

**cry**  
in the dark  
compassion in action



# Into The Light

## Compassion in action

**Welcome to our first 2019 edition of 'Into the Light'. Yes, this year it's 19 years since we opened Casa Lumina and 21 years since Cry in the Dark was born in the darkness of the orphanage in Dofteana, Romania, back in February 1998!**

So to start with I would like to say a huge thank you to all of our fantastic supporters, without whom we would not have come this far, and to God, for his faithfulness to the children, young people and families that we support through our work in Romania.

Just as God never ceases to surprise me, neither do our lovely friends and supporters who have joined us on the road of this journey.

Last summer, I witnessed something that at the time brought me to tears and still does today as I write this. I remember our little friend Albert saying that, if he was sick, he would like to stay in a place like 'Casa Lumina'. Now that Hospice Lumina is up and running his dream has come true, maybe not for him, but for the 80- 120 children that we serve through this wonderful project each month.

Last year, we planned for the Year 10 school groups to visit the Hospice to work with the sick children, just spending two to three hours with them playing games, carrying out activities or helping the nurses with the children there. As I had not initially gone with them that day, I turned up a little later and what I saw will stay for me for a very long time. I watched from a distance while one of the Year 10 girls was holding and nursing a small girl in her arms, who had profound disability and illness, and was just loving her and had been, I understand, for a couple of hours.



The blessing there was immense and we still ask today who blesses who. I think it's a two way street; the more we give, the more we get back. The young girl from the U.K had possibly never ever been into a children's Hospice in the U.K, let alone Romania. We in the U.K should be proud of our young people; when given a task or a job they step right up and we could not ask more from them.

As I watched, tears started to well up in my eyes as I realised that, once again, God had delivered on his promise and Albert's dream. Hospice Lumina (Hospice of Light); providing love and care just as our home Casa Lumina in Comanesti does.

I have heard it said that things like sport transcend barriers, language, culture etc., but what I would say is love and compassion transcend all barriers and the love of God is in every one of us, as we are all children of God.

So as I close this piece, I would like to thank these schools, the parents and teachers for allowing us to take their students out to our projects in Romania:

Manor CofE Academy York, Holy Trinity School Barnsley and All Saints Sixth Form York.

What a blessing it is. Thank you.

Steve  
CEO/Founder.



*Ffion helping to load up the boxes on her trip!*

## Trustees' Corner!

Thank you so much to all our supporters. Your engagement, at whichever level, is recognised and greatly appreciated by the board and certainly our beneficiaries in Romania. As ever, the projects in Romania continue to change the lives of each individual and family they reach and it is a joy to watch as the children/young adults create memories, in a safe environment, with their families, friends, and not forgetting our wonderful volunteers, throughout the year. If you've had the opportunity to join us, we hope you would agree and if you are yet to join us, please do get in touch - there are many chances to share in this story.

Why I got involved - The power of hope! Having had the privilege of joining the Christmas trip in 2014 and seeing first hand the impact of a shoebox filled with gifts, there was no other response but YES when asked to join the board of Cry in the Dark. Seeing the reactions of the children opening gifts (and there are a few that remain with me to this day!) highlighted the contrast of hope vs hopelessness in people's lives. Every project that Cry in the Dark is involved with brings hope to individuals who would otherwise be marginalised in society. It is easy for us to feel hopeless when faced with these issues but be assured Cry in the Dark is making a real difference.

As a board, we have a responsibility, but also a personal desire, to see the work of Cry in the Dark continue and increase in impact. We recognise the current uncertainty within the UK but remain committed to the long term journey of every project in Romania and trust with your help we will succeed.

Ffion Wiggins  
Treasurer CitD

## An extraordinary day at the Cat Café

Back at the end of last year, six young people from the Casa Lumina had been waiting impatiently all day for the evening to come. Carmen, Alina C, Maria, Nicoleta C, Lili and Radu were the lucky six! They dressed nicely and went into the town to see the Christmas lights and Christmas decorations.

The youngsters did not know that there was another surprise planned for them too. Everyone was puzzled when they entered the Literary Café. The Literary Café is the meeting place in Comanesti for writers, where other artistic events take place: folk music concerts, blues, poetry recitals. It is also home to some house cats who wait to meet their guests. At the entrance, they were welcomed by the first cat and the sound of carols. On the tables were plates with cakes, juices and fragrant tea in mugs with Romanian folk motifs. The youngsters sat down at the tables and tucked in to the goodies

prepared for them.

Alina first preferred to play with Minerva, a Norwegian forest breed cat, but she was soon entertained by something else very exciting! An old, white beard climbed up the stairs. It was the real Mos Nicolae (Father Christmas) who came specifically to visit the Casa Lumina youth. Mos Nicolae spoke to every one of our young people and, to their amazement, the young people all received a gift. Mos Nicolae promised the young people that they would meet again next year.

For the young people, it was a unique, unforgettable moment.



After an hour and a half, we all left and went to the downtown park where they admired adorned Christmas trees. Everyone returned to Casa Lumina with smiles on their lips.

*Casa Lumina.*

## In need of a retreat??

Hospice Casa Albert is the most amazing facility if you are looking for a space to host an away weekend, a team building activity or a trip for your men's/women's/youth group!

Due to our team relocating to Hospice Lumina, we now have the ability to use Hospice Casa Albert for other things. Set in the beautiful, tranquil village of Luncani, Casa Albert can hold up to 25 guests.

We have 2 kitchens, a chapel, a large living/dining room, as well as ample outside space.

