

# World Vision

SUMMER 2014



## Coming Together

20 YEARS LATER:  
RWANDA'S MIRACULOUS  
PATH TO HEALING

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**World Vision**, a free quarterly publication, affirms people responding to God's call to care for the poor by providing information, inspiration, and opportunities for action, linking them with children and families in nearly 100 countries where World Vision ministers. In an effort to be careful stewards of our resources, this publication costs 47 cents a copy to produce.

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JON WARREN/WORLD VISION



JON WARREN/WORLD VISION

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A new day emerges in Rwanda as survivors and perpetrators of the genocide reconcile.



LAURA REINHARDT/WORLD VISION

Romania's bright, hopeful spirit overcomes its painful past.

# Poverty's final frontier

BY RICH STEARNS

**M**ore than two decades ago the world's conscience was awakened by the shocking news coverage of two tragic events: the genocide of 800,000 people over three months in Rwanda, and the appalling treatment of orphans in Romania. The anniversaries of these events give opportunity to recognize the real progress made in tackling the root causes of poverty and lifting millions of people out of grinding, dehumanizing degradation.

Indeed, tackling poverty's root causes is hard, challenging work. Yet your support and years of dedicated work show that we are winning the fight. This kind of success is happening beyond Rwanda and Romania. It is global, and it is astounding.

Consider these signs of progress—just in the last five years: Every day, 8,500 fewer children younger than 5 die of preventable causes. That's more than 3.1 million children's lives saved each year. More than 400 million people have gained access to clean water, while malaria deaths have dropped by a third. Progress like this is being made on a number of fronts.

We know what it takes to end “stupid poverty,” as the rock star and anti-poverty campaigner Bono calls it. My prediction is that if the global community continues to aggressively address this kind of preventable poverty, we will see it significantly diminished in the next 10 to 20 years. We will have built and staffed enough schools, dug enough wells, provided enough health clinics. And we will have encouraged enough entrepreneurs, enabled enough farmers, and empowered enough women. Children will be able to grow up in safety, earn a living, send their own children to school, and grow old to enjoy their grandchildren.

But there is another kind of poverty. It's not the “stupid poverty” that is more easily dealt with—it's deep-rooted poverty in extremely fragile contexts that is much harder to address. You



Rich Stearns visits with Syrian refugee children at Za'atari Refugee Camp in Jordan.

see, solutions to poverty can only work to their maximum potential where there is basic infrastructure supporting development. The roads are paved and safe. The government is reasonably responsive to its citizens. And the justice system is basically fair. Unfortunately, for about a billion people, these necessary ingredients for prosperity are largely absent.

We must start now to do more to address poverty that results directly from fragile states: countries like the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, Somalia, and Afghanistan. Development in these and other places are held back by conflict and war, unstable governments, corruption, or geographic limitations. It will be in these difficult places that the road to progress is more hard-fought.

My own unofficial motto for World Vision is that we do the hard work in the hard places over the long haul. That's because God has called us to the cold places, the broken places, and the ragged edges. We are to be a healing balm on the open sores of our world. We are to demonstrate God's irresistible love and bring hope to the hopeless.

That's what has been happening in Romania and Rwanda, places that were once cold and broken but are now experiencing a new birth. God's love truly changes everything. “In this world you will have trouble,” Jesus says in John 16:33. “But take heart! I have overcome the world.” With such a hope, we cannot fail to follow Jesus to these fragile states, these most hurting of places in our world and show the love of God. ●

*“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”*

—JOSHUA 1:9

**FOR MORE FROM RICH** about his latest books, including the updated edition of *The Hole in Our Gospel*, visit [richstearns.org](http://richstearns.org).

# FRONTLINES



LINDBEY MINERVA/WORLD VISION

## SPIN CLASS

**When celebrities veer** from their craft—acting, singing, or scoring touchdowns—to chime in on political discussions, the public might tune out. But celebrity activism has its place, especially when the goal is to build a better world for children.

Known for their fast-paced, highly skilled basketball performances, the Harlem Globetrotters empower children through basketball clinics, anti-bullying education, fitness promotion, and hospital outreach. Now a new child-focused partnership between the Globetrotters and World Vision stretches across the globe.

