



# Looking Up...

*The* **MISSION TO CHILDREN**

*Reaching Out*

[www.MissionToChildren.org](http://www.MissionToChildren.org)

September 2007



**“You will show me the path of life;  
In Your presence is fullness of joy;  
At Your right hand are pleasures  
forevermore.” (Psalm 16:11)**

## A Climate of Kindness for Forgotten Children

How can we encourage a climate of kindness in Romanian orphanages? We begin by coaching the leaders and workers to treat the orphans with kindness. We also show them ways to cultivate kindness in the children as they relate to each other. Then we challenge the leaders and workers to let God demonstrate His love through them to the orphans. The result we hope and pray for? A climate of kindness throughout the orphanage.

In October we will serve children in six Romanian orphanages by teaching workers how to cultivate character within the children. Three of the six orphanages are specifically for special needs kids. The 40 to 60 “caretakers” we train will impact over 700 Romanian children from babies to 18-year-olds.

The goal of our Character Solutions ministry is to cultivate Christlike character in children who will become tomorrow’s family and community leaders. We can often present the Gospel during our seminars. We talked with an administrator in Romanian Child Protective Services recently. He earnestly supported this emphasis on character, commenting that “Character is the foundation to build something new for this generation.”

Your gift to “CSI for Romanian Orphanages” will help provide this climate of kindness for the forgotten children in Romanian orphanages. Will you be part of the team that dispenses kindness to these kids?

For more information on what God is doing through MTC’s character cultivation ministry, Character Solutions International, visit [www.CharacterSolutions.org](http://www.CharacterSolutions.org).



*The result we hope and pray for? A climate of kindness*

## To Weary Well-doers

Dr. John Garmo – President



It was another one of those months. Various events and deadlines had stretched Jan's and my emotions, torpedoed our routines, and overloaded our already-full lives. Her mother had just passed away after a draining and extended illness. We were assisting her father in various ways. We were arranging details for friends, family, and the rehearsal dinner for our son's imminent wedding. We were meeting with advisors concerning the revival of our worn-out kitchen. One of my teeth became inflamed and needed extraction.

At the office we were preparing for our two regular annual financial audits, each involving many details. We had just made a significant staff change and another was pending. I needed to make travel arrangements to the Middle East

### “Then he asked, “Would you like me to pray?”

immediately for the next month in order to get reasonable fares. I was behind in my preparation for work to be done in Africa the next week. Tickets for my Africa trip were locked in my travel agent's office—but my agent was on vacation. Writing deadlines had to be met.

In the middle of all this, I received an anxious call from one of our key partners. He asked if I could immediately coordinate an urgent aspect of his preparation for another important project deadline. I knew no one to delegate that task to, so I agreed to handle it. All these matters were part of well-doing, but if my mind were an engine, its RPMs would have been in the red zone and its cylinders smoking.

Then my son Byron stepped into my office. As MTC's Associate Director of Operations, he knew most of what I was facing those days just prior to my departure for Africa. When I told him the rest, he reached back and closed the door. Then he asked, “Would you like me to pray?”

His prayer took me out of that red zone and helped me return my focus of attention to where it belongs: Not on our situation but on our Savior. The challenges of the moment are forced into perspective when we lift our eyes above them, and as J. D. Carlson used to say so often, “Keep looking up!”

I ended that afternoon humming, played a little basketball after work with some buddies, dined with Jan, and had a good night's sleep. The next day, one thing after another began to come together. I'm still in that week, but it looks like we'll get everything done that must be done at this moment.

Are you a weary well-doer? If so, perhaps these suggestions will be helpful:

- Get regular exercise and sleep – God holds you responsible for the stewardship of your health.
- Surround yourself with a few godly friends who see, understand, care, and pray. And if one or more of those is your son or daughter, you are blessed indeed.
- Work diligently, then be still and know that God is God (Psalm 46:10).



Skip and Byron Garmo

## Precious in the Sight of the LORD...

by Jan Garmo

Another saint is worshipping her beloved Savior in heaven today. The final voyage—a peaceful journey into Heaven’s safe harbor. Her Shepherd’s constant presence brought her comfort as they walked together through the valley of the shadow of death.

Jesus carried my dear mother, Lenore Gustafson, to her heavenly home on the eve of July 20. As our family gathered around her bedside singing “Leaning on the Everlasting Arms” she breathed her final breath here on earth. I wonder what music greeted her on the other side as she entered that place of joy.



