



Reaching and Serving the Persecuted Church **IN TOUCH MONTHLY**

1 October 2006

Nehemiah repaired breaches in the broken wall around Jerusalem in an astonishing 52 days, but dead walls without living watchmen are a poor defense. So he appointed ordinary people – porters, singers and the Levites to be, as Isaiah put it, “*Watchmen on the wall.*” These were men of integrity, who “*shall never hold their peace day or night [and] keep not silence.*” Isaiah. 62:6 We need men like that today – watching.

Today the Church is like the walls of Jerusalem, to protect the Christian from sinful distractions. Our worship of the Living God is the defense of His Word and will for our lives. God’s ministers (where they do their duty) are “watchmen on the wall.” They warn us when the enemy of our soul approaches with the lure of drugs, the lust of pornography, the alleged convenience of abortion and the disgusting alternative of homosexuality. They tell us, honestly, what the Lord thinks of these perversions; and they will take the arrows and hits from our determined foes, while awaiting the Divine commendation, “*Well done, thou good and faithful servant.*”

He Who Began a Good Work...

Poland

One of ITMI’s projects in Poland is the ministry of **Jim LaRose**, an American who ministers to Polish foster children by visiting them in the government home where they live and organizing a week-long summer camp for them to attend. After his interaction with these children, Jim felt the Lord leading him to open a Christian foster home. Jim is working toward this vision along with **Lukasz and Asia Mikolajczyk**, a couple of Polish nationals who partner with Jim in his ministry. They have rented a duplex where they hope God will allow them to open the home. They are still trusting God to provide funds to furnish the house in a way that meets the standards set by the government agency in charge of foster children.

Jim ministers under the mentoring and oversight of Polish Baptist Pastor **Piotr Zaremba**. Piotr, in addition to translating the Bible from Greek to Polish so Polish speakers can have a relevant and accurate translation of God’s Word to read, provides

guidance for all of ITMI’s projects in Poland.

Piotr’s eldest daughter, **Carolyn Zaremba**, volunteered at the camp organized by Jim as an English translator this summer, then packed in one day and traveled to Phoenix, Arizona where she did an internship at the ITMI office. When she arrived in Phoenix, she wrote the following testimony about the camp, which we found riveting and had to share it with you.



Carolyn.

Marzena has spent most of her 11 years building a solid wall of protection between herself and the rest of the world.

Meet Marzena. She is the little girl in a shabby T-shirt and worn-out jeans. Actually, no, you are not able to really meet her. You see, Marzena has spent most of her 11 years building a solid wall



Marzena looks down in self-protection.

of protection between herself and the rest of the world – which she believes is out to hunt her down and do her harm. That is why her pretty blue eyes are hidden by long bangs of straight blonde hair, and even when you are talking to her face to face, she tends to avert her gaze as if she were afraid you could hurt her with your look.

In fact, any conversation you might have with her is an ordeal in itself. Whatever



Jim LaRose treats foster children to ice cream on one of his visits.

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she has to say, she mumbles it under her breath, quickly and quietly, just so you wouldn't understand her and – later – pin her down on account of her words.

Even her posture aims to make her invisible. Her shoulders are hunched forward in a self-protective gesture, her head is always bowed low to avoid eye contact, and she continually tugs at the front of her ugly dark-green T-shirt to hide the fact that she is becoming a woman. Her anxiety lest she should be confronted hinders her relationships with other kids, girls mostly her age, who are frolicking happily nearby, waiting to be called into the cafeteria for the evening meal. Those girls are wearing colorful designer-made clothes, they are teasing each other playfully, carefree and relaxed. On the contrary, Marzena is always tense, always on her guard to fight for her rights, always watching out to make sure she is not being put at a disadvantage.

So, later, during a game of Uno, she is the one complaining about unfairness if she gets a weak set of cards, and then it is she who accuses you of being mean when you deal her a “Draw 2” action card. And then, when the kids are playing dodge ball, Marzena gets hit on the head by one of the stray balls. She immediately runs out of the gym, griping loudly about the deliberate nastiness of the act. She refuses to acknowledge it was merely an accident. She believes, on the basis of her life experiences, that she is being cruelly picked on. By everybody.

Marzena is one of the eleven foster home children who came to a Christian camp in Pszczew, Poland, and she epitomizes practically every trait a typical kid raised in a foster home exhibits: an intricate self-protection system, low self-esteem, painful awareness of her miserable social situation, deep-rooted envy toward “normal” privileged children, ambivalence about right and wrong, and a raging possessiveness that is activated as soon as she feels somebody is paying her closer attention.