On a recent trip to Honduras with World Vision, the

Globetrotters brought their basketball wizardry to children in Yamaranguila. Three players—from left, Anthony “Buckets” Blakes, Kevin “Special K” Daley, and Fatima “TNT” Maddox—pulled Clementino Manueles out of the crowd to join them.

Earlier, the grinning 8-year-old sponsored child was among World Vision-trained youth leaders who led devotions for the Globetrotters.

The Globetrotters’ 300 exhibition games in 2014 feature an on-court interactive game about child sponsorship and provide opportunities for fans to sponsor a child in need. ●

## THE RACE TO 2015

**SINCE 2000**, 193 countries—all the U.N. member states—have been working together with a common purpose: to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Eight goals are designed to fight worldwide hunger, disease, lack of education, gender inequality, and other problems associated with deep poverty. These global goals provide a framework

for governments and organizations like World Vision to work together to level the playing field for all the world's citizens.

Each goal has several targets; some were surpassed years ago, but progress has been slow with others. With just months left before the 2015 deadline, here's where the MDGs stand worldwide.

### 8. DEVELOP A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT

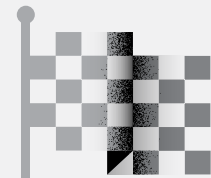
👍 In 2011, mobile cellular subscriptions reached 6 billion worldwide; access to essential medicines in developing countries also increased.

👎 Continue to address needs of least developed countries, landlocked developing nations, fragile states, and small island developing countries.

### 7. ENSURE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

👍 One target—to halve the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water—was met in 2010, five years ahead of schedule.

👎 Lack of sanitation is still high. Though 1.9 billion people gained access to a latrine, flush toilet, or other improved sanitation facility from 1990 to 2011, accelerated efforts are needed to reach another 1 billion people before the deadline.



START

FINISH

### 6. COMBAT HIV/AIDS, MALARIA, AND OTHER DISEASES

👍 New HIV infections continue to decline in most regions; tuberculosis treatment saved about 20 million lives between 1995 and 2011; and malaria deaths declined by 1.1 million between 2000 and 2010.

👎 There are still 2.5 million new HIV infections each year.

### 5. IMPROVE MATERNAL HEALTH

👍 At 47%, the maternal mortality rate is nearly halved since 1990, and all regions made progress.

👎 Accelerate interventions to meet the three-fourths target.

### 1. ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER

👍 One target—to halve the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1.25/day—was met in 2010, five years before the deadline.

👎 1.2 billion people still live in extreme poverty.

### 2. PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER WOMEN

👍 Equality was achieved between boys and girls in primary school.

👎 Only two of 130 countries have achieved that target in primary, secondary, and tertiary levels of education.

### 4. REDUCE CHILD MORTALITY

👍 Today, 17,000 fewer children die each day than in 1990; and since 2000, more than 10 million deaths were averted due to measles vaccines.

👎 One sub-Saharan African child in 10 and one southern Asian child in 16 dies before age 5.

### 3. ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION

👍 Enrollment rates reached 90% in 2010, up from 82% in 1999.

👎 Worldwide, 57 million children of primary school age (5 to 11) were out of school in 2011.

## ONE DONATION, MANY LOANS

**World Vision microfinance loans to families in poverty keep on giving:**

ONE

Donor gives money to an entrepreneur in need, via a local World Vision microfinance institution.

TWO

Entrepreneur invests in his or her business and repays the loan to the local World Vision microfinance institution.

THREE

World Vision recycles the previously loaned money to another entrepreneur, who again repays the money to World Vision.

FOUR

Repeat step 3!

Through microloans and other basic financial and business services, World Vision's **Campaign For Every Child** aims to raise \$85 million to benefit 1.8 million people around the world.

