

News from Rei

and the Romanian New Hope Team

Dear Friend,

August 2009

Ancient Rome

A little boy was riding along with his father from New Mexico to Colorado. They were traveling 250 miles to go fishing. After 50 miles, the excited son asked his father if they were almost there. The father answered that they had quite a distance to travel yet. After another 50 miles the son asked his father again. "Sorry son, we have another 150 miles yet." After 50 more miles the son asked, "Daddy, am I still going to be four years old when we get there?" ☺

Quite the opposite happened during our VBS. Our five-day trip through the ancient Rome went by like a thought. When the "trip" finished on Friday, the over 300 children were not going home. They stayed in the church's courtyard screaming, "Apa! Apa! Apa!" for the next half an hour. That is "Water! Water! Water!"

Why? At the end of each day, I take out a car wash water pump and sprinkle the children... I mean soak them... to the underwear. It is our tradition, now.

Thank you for your prayers. Again, the event was a blast. Hundreds of children heard the Gospel while following the apostles' footsteps throughout the Roman Empire. Over 50 teenagers had a chance to grow in leadership and spirituality as they

helped the lead the event. During the event, we experienced a much needed time of spiritual refreshment by being surrounded by those children.

Somewhere along the way, we had the child chased out of us. When we talk about faith, it seems we've lost our astonishment. As Mike Yaconelli said,

"The most critical issue facing Christians is not abortion, pornography, the disintegration of the family, moral absolutes, MTV, drugs, racism, sexuality or school prayer. The critical issue today is dullness... The Good News is no longer good news, it is okay news. Christianity is no longer life changing, it is life enhancing."

That was exactly what I suddenly realized during that week. Among those children, we, the adults, realized that we lost the gleam in our eye; we are dull, predictable, and banal

in comparison to the children. No wonder Jesus told us, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." Luke 18: 16-17

So, the VBS this year was for us first, and for the children, second. Praise the Lord! See photos on our website: www.nouasperanta.org



Rei Abruđan



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Your gifts made out to New Hope and designated for Rei and the Romanian ministry will be forwarded 100%.

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“Samson slayed the Philistines with the axe of the Apostles.”

Samson was a strongman who let himself be led astray by a Jezebel like Delilah.

(This is something I found in a compilation by Richard Lederer, *The Bible according to kids*, and it seems it is written by actual students and is genuine, authentic, and unretouched.)

The theme of our teenage camp was *Samson, a Wasted Potential*. I think we had one of the greatest Bible teaching times ever as it included incredible debates and life applications from the life of Samson. In fact, we came home with several major life lessons that will be put together in a slideshow with photos from the camp that will be given to all the participants as a token of remembrance.



There were a smaller number of participants, but we had the best one-on-one time. We, the leaders, were saying that this should be the way to go for future camps. They are much more efficient in terms of personal impact and in terms of really winning the next generation for Christ.

With this camp, again, God has spoken to us. We realized we live in a time when faith is thin, because our aching for what is above and beyond us has been anesthetized, and our capacity for wonder has been reduced to clever tricks. That's why we need to rethink our strategy and programs for the future. We must do that if we want to stay in touch with our vision.

Again, the camp was for us first, but second for the teenagers. Praise the Lord! See photos on our website: www.nouasperanta.org.

Dream Stealers

About a month ago at a meeting with several youth workers from Romania, I was asked, “*Rei, what’s wrong with you. You’re the oldest youth pastor in Romania, when will you get a normal job for your age?*”

Wow! I never thought about that. Am I out of the picture? Am I looking old? I thought you could stay young indefinitely if you eat wisely, get plenty of sleep, work hard, have a positive mental outlook, and lie about your age. ☺

You know what? I’m not *looking* for a “normal job.” I’m *doing* a normal job. After all, I am fulfilling God’s call for me for now. I know that.



Jack Canfield tells us about a young school student whose father was a horse trainer. Because his family had to follow the horse-racing season, the young boy had to change schools through-out the year. During his senior year he was asked to write a paper about what his dreams for the future were. His paper described his dream of owning a 200 acre horse ranch with stables and tracks and a 4,000-square-foot home. He even drew a diagram of the property and the design of his house. He turned the paper in, and two days later, it came back with an “F” on the front and a note to see the teacher. After class, the teacher explained to the boy that his dream was “unrealistic.” The teacher said that if the boy rewrote the paper with much more realistic dream, he would reconsider the grade. The boy went home and asked his dad what to do. “It’s your decision, son,” said the father. Dad knew this was a very important decision. The boy kept the paper for a week and then returned it to his teacher after class. “*Here,*” the boy said, “*you can keep the ‘F,’ and I’ll keep my dream.*” So, I’m telling all those dream stealers, “*You can keep your ‘opinion,’ and I’ll keep my dream.*”

Thank you for coming alongside us. It is because of you, your prayers, and support that we are able to keep our dreams. There are still five camps to go, so, please keep us in your prayers... maybe there are more life lessons to learn!

Rei and Ramona