



Prayerful tenacity!

Manda Lewis

One of the books I have been reflecting on of late is *Jesus Calling* by Sarah Young. And, whilst some days I find the words more helpful than others, one in particular touched my soul during this time of transition to ministry in Romania:

"True dependence is not simply asking Me (Jesus) to bless what you have decided to do. It is coming to Me with an open mind and heart, inviting Me to plant My desires within you. I may infuse within you a dream that seems far beyond your reach. You know that in yourself you cannot achieve such a goal. Thus begins your journey of profound reliance on Me. It is a faithful walk, taken one step at a time, leaning on Me as much as you need. This is not a path of continual success but of multiple failures. However, each failure is followed by a growth spurt, nourished by increased reliance on Me. Enjoy the blessedness of a victorious life, through deepening your dependence on Me (2 Corinthians 5:7)."

The lead up to my departure on 22nd July, included many legalities such as finalising bank details, suspending my health insurance and taking my name off the electoral role. All those things that are a normal part of life in Australia, suddenly put on hold! But what I am grateful for, is that despite distance, relationships continue. I can't explain how appreciative I am for the many emails and messages from people, letting me know that they are thinking of and praying for me, both individually and

together in groups.

There are so many emotions involved and tugs at the heart differing from one minute to the next, but I wouldn't change this journey I am on, for a moment. Knowing that I have been given this opportunity and passion for those living in Romania, to know Christ, it is truly a privilege to serve my Lord in this way.

I am thankful that both my flights to Dubai and then Bucharest went smoothly. The few days layover in Dubai was helpful and somewhat restful, as I took the time to process both leaving Sydney and beginning ministry in Vâlcea. I also managed to fit in a Big Bus Tour (hop-on-hop-off) of Dubai, a 4WD-ing Desert Safari and joining Si and Penny Hood at their Friday international fellowship service—as well as meeting their gorgeous Sami.

Met by my team leader, Mike, as I walked through the arrivals door in Bucharest, it was straight into action as we headed to Ikea. Without seeing my apartment in advance, I purchased a day-bed and mattress, cushions, bedside table and several other bits and pieces, in the hope that we could fit it all in their station wagon. With the passenger seat pulled as far forward as possible, and the mattress touching the ceiling, we made it back to Vâlcea before dark and got everything set up so I had somewhere to sleep.

Please Pray...

» **Praise** God for His provision of an apartment and all that I need to get started in my ministry here in Vâlcea and **Pray** that I will be able to take possession of my car without too much hassle.

» **Praise** God that I was able to send out my first email to Roma-Workers around Romania and please **Pray** for the Network to begin to grow and develop with a firm foundation in God's Word.

» **Pray** that I would use my time well as I make plans to visit those I network with and for safe travel and fruitful conversations.

» **Pray** for Josh and I as we continue to navigate the journey ahead together, and especially during this time of separation.