Ministering to such children is a challenging task, a mission next to impossible. Added to that is the fact that foster home kids make up only a fraction of Pszczew campers. Other children hail from a totally different background, but their behavior can be just as problematic as the foster home kids' tantrums. As children of affluent middle-class families, who send them to Pszczew camps in the hope of improving their English language skills, they are likely to selfishly parade their parents' wealth and look down their nose on poorer situated campers. However, both groups, disparate as they may be, have a common need. Each and every one of those children needs to be shown genuine Christian love in action, a selfless, all-conquering, Spirit-driven way of living. As the vast majority of those children know only the rigid dogmas of Christian religion, being raised up in traditional Catholic families, they are total strangers to the dynamite of the Holy Spirit transforming an imperfect human into Christ's likeness.



Jim shares the Gospel with children at summer camp.

So the fields are ripe for harvest, but the task is immense. It never comes easy to leave your comfort zone and reach out to those kids the way Jesus would. As one of the staff members, at the end of the camp, I always experience a feeling of astonishment. How did we do that? How could we have been such a reservoir of love for the whole period of ten days, never running dry, patient and caring even when faced with situations that often left us helpless? How did we find the right

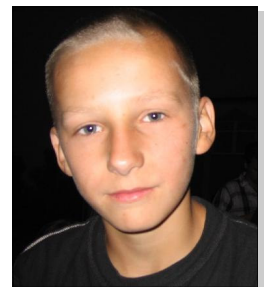
words to talk about Jesus? How did the American staff cope with the frustration of the language barrier? How could a group of so many diverse personalities become such an efficient and supportive staff team? But my amazement only increases the glory of the One who has so generously provided for everything.

It gives Him great pleasure to use us Christians as his tools, to impact the kids' lives, to act in answer to our desperate prayers. It is He who gives us the will to love – even if a kid is not lovable at all.

And really, it is this Jesus-like love which makes the camp in Pszczew stand out among a multitude of other summer camps. Of course, it is true that the camp directors – Jim, Lukasz and Asia – along with other staff members take great pains to fill the daily schedule with interesting activities our campers enjoy: Bible lessons, fun English classes, crafts hours, special interest workshops, sports, lake time, games and singing. Nevertheless, it is this tender, loving Christian attitude which the staff exudes that makes the children's walls of self-defense come tumbling down.

Take Michał, for example, a reticent pre-teen, whose black T-shirt has an atrocious flamed skull on it, and watch him as he actually begins to smile and befriend his peers. Likewise, by the end of the camp, Marzena no longer holds back during a sports activity, but flails about the gym flinging her heart and soul into the game.

Another foster home kid, Przemek, prays the sinner's prayer with one of the counselors and then bounces from one staff member to another announcing proudly: “We'll see each other in heaven!”



Przemek.

Monica, who due to her ADHD syndrome can sometimes be a real

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Dear Team,

This month's issue of ITM could justifiably be called the "Zaremba edition." **Carolyn Zaremba**, 21-year old daughter of ITMI's European director **Piotr Zaremba** wrote the lead story about God's blessing on our summer camp in Poland. This story is so beautiful it paints its own pictures – and English is her second language! Well done Carolyn!



Piotr and Carolyn.

Plus, we congratulate Dr. Piotr Zaremba, on completing his Ph.D in Hebrew linguistics. He began the course about four years ago with a view to providing his Bible translation Team with a sound academic base. This task was a step of faith for him, as his graduate degree was from a theological school where only rudiments of Hebrew and Greek were taught.

Piotr knew the course would involve additional effort on his part, so he flung his heart and soul into it preparing and giving Hebrew lessons, listening to recordings of the Bible read in Hebrew, and finally beginning to talk to God in this ancient language. His actual Ph.D project consisted of a meticulous translation of the Dead Sea scrolls which contained writings from the Minor Prophets and an ambitious dissertation in the field of Hebrew linguistics. Last month he passed his written Ph.D exams and successfully defended his Ph.D thesis. Well done Piotr!

Our Ugandan visitor **Kawede** has received many kudos on his current cross-country friend-raising trip to America. He and Steve Evers have been involved in an ambitious multi-state itinerary, meeting and making new friends for ITMI's Bible College in Kampala. He is a man of humility and sincerity. He returns home on October 16.

Harriett checked into hospital for an angiogram the day we went to press on this issue. Her cardiologist recommended and has implanted a pacemaker— like Vice President Cheney's. We have revised our return date to South Africa. We couldn't get confirmation on the London to Cape Town portion of the flight this month, so we're booked to leave Phoenix on November 6th.

