

## **Ranui Baptist Church**

### **How a Small Forgotten Village in Romania is being Transformed!**

#### **History**

- Nou village is a Roma village in the central Romanian countryside in Transylvania. Roma or Gypsies are an underclass in Romania. They took over the village after the ethnically German residents left en masse after Communism collapsed in the early 1990s.
- The Mission's partner in the Village is a small church planted by the main Baptist church in Sibiu city, about 20km away.

#### **Ranui's involvement**

- Ranui Baptist Church has been funding special help for Nou village since 2006. The help has been used to support a group of teenagers taking public transport to finish off senior high school, trade education or university courses.
- The State will pay for children in Years 1 to 8 to bus to school outside the village. After that it is over to the parents to pay – and they cannot afford the NZ\$100 or more per month to pay for each child to catch the bus to town. High school in Sibiu finishes after Year 12 so for Years 9-12, the parents have to pay or the child cannot go to college.
- Social pressure on girls to marry and have babies in their early teens is very strong (from 14 years). Boys may marry around 17 or 18. This means they cannot complete their education. We are seeing some change in this attitude and some girls are waiting to finish their education before marrying and having a baby.
- The usual track for boys has been to get a heavy labouring job at age 15 or 16, such as forestry/woodcutting, which has no training attached and is poorly paid.

#### **Changes are happening**

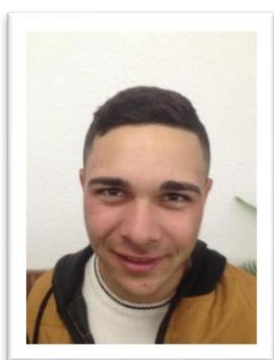
- Ranui's investment has been long-term and it is starting to see real change in lives and attitudes. About 20% of young people are now carrying on with their education. When the Mission first started, it was only 1 or 2% at most who carried on with studies and training.
- In the village, now there is a growing willingness to pursue higher education. This is a rare and new thing in rural and Roma society.
- With the teenagers finish training at technical high schools, they can go into pre-arranged jobs with automotive or food companies because they have a recognised trade qualification. The auto parts trade is very big in Romania and it is a popular route for both guys and girls to follow so they get good jobs by Romanian standards.
- Those that get jobs send money back to their families and that benefits the community. Houses are repaired. The standard of living improves. Health improves. The parents have been observing this and are encouraging their children to go on with their studies.

## Christian outreach

- The local Baptist Church (Harul (Grace) Baptist Church) under Pastor Cornel continues to be a faithful witness in the village and is key to our outreach to children and teenagers in particular.
- The teenagers participate in Christian education at the church. They get to learn Christian values and life skills on a weekly basis and to hear the Gospel.
- All the children and the teenagers are offered the chance to go to our summer camps, which are always very popular. There are over 140 children in the village and all are eager for the chance to be in the group that goes to camp but have to take turns. It's also the only holiday they have ever had, and of course they get to hear the Gospel and see staff and volunteers living out their faith.
- The youth and children come with no understanding of Christian faith.
- Parents and other adults notice changes in the behaviour and attitudes of the children after camp and the Mission's programmes.
- All the parents are very grateful for their support.
- Adults are also coming to church and making commitments.

## Ranui's support in 2019

Ranui Baptist Church's contribution in 2019 of \$2956 (nearly \$3000) was allocated to support of four students of the bigger group as follows:



1. Darius is studying at the Henri Coanda Technical High School in Sibiu. He is in Year 11.



2. Anamaria is finishing her Year 9 at Henri Coanda Technical High School in Sibiu.

She has written a note of thanks to you, her sponsors (translated):

"Dear sponsors,

My name is Ana-Maria Estera H-. I am in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade at the Technical High-School "Henri Coanda".

I would like to thank you for your financial support!

May God bless you with good health!

Without your support I could have never attended the school.

Thank you!"



3. Elena-Sonia is in year 10 at Carol I Technical High School (Construction and Architecture) in Sibiu.

Elena is sponsored through our child sponsorship programme operating to reach out to children in the village.



4. Alexandru is in year 10 Henri Coanda Technical High School in Sibiu.

Alexandru is sponsored through our child sponsorship programme, also.

## Mulțumim Ranui!

(We thank you, Ranui!)