My Norwegian mother grew up in the Puget Sound area near the little town of Poulsbo, affectionately called “Little Norway.” Boats of all sizes fill the harbor. It reminds me of our visit to Norway a few years ago. Each of the Stave churches we visited had a ship hanging near the front of the church. Our guide told us the ship represents the “journey of life” from birth to death.

Knowing how much my mother enjoyed rowboat rides in the Puget Sound, I could imagine she might have heard the soft lapping of the waves as she entered Heaven’s harbor. She is now at peace and free from all her earthly encumbrances.

Her decision long ago to place her faith in Christ alone gave Mom the assurance that when walking through the valley of death she had Jesus, and He had her—safely in His hands. Her favorite scriptures spoke of these assurances that to be absent from her body was to be present with her Lord; “And this is what He promised us—even eternal life” (2 Corinthians 5:8, 1 John 2:25, 1 John 5:13).

The meaning and worth of life never becomes more poignant than when we witness a person taking his or her final breath. My mother’s home going has given new meaning to Psalm 90:12, “Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.”

## The Silversmith

The Bible study on the third chapter of Malachi was almost over, but the question still remained. What did the phrase from verse 3 mean, “And He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver?”

One woman in the group volunteered to visit a silversmith and report to the others what she found out. She asked the silversmith about the process of refining silver. After he described it to her, she asked, “Sir, do you sit down while the work of refining is going on?”

“Oh yes, ma’am,” replied the silversmith. “I must sit and watch the furnace constantly, for, if the time necessary for refining is exceeded in the slightest degree, the silver will be injured.”

The woman at once saw the beauty and comfort of the expression, “He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver.”

God knows it is necessary to put His children into the furnace, but His eye steadily watches the work of purifying, and His wisdom and love allow only what is best for our good. Our trials are not random, and He will not let us be tested beyond what we can endure.

Before leaving, the woman asked one final question: “How do you know when the process is complete?”

“That’s quite simple,” replied the silversmith. “When I can see my own image in the silver, the refining process is finished.”

## USA: Combined Federal Campaign #11922

The Combined Federal Campaign invites US Federal civilian, postal, and military workers to give to Mission To Children from September 1 through December 15, 2007. Last fiscal year, CFC pledges provided character training through MTC to one hundred twenty-eight South African school teachers. A conservative estimate is that these South African teachers will challenge over 3,500 youth to grow in character.

Please list Mission To Children #11922 when selecting a charity this year. MTC can be found in the Alpha Index or under Christian Service Charities. It may take four to eight months for us to receive the list of donors, so please be patient in our response to your contribution. If you have questions please call our toll-free number at 1-877-766-2400.

## Romania – A Country in Transition

Romania is a country in Southeastern Europe bordered by Hungary, Serbia, Ukraine, Moldova, and Bulgaria. About the size of Oregon in the United States, 22 million Romanians live in the twelfth-largest country in Europe.

Romania was formed in 1859 by the merging of Moldavia and Wallachia and united with Transylvania in 1918. The communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu oppressed the people of Romania from 1965 until 1989. He was executed in 1989. Romania suffered a decade of economic instability and decline following the overthrow of the communist regime.



Since 2000 there has been relative economic stability. Unemployment is only 6%, life expectancy is almost 72 years, and literacy is 97%. Romania entered the European Union in January 2007,

and the economic gains have only recently begun to create a middle class. Average incomes in Romania are still lower than many others in Southeastern Europe and corruption still handicaps the business environment.

The situation for children in Romania is distressing. Romania's abortion rate is five times higher than that in other Western European countries. More than 80,000 children live in institutions or with surrogate parents. Many of these children are subjected to verbal, physical, and sexual abuse. Abandonment of children by mothers who

can't afford them is also a problem. The education system is understaffed and in need of resources and modernization.

Pray with us for the protection of these precious born and unborn children. Pray that they would know God's plans for them to give them hope and a future (Jeremiah 29:11). A

new religious law may make it difficult for evangelical denominations in the future to have official recognition from the government. In this regard, please pray that the church in Romania will be strong so as to make a moral difference in this emerging society.



*Each child is a gift from God*



*God's plan is to give them hope and a future*

Please detach and return with your donation in the enclosed envelope

Canada  
The Mission To Children  
Box 25100  
RPO Martindale  
Calgary AB T3J 5C9

USA  
Mission To Children  
PO Box 2217  
Escondido, CA  
92033-2217

**(877) 766-2400** (toll-free)  
[www.MissionToChildren.org](http://www.MissionToChildren.org)



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