

IVAN SKOLEBA'S REPORT



Greetings, dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord!

Thanks to your support a lot of people in Ukraine have learnt about church of Christ not only through words but also through deeds.

A lot of work was done in October, which helped spread the Gospel in Ivano-Frankivsk and the Region. We distributed humanitarian aid to hospitals where needy people of the society are served, to children's home and boarding schools that need clothes and toys. We also distributed seventy-five Bibles and seventy-five children's Bible study books. Four families have received financial help for their children's treatments and food. Visited 15 families, three of them needed consulting. Bible lectures were presented from October 14 though October 1. Two district and one regional newspaper wrote about this work. John Kachelman's interview was shown on television. He spoke about the work of churches of Christ in Ukraine, which thanks to the aid of American churches of Christ that collected humanitarian aid in the form of medical equipment for eye surgery, will allow giving medical aid at a higher level. One of the district hospitals received dental equipment, where an American doctor helped install it. The Administration of that District helps church, which always praises our Lord and gives people an opportunity to learn more about church of Christ in Ivano-Frankivsk.

We're very thankful to John Kachelman for finding opportunities to come to Ukraine and teach Bible classes. We're also thankful for his humanitarian aid that gives us opportunity to start new congregations in faraway parts of Ukraine.

I'd like to thank the church for support and prayers, thanks to which we are able to preach Christ and help people. Thanks for their constant encouragement and advice. You can't even imagine how important your work, patience and understanding are.

Humanitarian work...

I cannot help sharing with you what we saw and heard while distributing humanitarian aid and literature.

In the village of Nebliv we visited one old lady who had been paralyzed for twenty-four years and unable to walk. Last spring John Durham promised to bring her a wheelchair and this fall her dream came true. Her eyes were filled with tears because with the wheelchair she could move inside and outside without anybody else's help. That woman lives on a very small pension and earns her bread refitting old clothes for others. She cannot afford buying even living essentials and when we gave her some household items such as knives, buckets, matches, soap, shampoo, clothes-line, clothes pins and clothes she wept for joy and said that nobody had ever helped her like that. She thanked God and us, asked a lot of questions about the church and said that nobody from Catholic Church had ever visited her because she had nothing to give to the Catholic priest. I was shocked when I heard that. You should have seen and

heard it for words cannot describe it adequately. Catholicism has enslaved people spiritually!

There was another situation in a district hospital. We went there with John and Tanya. The Chief Doctor of the hospital was not very friendly and hospitable and said, "You come here, take pictures and then talk about how bad our life is on the Internet. And you never help with anything." He said that not long ago there were people from Germany and Holland, took pictures and left. As for him, he cannot stand seeing people suffer and not being able to help them. Of course, he was right and we did not promise him anything. We listened to him and said we would help as much as we could. We called that Doctor the next day and asked him to come and see what medical stuff we had. He could not believe his eyes. He said he had never seen people like that who had said they would help and did so. He was very thankful, hugged us and said that within the last two years he had not received anything like that. We loaded his ambulance full of surgical instruments, supplies, catheters, etc., which costs a lot as he said. In a few days a surgeon called and thanked me. He said they had saved lives of two people having operated them on time because those people could not pay for their surgeries in private clinics. I told him that we should thank God for those Christians in America who collected all that for us and sent it here free of charge. Many government officials in Kyiv tried to hinder our humanitarian work saying that we did not need anything. But our work was not a waste of efforts and it is encouraging. Lord blesses the work of His church in Ukraine and many people know church in Ivano-Frankivsk now. We need to pray to the Lord for strength and wisdom to use everything for His Kingdom.

Situation in Ukraine

Ukraine has been going through very difficult times these last three years. Political clans have driven the country to poverty as they have been fighting for power. Latest elections have fully destroyed people's faith in political leaders. Prices have increased up to 25-30 % depending on the goods. Our real estate is more expensive than it is in England and America. Deputies and their families live in mansions and drive \$300 000 cars while common people, young people and people with intellect, flee from the country looking for jobs to earn money. Medical care is in horrible state and epidemic of TB and other diseases is officially admitted. Children and old people die because of the lack of quality foods and medical care. Prisons are filled with pilferers. There's no work and commerce is the main one, especially resell. All these factors oppress people and they practically never smile.



Family

Our son Ruslan moved to Donetsk and switched to correspondence studies since we cannot afford paying for his education and lodging. He attends Proletarsky congregation in Donetsk and lives with his grandmother, Sveta's mother.

Our daughter Anya lives with us in Ivano-Frankivsk, she goes to the second grade. Last week some older students pushed her. She fell down and hit her

finger bad. We took her to hospital, had it X-rayed. Thank God, it was not broken but there was a bad contusion. When I asked Anya what had happened she said that when those boys heard her talk Russian they called her "moskalka" and pushed. Anya, of course, tries to speak Ukrainian at school but we speak Russian at home since my wife is Russian and talks more Russian with Anya. People here in the West are very much against Russians. It is historical.

Prayer requests to you

Please, pray for my family and our work. We need your prayers very much. Also, pray for Oksana, whom doctors cannot diagnose and she has constant headaches. We ask you to pray for our meeting place. There are governmental changes taking place in the city and we hope that God will be merciful and will set hearts of people responsible for that.

We thank you. Please, give our love to all brethren in the church there.

With love,
Ivan, Svetlana, Anya

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