



We're Engaged!

Manda Lewis

Once more, as I look at my calendar, I am astounded by all that has happened since I last wrote, less than six weeks ago. From the likes of daily living in Vâlcea, Skyping many people around the world and just trying to keep up with everything myself, I am thankful that God continues to give me the strength I need to get through each day.

In the first half of September, I had the privilege of celebrating with two sisters and one brother as they were Baptised at Bethesda Church, where I attend. God is certainly faithful in watering the seeds that have been planted and I pray that those three lives would produce some amazing fruit that would draw others to Him.

Seeds were planted and some for the first time, as we did a VBS Kids Holiday Program out at Colonie. This program ran over three mornings and we had around 45 kids each day. It was a real joy to watch the kids soak in the messages of the hidden treasure, the sower and the lost sheep. I organised much of the craft and it was great to again work alongside two from the French team from August last year, as well as others.

Please pray for Simona and several of the other women at Colonie, who are shining Christ's love in their community and who made the VBS possible. Pray that the children and adults will come to have a personal relationship with God that is not based around superstitions, rituals and legalism, as many do.

One misconception believed by many Rroma here, is that after a person is baptised, they will have 40 days of trials and temptations before things will get better. Pray that the truth of the Gospel will be understood and that Satan would not get a foothold.

In the afternoon of the first day of the VBS, Mike, Elvira and I also went to pick up my Dacia Lodgy after waiting more than two weeks for it to arrive from elsewhere in Romania. With paperwork still ongoing, please pray everything will be sorted before I need to cross the Hungarian border in a few weeks time to renew my tourist Visa. I am also very thankful for a quick adjustment to driving on Romanian roads again but would appreciate your prayers for continued safety.

And the story you really want to know...

Josh and I enjoyed a very special eight days together after his arrival on Monday 22nd September. During his visit we did some work at Mike & Elvira's house- cleaning windows, painting doors, building banisters and scrubbing stone tiles. Josh was able to attend one of our Sunday church services, in which I played translator and he got to see a little bit of where I live and the people I work with, including a brief visit out to Colonie.

On Wednesday, 24th September, we left for a spectacular three day driving tour, which included a detour via the Rroma village, Momaia. We drove up

Please Pray...

» **Praise** God that His word is bearing fruit at Bethesda Church and **Pray** for the Truth to change the hearts of those He calls to follow Him.

» **Praise** God that for the correspondence that is starting to develop between Rroma Workers around Romania and **Pray** for my plans to visit the Networks, including safe travel.

» **Praise** God for a safe and wonderful time with Josh during His visit and for the joy that comes with our engagement.

» **Pray** for Josh and I as we make plans for our wedding and our future together, especially through this second stint of separation.

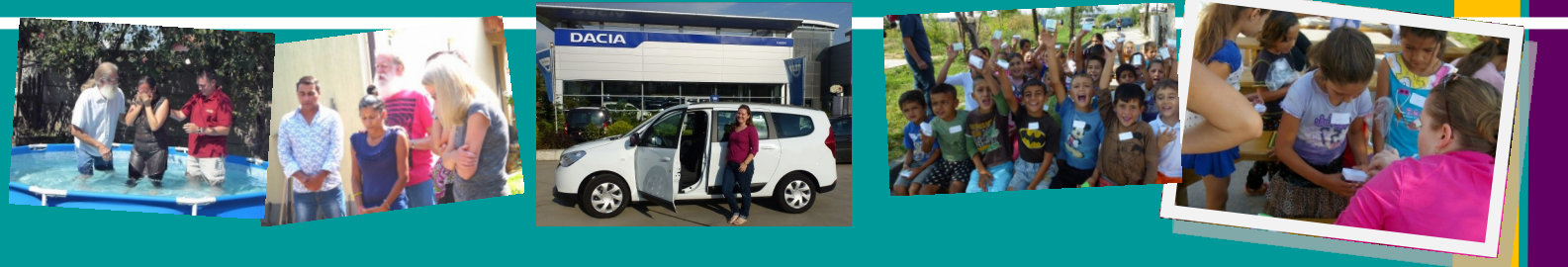


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through the mountains, bought some Romanian cheese and also stopped at a more than beautiful place, overlooking villages and snow-capped mountains. Having mentioned this place to Josh, where Mum & Dad and I had likewise stopped in October 2009, and which back then was given the nickname 'Kurrajong on steroids', Josh chose to give this already special location even greater significance, by getting down on one knee and asking me to marry him. Needless to say, I said YES!!

And the trip just got better, as we visited Bran Castle (Dracula's fake castle); Braşov, where we enjoyed a beautiful dinner to celebrate our engagement; Peleş Castle in Sinaia; Făgăraş; The Transfăgăraşan- which Josh had the thrill of driving, despite limited vision due to snow; Cozia Monastery; The Transalpina Road through the Părang Mountains and the town of Horezu which is famous for its pottery.

It was certainly one very full yet amazing week together and it certainly wasn't easy to say goodbye for another two and a bit months.

Whilst now comes the joy of making plans for our wedding, just six months away, on **4th April (Easter Saturday)**, and for our future together; I still have much work to do as I prepare to visit Roma workers around the country. I would appreciate your prayers as I try to find a balance in how I spend my time and that I would be able to focus on the task ahead over the next few months.

I am currently trying to finalise a schedule to visit Roma workers around the country and am hoping to start travelling sooner than later. I already have around 30 contacts and whilst I won't be able to visit all of them, I would love to visit as many as possible to discuss the way forward.

There are many questions yet to be answered about what happens after I return to Australia in December and how my role with International Teams and the Roma networking will take shape. Please pray for the many big decisions and for the wisdom and discernment required to make them.

What I can say, is that the big factor is for Josh to finish University over the next couple of years. There is still scope for me to work remotely from Australia on the Roma Network and perhaps make another short term trip to Romania, as well as maybe investing in other areas of International Teams ministries, but there is still much discussion to be had in the mean time. I will certainly keep you posted as plans progress.

Thank you to those who have already rejoiced with Josh and I through your words of encouragement. It means a great deal to both of us, to know the love and friendship and support of so many people around the Australia and indeed the globe. We look forward to seeing how God will continue to shape our journey together in the coming years and pray that we would honour God in all we do and in the decisions we make.

In His hands, Manda (& Josh).

Photos: (front page): Moieciu de Jos, Romania; At Parcul Zăvoi in Vâlcea; (Above): Baptisms at Bethesda Church; my new Dacia Lodgy; VBS Kids program at Colonie; Moieciu de Jos where Josh proposed (also Oct 2009, when Mum & Dad and I were at the same place); driving the Transfăgăraşan; Overlooking Braşov.



UPCOMING EVENTS

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

~ SAVE THE DATE ~

4th April, 2015
(Easter Saturday)