

Vision Impossible?!

Manda (& Josh) Pidgeon

Though last Saturday's coffee & dessert fundraiser was smaller than I had hoped, it was a great opportunity to share about the journey I've been on.

Whether I'm writing my newsletter, looking back at my calendar over the past few months, or writing a talk to share with you, taking the time to process and reflect is always a helpful reminder that God can use any ordinary, willing person to achieve His purposes- even me!

From my first Roma camp in Leskovac, Serbia in 2010, to completing my major college project on "the Roma people of Romania and the Key ministry approaches needed for the next decade" in 2012, my heart strings have continued to be pulled tighter with time for this somewhat 'invisible' people group. The question that has continued to overwhelm me is "How do we effectively reach the 2.5 million Roma people spread across Romania?"

Part of my research provided me with the opportunity to do a survey of those who were already working with Roma around Romania, and from this I heard pleas to help them reach out to the Roma communities around the country.

While I originally thought that I might return to Romania in order to work with just one or two Roma communities, based around wherever I was to live, I have come to realise that God has been tugging my heart and actually preparing me for a wider plan.

For those who know me well, I am a big

advocate for self-care. There are so many people in this world who are working in a ministry of some form and who are struggling to look after themselves. People are burning out, trying to do ministry on their own, and often rewriting the wheel when it comes to resources, curriculums and strategies.

This scenario has been unfolding before my eyes, and I realised that God has been giving me a vision and mission to reach out to these workers- to care for them, to see them being resourced; seeing them being cared for as children of God. These people are sacrificially giving of themselves, and unfortunately many have no one caring for them.

This burden and dilemma has presented me with what seems to be a 'vision impossible'- a ginormous vision and dream, and one that I am constantly asking God why He has brought all this upon me. Despite this, I knew God was saying to me- if we can equip the workers, we can reach the communities.

Throughout my life, God has continued to grow a network around me, which in turn, enables us, the body of Christ, to reach the marginalised Roma people with the Gospel... and how?... by encouraging, equipping and empowering Roma-Workers, so that the ripple effect and even tsunami can roll out over Romania- and who knows but maybe even Europe.

This dream and vision is starting to take shape! Since starting the Roma-Workers Network (RWN) in 2014, it has already

Please Pray...

» **Praise** God for all the details that have come together so far for the RWN conference. **Pray** that He will continue to finalise all the details and make a way for those to come, who He wants to be there.

» **Praise** God for a wonderful first year of marriage, and **Pray** for Josh and I whilst we are apart in May.

» **Pray** for safe travels and good health for Mum and I.

» **Pray** that the Lord will continue to raise up more financial partners for my ministry roles, to enable us to not only live in Sydney but also cover ongoing ministry costs as they arise, such as a new computer which I will soon need.



At 'Flat Rock'

Sharing the love of God in Romania & Australia

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grown to over 70 workers all around the country who are now starting the process of networking with each other, caring for each other, praying for each other, sharing resources, and just doing life and ministry together. And it's still growing.

The RWN Conference that I'm hosting in less than a month's time, from 9th-13th May, is enabling workers from all around the country, to be "Rooted Together In Christ". But that sense of the body of Christ and being rooted together in Him extends beyond the borders of Romania. In fact, each one of us is able to extend our hand in prayer, help provide for a Roma worker to attend the conference, by covering their registration costs, and by helping with simple practical needs such as providing phones for recording the workshops, or maybe helping with the development of an RWN website over the next two years. So thank you to all of you who are rooted together in Christ with us.

The conference is coming together, though I am certainly feeling the pressure to get everything set in place before Mum and I fly out on 1st May. Please pray for our speakers as they prepare their workshops and devotions. The workshops will cover topics such as church planting, mentoring, discipleship, Roma epistemology i.e. how to minister the 'Roma-way', small business initiatives, Human Trafficking prevention and education, and self-care.

We will have four people (two English and two Romanian speakers) who will be devoting time at the conference to give spiritual guidance and to pray with those who need it. Please pray for all our speakers and those who have committed to be part of the conference- I couldn't do it without them!

We have a great conference program lined up but there are still more Roma-Workers waiting for a sponsorship to be able to come. I would love to be able to say yes to them, but I need your help. It takes AUD\$150 to feed, accommodate and provide conference materials for one worker for the whole week. Can you or maybe your bible study provide the funds for one worker?

