

ECL Door of Hope

Bringing Hope to the hopeless and Help to the helpless

“Children on a cold and muddy street”

March/April 2011



Hello dear ones,

I have just returned from Bulgaria where I visited a remote ghetto community in a separated suburb of Sofia. The weather was cold and grey. Biting winter winds hollered down the street. Being on special medication, I found it impossible to keep warm. Streets were smelly, muddy, pot holed and filled with water. Stupidly, I was wearing unsuitable shoes. But unlike poor people confined to poverty for the rest of their lives, I did, finally, have a warm British home to return to.

The group I visited had little if any work. The area has 95% unemployment. Some people I spoke with said they would take any job that was offered – moving furniture, picking fruit in summer, gathering scrap metal and discarded newspapers.



A lady whispered that 100% of women have no work: that they constantly shuffle up and down busy streets pleading for any type of employment. But being gypsies, they are not welcome. From what I understand, discrimination is rampant. If choice was available, employers would not choose a gypsy. Their prejudice is unfounded. The Christian gypsies I

DOOR OF HOPE, P.O. BOX 60, BATTLE, E.SUSSEX TN33 0QB.

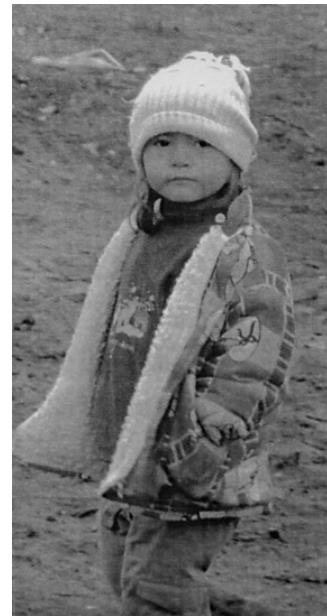
Telephone/Fax: 01424 870836

Email: Doorhope@aol.com Registered Charity 1083260

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spent time with work resolutely when given the opportunity. In dirty surroundings, their hygiene is commendable and their behaviour admirable. Alcohol and drugs are avoided as is sexual relationships before marriage. Visiting their little church, I soon became warm huddled beside an old log-burning stove (*see picture*). Their food is minimal. Mostly bread with added vegetable oil. When available, beans, sausages and pig's trotters for soup.



In spite of commitment to a number of projects, we at Door of Hope would like to give this poor, ghetto group some limited help, especially with their older children. A damaged room available for the children has a large hole in the wall, a drooping, damaged ceiling letting in the rain and the cold. We would like to fund repairs. Using this room is undoubtedly a health hazard. There is a need to teach the young teenage girls cooking, family planning, sewing with a machine (which we will provide) and creating an income by selling second-hand clothes that we will give to them. In exceptionally cold weather, we would also like to provide vitamin enriched food. To exist isn't easy. Thankfully, there is an active Christian influence in the ghetto that is eager to be guided.

As I said, our present funding is already committed to different projects. Can you help in the above mentioned project, even if it is a one-off donation? I would be profusely grateful as would the children living in the "cold, muddy streets". I say no more as I do not like begging and pleading for money. You can make a donation to us by clicking on the Just Giving logo below or going to <http://www.justgiving.com/Charity/Donate.aspx?cid=184785>.

In HIM who drowns us in his eyes and visits us with the speed of thought.

Rev. Philip E. Streeter.



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