

Our new logo!

March-April 2013



The Good Samaritan



After being the fastest-growing European country for almost two decades, Spain's present reality is like a broken mirror that used to reflect an ideal dream. Hidden in that false image were an idolatry towards money, institutionalized corruption, and an absolute loss of ethical values in politics, business, society and private life. Now the country is governed by the "new feudal lords of savage Capitalism," of both Spanish and foreign origin. Their consciences should be burdened by the endless list of desperate people who have committed suicide because of the foreclosure

and loss of their homes.

According to an article published on March 23rd, 2013 in the Spanish newspaper, *El País*, "Three million people are in extreme poverty. 6.4% of the Spanish population is on the edge of social exclusion. To this fact one can add the falling income of those employed, and the increase in unemployment—6 million unemployed—and the increase in prices by 10%." (p.36).

In this crisis the most vulnerable suffer the worst. On the other hand, the wealthy and powerful benefit. “Who will answer for all this? How will they answer for the victims—those literally dead and those evicted from their homes—of this situation?,” wonders Dr. Antonio Ariño, professor and Chair of Sociology of the University of Valencia.

The absence of ethics in politics and finance is leading to a Europe that is amoral, dictated to and enslaved by those few who wield the power and handle the finances. The church must have a prophetic voice (such as the Minor Prophets) to denounce all this idolatry. “The love of money is a root of all sorts of evils.” (1 Timothy 6:10)

Every day people come to the offices of the Good Samaritan Center and the Evangelical Churches, seeking emergency help. To minister in this situation we have created the Dorcas Project, through which we want to help these families in a practical and direct way.

Proyecto "DORCAS"

One example among many...

Pablo and Veronica are Romanian, married and the parents of two children, 5 and 10 years old. He is an agricultural technician and social worker, and she is an accountant. They are a young, intelligent and well-educated couple.

One day they came to our office seeking help: **"We want to return to Romania; we can't bear this any longer. Things were different 9 years ago when I came by myself, today I would rather go home, this isn't worth the trouble. My wife can't bear being so far from our children,"** said the husband, with tears in his eyes. The next day was the anniversary celebration of the Good Samaritan Center and we invited them to be with us. They came to a worship service, heard testimonies, and the seed of the Gospel was sown in their hearts.



We were able to help this couple buy return tickets to Romania.



Anniversary of the Rehabilitation Center



This year—and it has happened once before—snow showed up on our anniversary! I remember that the first time it happened, we were very concerned, but this time we mostly just enjoyed the natural decoration, unusual and free of charge, which God gave us. In spite of some understandable absences (some tried but couldn't get here because of the roads, and others felt better not risking a trip out in the snow), there were almost 80 people present.



The traditional paella.



Because of the cold, we had to eat inside the building, enjoying a cozier and more welcoming environment



Roland introducing the monitors



We had a very nice worship service with several people who ministered. There were also testimonies of the residents and family members, as well as the pie contest we do every year.



At the anniversary celebration, we enjoyed the presence of a married couple of which the husband had gone through rehabilitation and told us all how the Lord had helped him. Now with a new life in the Lord, he is employing his abilities with drums and electric guitar, playing in a Christian music group that is being used to share the Gospel.

Tony, from Barcelona, is in a phase of reinsertion, and he wants to stay on and work with us here at the Center. We are all in agreement about that, and we have requested financial assistance from the government to be able to hire him. The rest of his salary we will have to pay by other means. If someone would like to help towards the part of his salary that we must pay, donations can be sent to the Good Samaritan's account indicating "Monitor Project." Many thanks for helping us to help others!



"God has opened my eyes".

"I have always believed in God's existence, like many in Spain. But I only sought Him when I had problems—I was a 'believer,' but not practicing. I started having all kinds of problems in my personal life, and that was when I started attending an evangelical church. I still practiced a nominal Christianity—my body was in church, but my heart was in the street. I was attracted by the music in church, and the preaching, since I am very passionate about music. But I started abusing alcohol, and had an "imitation" Christian life, dimly appreciating its benefits but quickly going back to worldly pleasures. I was in this internal struggle for several years: Sundays I would ask forgiveness for my sins, and Mondays I would go back to them. Although I was sincerely sorry, I had gotten into a vicious circle: I didn't read the Bible, nor did I want to spend time with brothers in Christ."

But God has His plan. He used my mother (who passed away in between my two periods of rehabilitation), who in order to help me, started going to church with me. She was not a Christian, but we had an evangelical church called "Liberty" near our house, to which I am very grateful for all the help they gave and still continue giving, both to me and to my family. They stood by my mother in her sickness, right up to the end. Since my mother kept accompanying me to church (and in my rebellion sometimes I didn't go but she still did) she made some strong friends there, began a program of discipleship and ended up accepting the Lord. Sadly, the colon cancer she had suffered for many years prevented her from being baptized by immersion, but she went home to be with the Lord with the full conviction of having peace with her Creator. I still marvel at how my lamentable situation led to my mother's salvation! Really, it leaves me speechless.

In spite of everything, my decision to give myself totally to the Lord and separate from a life of sin happened at the Good Samaritan Rehabilitation Center. It was there that I started to study the Scriptures and understand them, and to want to truly know more of my Savior, Father and Creator.

When I had been in the Center for five months, my mother's health worsened and I returned home to be with her during her final days. After she passed away, I thought that the most logical thing was to stay home with my father and brothers. I continued studying the Bible, I did a discipleship program, and was baptized. I had a very good relationship with my pastor, Ruben Miyar, and with the brothers and sisters at church. However, since I didn't stay with the program, I got into drugs again and before totally returning to my old ways I returned to the Center, where I have done another 9-month program.

The Good Samaritan Center, besides being a wonderful place in the middle of nature, lets you think about the error of your ways, and the losses that drugs have caused in your life. But the most important thing is you can search the Scriptures every day in the devotionals. You always have the support of the monitors with your doubts and struggles. And what is most important, you realize God has always been with you, caring for you, helping you, protecting you, and getting you out of indescribable situations.

Now I realize how day by day, minute by minute, God blesses me. The problem is we don't appreciate it, but it's true! God is always at our side. Besides, God says He "will never give us a trial we cannot bear." If we draw near to God in prayer and have faith and patience, He will give us a way out. Let us take our burdens to Him, and let us rest in Him. I still have problems (work, the economy) but I lack nothing. Whatever I may need, at the right time God will provide it. I know He has great plans for my life, so I trust in Him.

I will be eternally grateful to God for getting me out of the pit I was in, for giving me the opportunity to be born again, for forgiving all my sins, for the shedding of His blood, and for calling me his child. This is something indescribably wonderful!"

A new vehicle for the Rehabilitation Center !

We want to express our thanks to **European Christian Mission—GB** for its gift toward the acquisition of a second-hand vehicle for the Center's use. Our old van was almost ready for the junkyard.

With this newer vehicle, we will spend less on transportation; it is in good mechanical shape, and will serve us well in the coming years. Thanks to all of you who have participated in giving!



School drug prevention program.

As we do every year, we have held annual drug-abuse prevention days in the Catholic School of the Silesians in Pozoblanco. For two days we spoke to the different grade levels in five shifts.

Sadly the majority of those hearing us have friends who use illegal drugs, and a few use them themselves. During these days we get to know the students, and counsel them against drug abuse. Tony came with me, and participated by giving his testimony, which as always was highly impactful and stimulated questions and debate among the students. It was also nice that three or four of the students knew my son Samuel and that others had gone, at a younger age, to our children's summer camp events at the Center. I believe that our years of work are starting to give their fruit!



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