At the coffee and dessert night fundraiser, I created a tree with leaves, for which each leaf represented support for one worker. Being Autumn in Sydney, It's great to see each leaf 'fall', **but we still need about 20-25 sponsorships donated by NEXT WEDNESDAY, 20th April! Can you help make this vision possible?**

Although the conference is certainly demanding a lot of my time at the moment, the rest of life continues, filled with celebrations and challenges. In particular, my member care role has been focusing on helping our Aussie workers around the world, especially as we prepare for several families returning on Home Assignment.

It was great to hear Christine Cottrell speak at our Annual Dinner on 12th March, as she shared about their family's highs and lows of refugee ministry in Europe over the past decade. Please pray for their family as they remain separated, with Brian still in Glasgow finalising the sale of their house, and all the last bits and pieces. Pray that he can join his family in Australia again soon.

Praise God for the opportunity to spend some quality time with Kez as we joined thousands of women at the Hillsong Colour Conference. There were some great and challenging talks given, and I was particularly encouraged by Holly Wagner, who gave the illustration of different sized tents which represent where we're at in life. For me I feel like I've been through a time of personal equipping and that I've now stepped out of that preparation tent, moving towards a bigger tent in my Roma ministry- one in which there is enough room to share the space with others, as He stretches and grows us! I can only pray that I will step in faith, but that He will prepare a place to put my feet.

Time has certainly flown, but it was a joy to recently celebrate both Josh's and my birthdays and our 1st wedding anniversary- all within the space of 6 days. Yes already! We celebrated our anniversary by heading up to a quaint B&B in Katoomba for a night, and enjoying take-away as we watched the sunset at 'Flat Rock' (photo on front), which Josh organised as a surprise. I can't thank God enough for the blessing of such a wonderful, loving husband whom I adore.

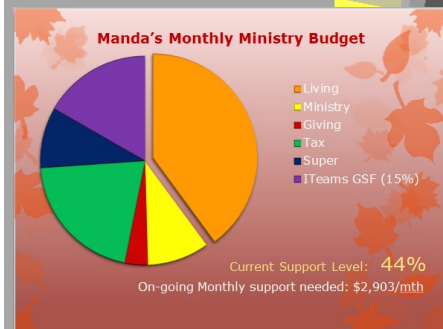
Whilst you are praying for the RWN conference, we would also appreciate your prayers for Josh and I, as it will be the longest time we've been apart since we've been married. Josh has exams just two weeks after Mum and I return in June, so please pray for him as he balances study and work and other commitments, in the lead up to this crucial part of the semester.

Thank you for your partnership, love and support through the joys and challenges. It is a privilege to do life with you!

In His hands, Manda (& Josh) Pidgeon.



Conference T-shirts



Travel Itinerary

1st May- Leaving Sydney and preparing for conference

9-13th - RWN Conference

14-22nd- Visiting RWN Networkers who can't come to the conference.

23rd- 1st June- Holiday with Mum in Prague & Copenhagen

3rd June- Arrive in Sydney



SAVE THE DATE | 2016
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MAY 9-13
ROOTED TOGETHER IN CHRIST



First Biannual Roma-Workers Conference...
for Christian workers ministering to Roma around Romania

WHERE: SURDUC, ROMÂNIA
COST: 400 RON per worker

Further information & Registration forms
will be available from 18th January

The conference will be run in Romanian & English
(with the potential for other languages to be translated, pending sufficient numbers)

rromaworkers.ro@gmail.com | www.facebook.com/groups/rromaworkers.ro/



A project account has been set up for people to give financially towards the RWN conference in May-2016.

Will you consider sponsoring one Roma worker to attend the conference for just €100?
(including administration costs = AUD\$150)

Click www.iteams.org.au/give/give-once/ and select 'Roma-Workers Network' under projects, to give a once-off contribution.

For those who sign up to be a sponsor, you will receive prayer points for that worker, so that you can be praying for them over the week of the conference.

We are looking for 30-40 financial sponsor buddies, and a prayer buddy for all 100 workers, so even if you're not in a position to financially sponsor a worker, you can still be a prayer buddy.

Please email rromaworkers.ro@gmail.com to sign up.
(include your full name, email, church and a small paragraph about you, which will be given to the roma worker)

