

“The hunger for love is much more difficult to remove than the hunger for bread.”

Mother Theresa

How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one whom they have not heard?

Romans 10:14



Moldova

February 2009

Justin & Jessie Ballantyne
– Serving with OM



Prostitution is one of Moldova's main forms of export. Of the victims, approximately 40% are minors as young as 14

A Nation of Contrasts

Cold winters, hot summers; Mercedes Benzes, horse and carts; Big-city houses, under-developed villages; Clean shoes, thick mud; Floods, droughts; The need for something deeper, 600 villages without an Evangelical church...

Moldova has presented itself as a nation of contrasts. Like so many other developing nations, there are the wealthy and the poor and sadly, an innate desire to present an image of 'having it all together'. People dress very well and some drive cars that are usually only reserved for the wealthy in Australia – however they may only have one set of clothes and children are often withdrawn from school at the earliest possible age due to a lack of financial resources.

Infrastructure is poor, gas is an ongoing problem and the desperate need to stay warm in a village is a daily struggle. Work



options are very limited, and many stand in a market day after day trying to sell the meagre items they can find. Many crippled beggars plead for money on a daily basis, whilst some even resort to charging one lei to have your weight measured on bathroom scales in a busy street.

Rough Timeline

1

11 February – 9 March

Live with Moldovan host family and undertake intensive language lessons

2

March – May

Combine language lessons with OM Moldova's Challenge into Missions program and practical work and outreach in rural villages

3

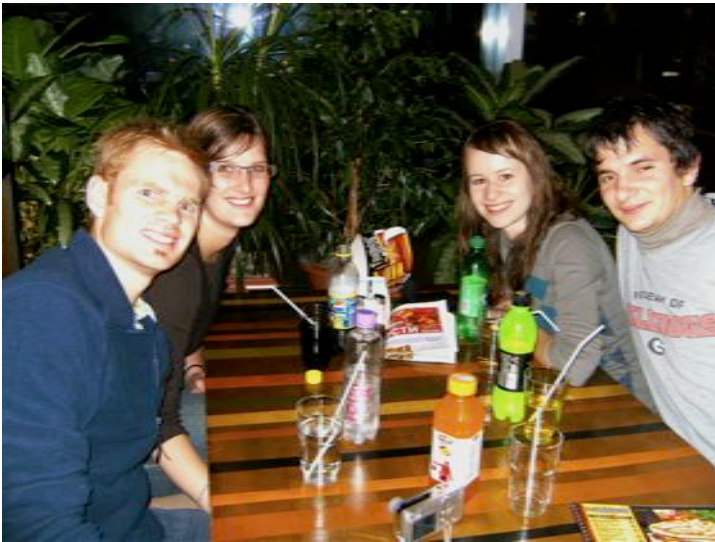
June

Commence in formal working roles and assist with Summer programs in the villages

What the?

Moldova has the highest recorded rate of drink drivers in the world, with approximately 20% of those breathalised being over the legal limit. Whilst our first year may present challenges in not owning a vehicle, it sounds like walking might be the safer option!

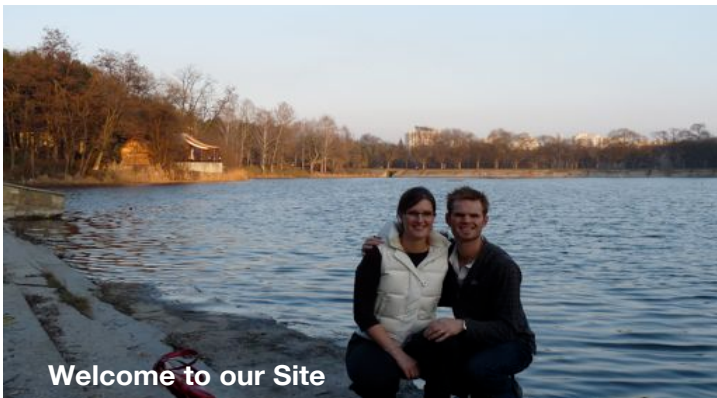
As we learn with eyes and ears wide open, our hearts are being touched for this nation of great need.



Dinner on our first evening in Moldova with fellow OM team members, Michaela (Austria) & Lilian (Moldova)

www.juzandjessie.com

If you're interested in learning more about Moldova, the work we're involved in and gaining an insight into our daily lives, check out our website. We post regular blogs (diary entries), photo albums, prayer and praise points etc. This will be our main form of communication. If there's something in particular you'd like to know more about, or if you have any weird and wonderful questions you'd like answered about Moldova, send us a quick email and we'll do our best to cover it!



Welcome to our Site

Take a look around this site to keep up-to-date with our work in Moldova. We will regularly update our Blog and Photo Albums for those of you interested in our adventure.

Shoes

During our commissioning service in Australia, Sam Scott (from OM) gave the church a prompting tool for prayer. He explained that every time we put our shoes on, we could be reminded to pray for one another in our mission work. We see prayer as a vital aspect of our mission, and this is just one way we can ensure that we remain diligent in prayer.

Once, European Christians told the world about Jesus. Today's 'Christian Europe' has less evangelical believers than any other continent. Millions have rejected God. Millions more are searching for anything to fill their emptiness. Europe is spiritually bankrupt. Peter Maiden – OM International Director

Pray For

- ⇒ The ability to learn Romanian quickly and fluently
- ⇒ Our eyes and ears to be open as we learn about and adapt to Moldovan culture
- ⇒ Solid sleep
- ⇒ A smooth residency visa application process
- ⇒ The provision of an apartment that meets our needs

Jessie

These first weeks in Moldova have been a great time of learning and adjusting for Juz and I. Thankfully, we like most of the food here and haven't really found the cold too much of a problem – that is pretty amazing for anyone who knows just how cold I get!

The point at which I have been most challenged so far was in a small home church in a rural village in Western Moldova. When asked what it meant for these people to be a Christian, one lady shared that while her family struggles to make ends meet each day, if they continue to seek God first they know that He will look after them. What a challenge to each of us as we worry about the smallest things in a comfortable world.

Juz

Our first months in Moldova were always going to centre on looking at and learning about Moldovan culture, customs and their general way of life. Jessie and I currently have the opportunity to live with a Moldovan family in a village for a month and I've already observed many interesting socio-cultural differences. The living standards are considerably different to Australia. There is no running hot water, the one bedroom unit is shared between the parents and two children (6 & 1 year old), and the father is constantly on the phone in search for work. Breakfast is always the previous nights leftovers. This first-hand experience has provided us with a window to view the constant battle a Moldovan family has in making ends meet.