimately changes just one child's life for the better, it will have been worth it."

## Lots of wonderful newcomers

It makes us happy and grateful that we were able to welcome many new children to our day centres with the start of the new school year in September. Especially in Petrovka, the demand exceeds the number of available places. For the first time in many years, we had to create a waiting list.

Of course, this says a lot about the situation in the country, but also about the fact that our work is more and more accepted by the village community. Seven years of faithful service by a dedicated staff is bearing fruit. Thanks be to God!

We notice that many of the newcomers are growing up in very poor and modest living conditions. One seven-year-old, for example, had no idea what Lego bricks were - today, after three months at the day centre, he is already able to build fantastic new things out of them.



**"I love being at the day centre because there are so many interesting games and because the staff are friendly to me."**

A five-year-old knew neither colours nor numbers. Now he counts to 10 and even the colours are no longer a problem. By the time he starts school in September 2022, he will be well prepared for primary school and will be in no way behind his peers.

Surprisingly, this year we were again confronted with situations where illnesses occur due to the children's living environment. For the first time in years, children fell ill with scabies and we also had to deal with lice time and again. We are happy and thankful that we can also be of practical assistance and help to improve the living conditions with your support.





## Working together for the benefit of children

We consider the many new and long-standing cooperations and friendships with people who work for the benefit of "our" children, youth and families to be a great gift.

It was a pleasure to have a team from Luxembourg and also a team from Zwickau with us for our summer camps this year. There is such a blessing hidden in these joint actions and we remember the time together with great pleasure. More than 200 children took part in our summer holiday programmes.

We have been invited to the dolphinarium and the cinema and have always been given plenty of presents - both by business people from Odessa and by friends from abroad. We are grateful that for over 10 years a considerable part of our running costs has been covered by a company from Odessa.

We are also very grateful for the dental care provided by a private clinic here in Odessa.

Good dentistry is a luxury in Ukraine - a luxury given to our children. A few days ago, a girl was even fitted with expensive braces, not to mention the 74 free treatments throughout the year.



Thanks to your generosity, we were able to provide food for many families even on weekends, provide two families with firewood for the winter, give away clothes and shoes, cover costs for studies and education, finance surgeries, medical examinations and treatments, renovate homes, pay debts and bills and cover funeral expenses. Many thanks to all who have been involved.

Of course, all this would not be possible without our team of 12 people who could not be more different 😊 : women and men aged 18 to 77 who give their time, gifts and skills to be a second family to our children and young people (as many children say). Thank God for each and every one.



## Entering the New Year with confidence

We are entering the new year with the hope that we will be able to have a lasting positive influence on the lives of children and young people in the coming months. We have concrete plans and projects for this, which we will share with you in the upcoming newsletters. We want to continue to be a companion and bearer of blessings, encouraging people not to give up, even when it is difficult. We want to pass on the living hope that each of us carries within us. Unfortunately, we cannot end the year with the news that the purchase of our own building has finally been completed. There are still a few bureaucratic hurdles to overcome. But we are confident that the German proverb will come true in this case, that things that take a long time will finally turn out well 😊

On behalf of all the children, families and staff from Odessa and Petrovka, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for all your support. Without the countless people from Ukraine and many other countries who do this ministry with us, pray for us and donate, little of what is in this newsletter would have been achieved. Thank you so much!

We wish God's protection and blessing, peace and much joy in the New Year.

Sincerely,

Slavik and Nicole



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