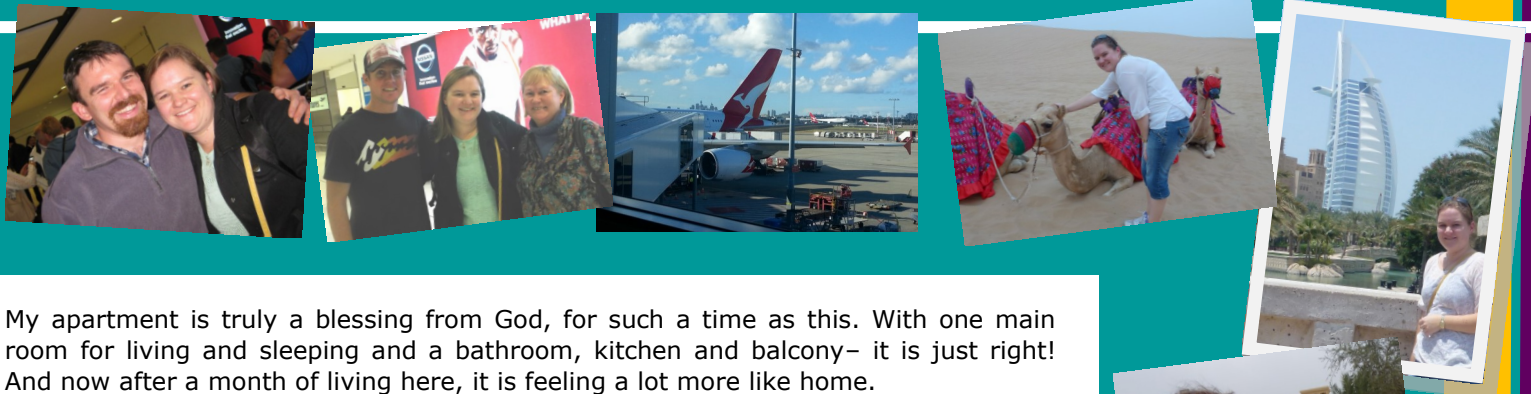


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My apartment is truly a blessing from God, for such a time as this. With one main room for living and sleeping and a bathroom, kitchen and balcony– it is just right! And now after a month of living here, it is feeling a lot more like home.

Whilst most things in Romania run at a slightly slower pace to Sydney, I have enjoyed getting orientated with the layout of Vâlcea. I have been out to Momaia to help John and Cheryl pack up their house, as they prepared to move to Timisoara to join the Areopagus ministry. I went with Tim and Krista to Govora, to a home for the elderly and I have been joining Krista as she goes out to Colonia, where she has begun studying Ephesians with a small group of Roma women. It was lovely, last Thursday, to be able to hear some of them share their stories of how they came to know Christ, and mutually encouraging also, as I shared mine with them. Please pray for those in Colonia who know Christ, to grow in their faith and shine Christ’s love to their families and community.

On Friday 15th August, it was ‘Sfânta Maria’ (St Mary’s Day), and a public holiday. For some, including Elvira’s brother, Marian (the male version of Maria), it doubles as their name day, so it was my privilege to join them for a delicious Romanian-style bbq dinner to celebrate.

A wonderful praise point is that I have been able to find and order a car, a seven-seater Dacia Lodgy, and if all goes well, should take possession of it by the start of next week. Thank you again to the many people who made this possible, especially through CHBCs’ Christmas appeal last year. It will be a true blessing to allow me to begin travelling to meet up with Roma-workers around the country.

This week, Elvira and I finalised an initial email and its’ translation, to send to anyone working in Christian ministry with Roma communities around Romania. Please pray that God will raise up catalysts for this ministry so that it will begin to be owned and shaped by those I network with, and ultimately the Roma people themselves. Pray that the vision will continue to develop and begin to see fruit so that workers will be equipped to effectively minister to Roma people.

I would appreciate your prayers for the next two months in particular, as I receive responses from Roma-workers and plan a travel schedule to meet with as many of them as possible. Pray that I would adjust quickly to driving on the right-hand side again and to the general road conditions.

Whilst I am loving being able to speak Romanian again, as tiring as it can be, please pray that my words will be clear and that my language will continue to develop, especially as I communicate with those who don’t speak English well or at all.

Thank you again for walking with me in prayer and by your words of encouragement. God’s presence is never more evident than when we lift our arms up and ask Him to use our weaknesses for His Glory. Some days I wonder just how He is going to bring this vision, that I believe He’s given me, about, but then He ever so gently gives me a glimpse to remind me just whose ministry this is, and to put me in my place. Thank you, Lord!

In His hands, Manda.

Photos: (front page): Desert Safari in Dubai (toward the Oman border); At CHBC, the Sunday before I left; (Above): At Sydney Airport with Josh; Adam and Mum; In Dubai on the Safari, in front of the Burj Al Arab, and with Penny and Sami; My apartment block next to the Olt river.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Preparing a schedule to visit Roma workers from September through till mid-November

Josh visits 22nd-30th September



“From Him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.”
Ephesians 4:16