Sonja van Wyk, wife of ITMI's **Charl**, fell down some stairs at a friend's home last month and broke her right foot. Three children and a domestically-challenged husband ask for your prayers for a speedy recovery. (Strange how we don't appreciate busy folks until they're temporarily out of action.)



Eugene Kalunga.

My long time friend Rev. **Eugene Kalunga**, Founder and Director of the Excellence Christian Academy in Kabwe, Zambia is still burning with zeal for the Lord. After inspiring the formation of other Christian schools in Zambia and Malawi, he has ignited the idea of Christian education among the Mwashas people in Tanzania. Meanwhile ECA continues to grow. They need more classrooms to accommodate a growing number of senior level students. Last month three computers went down in the Science Lab and the school's Secretary needs to replace her computer. ITMI will gladly rush any funds designated for these projects.

Dr. Adrian Ban is planning to visit the U.S. in November. If you, your church, or your small group would like to hear what God is doing in Romania, or about the vision God has given the Bans, please contact our office.

Yours in His grip,

Bill Bathman

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hassle to her care-takers, after acting up in the English class makes an effort to single out every teacher present in the classroom at that



Monica.

time and communicate in her broken English how sorry she is and how she will try to behave herself next time.

Zosia, a potential whiz kid who at the age of 12 already reads in English and sets out to master French, wonders at first if the Bible is not just a thick boring book Christians got into the habit of reading. On the very last evening of the camp, though, in the presence of all the girls from her group, she thanks God for sending us his Son Jesus Christ to die for our sins, so that we could spend eternity in heaven.

The very same Jesus Christ once said: "freely you have received, freely give". The love that the staff members lavish on the campers leaves an indelible stamp on those little souls – even though one heartrending day finally comes and the camp ends, plunging the children back into their everyday reality. Still, even though what they were told they might forget, what they were shown and what they felt during

those ten July days will never leave them. And God is faithful, He will complete the good work that has been started in them in His own perfect time.

Written by Carolyn Zaremba

Romania

Dr. Adrian Ban and Ema, his wife and ministry partner, are passionate about preventing the current generation of Romanian children from experiencing what these Polish Foster children are facing each day as a result of the decay of their families.



The Ban Family.

The Ban's have a preventative ministry that focuses on providing Godly training, counseling and care to Romanian families. Adi and Ema are concerned with protecting the family

unit from the attack that it is under. Residual issues from the Communist reign of terror have left the Romanian family defenseless against the onslaught of the widening generation gap and the influences of western media on the younger generation. The Bans equip families with the ability to communicate and relate with one another in a Biblical and Godly manner.

The Ban's Young Couples' Fellowship is a group of young couples that the Bans are impacting by teaching them how to glorify Jesus in their marriages, something they won't typically find in their family, society, and sadly in their church. They recently had their first meetings of this school year and are praising Jesus for bringing two new couples to the group.

Adi and Ema also oversee all of the children's Sunday school teachers in their church. They are hoping God will allow them to have a VBS next summer, and ask us to pray with them that a church from the U.S. might be led to partner with them to make this happen. Maybe you know a church that would be interested? Written by Summer Kelley

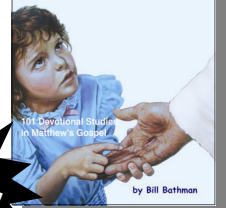
How'd You Hurt Your Hand? by Bill Bathman

101 Bible studies in Matthew's Gospel. This 205 page book by Bill celebrates ITMI's 25th Anniversary. It is a current commentary considering the question, "what if Matthew took a look at us? Would he recognize 21st Century Christianity?" We are encouraged by the positive response to its launch last month. Some have ordered additional copies to use as Christmas gifts.

\$10 + S&H

Discounts available for quantity purchases.

How'd You Hurt Your Hand?





For Praise . . .

1. Piotr Zaremba has successfully completed his Ph.D.
2. Excellent reception of Muhindo Kawede, ITMI's national missionary in Uganda.
3. The many blessings of Carolyn Zaremba's summer ministry in Arizona.
4. Expansion of Eugene Kalunga's educational ministry in central / southern Africa.

For Prayer . . .

1. Needed classroom space and computers for ECA in Kabwe, Zambia.
2. Harriett's speedy recovery and adjustment to her new pacemaker.
3. Healing of Sonja van Wyk's fractured foot.
4. Expanding ministry of Moreson Children's Haven, near Cape Town, South Africa.

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