If you are looking for a venue and fancy a trip outside of the UK please get in touch to talk to us about the possibility of hiring Casa Albert for your own private use.

Contact [bethjohnson@cryinthedark.org](mailto:bethjohnson@cryinthedark.org) for information.

## **Students continue to "Be the Change they want to see"**

I am Subject Leader of PSHCE & Careers and I teach business at All Saints RC School in York. We have a large Sixth Form with lots of students from schools across York. All of our Year 12 students are encouraged to take an extra enrichment subject for a year and I take those students who have chosen the Y12 Archbishop of York Leadership Award. This course encourages young people to 'Be the change you want to see.'

As I have done every year, in September 2014 I asked the group of young people in front of me what charity they would like to support through the year and one student said 'Cry in the Dark.' She also said that she had been with 'Cry in the Dark' to Romania in Year 10, at her previous school. A young man in the class had also been and they both said they would like to return. I had been expecting the students to say NSPCC or the RSPCA. I told them I would need to think about it. I then contacted their teacher from Manor School to find out more. At their lesson the following week I told them I would be happy to pursue this. So, in October 2015, I went to Romania with five students. We had a great experience that week and three of those students returned in the summer. In October 2016, I took eleven students; five of them returned in the summer. Last October, I brought another four and in October 2019 I will bring eight more students.

It is fabulous to feel part of 'Cry in the Dark' and to see how all the projects are growing successfully year on year. Beth and Steve do an absolutely amazing job of hosting my students for the week and making sure they receive a diverse range of experiences; experiences they simply would not be able to have at home, from the activities with the children at Negustorului to entertaining the children at the new hospice. My students and I all love our week with 'Cry in the Dark' and that is why so many of us return.

Sarah Bilton



## **Virtual Reality at Hospice Lumina.**

Asociatia Lumina is currently running a project titled "We Make Dreams", funded by the Community Foundation, through the MOL Children's Health Program.

The theme of the project is the use of Virtual Reality (VR) for the purpose of providing children diagnosed with life-threatening diseases, experiences that are not otherwise accessible to them, and also for pain therapy.

The aim of the project is to reduce the physical and mental suffering of children diagnosed with incurable diseases, who benefit from respite at Hospice Lumina, by using virtual reality both as experiential psychotherapy and as physical pain therapy.

Our main beneficiaries are children and young people with incurable diseases, in advanced and terminal stages of their illness who generally also have complex socio-medical needs of care.

Project objectives:

O1: Acquisition of virtual reality devices and familiarization of specialists with these devices,

O2: Organization of experiential psychotherapy sessions using virtual reality,

O3: Implementation of at least 4 pain control modules using virtual reality.

O4: Photographing the experience of children by using virtual reality

Patients spending stints of time in Hospice Lumina are patients with major mobility difficulties, who require permanent medical treatment and have very often been hospitalized and suffered repeatedly with painful procedures and bouts of chronic pain. This form of therapy can relieve suffering and lead them into a world they can't even dream of.

Virtual reality is an excellent means of escaping from everyday life and the unpleasant reality some of these children face, but also a method of experiential psychotherapy.



Written by  
Mihaela Dumitrache

# £2 PARTNERS

*Calling all supporters - we need you!*

CAN YOU GIVE JUST £2 A MONTH?

## £2 Partner Appeal

At the end of 2016 we launched our £2 Partner appeal and we have been so grateful for the success of it.

CitD runs on the generosity of amazing people like you and we have been blessed with long standing faithful supporters. At this time though, we are desperate for more people to sign up to give regularly and we are asking you to do that from as little as £2 a month.

£2 a month can go a long way in Romania.

With just £2 you can buy -

- ♦ 10 loaves of bread
- ♦ The petrol to get a nurse to a patients house
- ♦ 32 litres of clean drinking water
- ♦ A days worth of incontinence pads for a family
- ♦ A 2 course hot meal at Casa Lumina

As you see, we can make a huge difference with just a small regular gift.

You can sign up to be a £2 Partner with your bank via Standing Order. All the details are on the form to the right —>

Or you can visit our Virgin Money Giving page and sign up there:  
<http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/charity-web/charity/finalCharityHomepage.action?charityId=1002735>

Thank you

## £2 Partner Appeal

I would like to become a **£2 Partner** and help Cry in the Dark continue to serve some of the neediest children and young people in North East Romania from as little as £2 a month!

I would like to make a monthly gift of **£2** **£5** **£10** Please tick chosen amount or

Other amount **£** (Please state)

### STANDING ORDER INSTRUCTIONS TO YOUR BANK:

Please pay the sum indicated to: CRY IN THE DARK, ROYAL BANK OF SCOTLAND Plc  
59 STREATHAM HIGH ROAD

LONDON SW16.

Sort Code: 160093

ACCOUNT No:10025884

Starting (date):...../...../..... and thereafter until further notice.

Signature:

Date:

**Please debit my/our account as indicated above:**

Account name:.....

Sort Code:..... Account No:.....

**I have set up the standing order directly with my bank – Yes..... No.....**

**Name and address of Bank/Building Society:**

Postcode:

**Gift Aid: if you are a U.K. tax payer, your gift could be worth an extra 25%.**

**Gift Aid:** I confirm that I am a U.K. tax payer and wish Cry in the Dark to treat all donations I make from now on as Gift Aid donations. I pay income tax and/or capital gains tax at least equal to the amount Cry in the Dark reclaims on my donations:

Signature:

Date:

**My name & contact details: (Please print clearly)**

Email:

Home Address:

Phone No:

Postcode:

**Cry in the Dark**

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