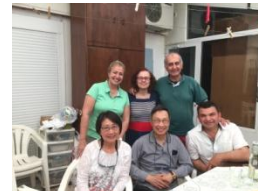


Greece Roma Mission Journal No. 3

On April 23, 2017 Gilead Bible Church (GBC) sent Annie and Robert Ching off in prayers to serve with Vula Rushdoony of Macedonian Outreach. They were assigned to conduct children programs to the Roma(Gypsy) children in four villages: Thessaloniki, Katarina, and Larissa in Greece, and Skopje in Macedonia. Following is one of the several reports written by Annie to GBC.

Dear Prayer Team and GBC,

On May 14, Robert and I arrived late at night in Larissa which is a major city located midway between Athens and Litochoro where Vula's Macedonian mission house resides. It was a long journey starting with a 7:30 am flight from Barcelona to Athens, followed by a 5 hour bus ride from Athens to Larissa. We stayed overnight at the Larissa Evangelical Christian Center. The next day, Pastor George of the church drove us to Vula's mission house after a great lunch with 3 other missionaries, Lilian and Becks from America and Stavros from Northern Greece. Our mission officially begun!



Vula was in great shape and spirit. On Tuesday May 16, we first went to a local store to buy fruits and snacks for the children. Vula is hosting her former Greek youth pastor who is now 87 years in her mission house. He loves children dearly. After a 1.25 hour drive to Thessaloniki, four of us met up

with the Greek layman Pastor John Papadopoulos and his wife Katerina at the entrance to a Roma (Gypsy) village. John is an eye doctor at work. They took us to this little shabby house which they called church and school. The village is located in the middle of a squatter area which is also a garbage dump! What a manifestation of humility, sacrifice



and love ♥ of Christ from this couple. The children welcomed us with joy. My anxiety and uncertainty quickly turned into urgency and compassion, knowing this is where Jesus would live and at work among the humble and neglected people.



For the next 3 hours, we had the most blessed time with the children. Apparently, others have been sowing the gospel seed. They responded to the gospel with an open and simple heart. Praise God that the lesson of Noah went well with Katerina as my interpreter who is also a music teacher. She actually interjected with additional teaching to help the children understood. That was a great help! The extension of the



lesson into the Chinese character 船—(God saved 8 mouths in the boat) -- went unexpectedly well. The children were smart and eager to learn. In the end, they all learnt and said 多謝 (Thank you), 你好 (How are you)!

After class, we played outdoor games; everyone participated with joy and excitement. Amazingly, the ring toss from GBC was most welcomed! They even improvised to toss the rings into an iron umbrella post. We introduced a game using the Chinese traditional rubber band jump rope 橡筋繩. So much fun with so much run. Simple games brought them incredibly simple fun! We soon forgot that we



were right in the middle of poverty where these people speak a different language and live in merger subsistence and isolation. But, like Jesus said: *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven...Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.*”

Although our time with the children was short, I was deeply touched by their humbleness and spiritual thirst. And I was amazed by their love and appetite for the healthy snacks we provided. I was also intrigued by their creative games improvised with a little piece of fern from the ground or popping the empty juice boxes after drinking. They found joy in little things and they had each other to play with.



These were moments of pure joy that brought true satisfaction to me.



On Sunday May 21, we were privileged to join the Roma families for worship. Their singing was joyful, spontaneous, energetic and worshipful. The prayer was led by a Roma mother with such fervency that I could only echoed with Amen. The church was led by the same Greek layman eye doctor and wife. He even invited Robert to share our work with the Chinese people in Greece. Praise the Lord; we truly felt that we are One in the Lord!

I taught the Sunday School lesson with some 30 children in one small dark classroom (since the generator for the lights was not turned on). But we had the most wonderful time together teaching from Matthew 19:13 Jesus said: “let the children come to me...” illustrated by the Chinese character 來(come). The older children loved to follow any Chinese phrase I taught them, granted most children



do not attend school. They are illiterate in Greek, but they learnt Chinese fast! The message of Jesus calling for their trust in Him through the salvation of the cross was well received. Praise the Lord!

Witnessing the devotion of John and Katerina, and the great outreach potential of these Roma families for Christ, Vula is considering sponsoring an on-site teacher to educate the children and to improve the church site. We left some seed money to lay a concrete foundation for an education building. The pastor and leaders were very grateful of the support from Gilead Bible Church. Our prayer is that with our unity and love in Christ, this Roma people will too come to the saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.



We are truly humbled and privileged in overcoming the cultural, language and social barriers to reach people so different from whom we accustom to in America. This effort can only be made by strength through Christ and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. *"Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit," says the LORD Almighty.*" Zechariah 4:9. God also granted us great

encouragement and satisfaction in the mission trips. *Colossians 1: 28-29 says "He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. To this end I (we) strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me."* Our earnest prayer for the GBC is that: *To this end, you are also strenuously contended with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in you* at the Arts and Wind Festival in this Memorial weekend. May His name and gospel be lifted up, through your dedication in the Festival. Remember, May is dedicated to be the Month of Mission for Gilead Families. May all honor and glory be to Christ our Lord!



With Love and Prayer,
Annie and Robert
Litochoro, Greece May 21, 2017