## WORLDWIDE | CHILD-FRIENDLY SPACES

Children who regularly participate in Child-Friendly Spaces in disaster zones are more likely to maintain a positive outlook on life, according to a joint study from Columbia University and World Vision. Child-Friendly Spaces, which often include education, recreation, and professional counseling, provide vulnerable children a safe place to learn and play—even in the midst of natural disasters and conflict. In the last year, World Vision Child-Friendly Spaces have helped children displaced

by Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, an earthquake in Guatemala, and conflict in Syria and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

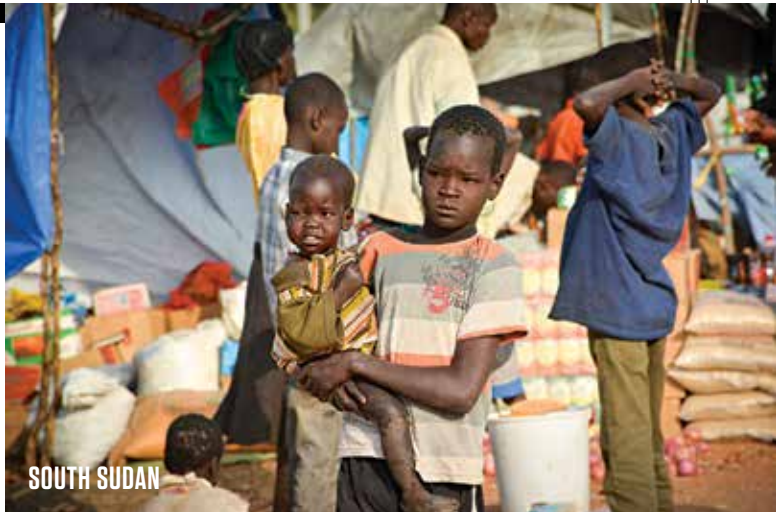
## SOUTH SUDAN | CONFLICT CONTINUES

Since fighting broke out in December 2013, South Sudan has been in turmoil as government and opposition forces attempt to assert control over the world's newest nation. About 1,000 people have been killed. Caught in the middle are civilians—709,000 South Sudanese have been displaced, including about 249,000 who fled to neighboring countries. Despite a cease-fire agreement in January, aid groups remain cautious until the deal becomes a reality. World Vision has provided displaced families with basic household supplies, shelter, clean water, and Child-Friendly Spaces.

## WEST AFRICA | WATER MILESTONES

World Vision's work in Mali, a country in the news for its political instability, recently hit a notable goal: 1,000 productive borehole wells since the water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) program started there in 2003. The 1,000th well was drilled in Yaran, Mali, in January. In Ghana, World

MICHAEL ARUNGA/WORLD VISION



SOUTH SUDAN

Vision and Procter & Gamble celebrated the 1 billionth liter of clean water delivered through their partnership.

## AFGHANISTAN | MIDWIVES SAVE LIVES

World Vision-trained midwives are making a difference in Afghanistan, which has one of the highest infant mortality rates in the world—for every 1,000 births, about 73 infants die. To help reduce the number of Afghan children younger than 1 who die at birth, World Vision introduced a project in northwestern Herat Province that equips health workers to educate mothers on hygiene, disease prevention, breastfeeding, and nutrition. The initiative has reached about 450,000 children younger than 5 and women of reproductive age in Herat. ●



## BE THE FIRST TO KNOW

When humanitarian emergencies develop or natural disasters hit, find full coverage with **World Vision Now**, a free iPhone app. You'll get breaking news, human interest stories, prayer points, and photos and videos—and with push notifications, you'll be the first to know when disaster-related news breaks. Download now from the iTunes store by searching "World Vision Now."

### BONUS FOR CHILD SPONSORS:

Tap the center icon on World Vision Now to access **My World Vision**, where you can connect with your sponsored child.

## CHILD-FRIENDLY SPACES

JOH WAREN/WORLD VISION



# DR. PAUL ON CALL



Read more about Dr. Paul  
at [wvmag.org/summer2014](http://wvmag.org/summer2014).

*A Christian physician combines medicine and ministry to treat more than symptoms.*



In Butare, Rwanda, Dr. Paul Osteen examines Alice, a sponsored child.

BOB MILLER/WORLD VISION

**D**r. Paul Osteen was stunned when he first saw Kipkurui. The 14-year-old boy had been unable to eat much for two years, could barely stand, and weighed about 50 pounds. Growing up in a poor family in a remote western Kenyan village, all Kipkurui had to wear was a tattered flowered dress.

The missionary medical team at Tenwek hospital in Bomet, Kenya, determined the boy needed an operation for intestinal obstruction. Paul soon removed the scar tissue blockage.

While Kipkurui recovered, Paul asked Chaplain Helen to visit and encourage the family with Jer. 29:11, a reminder of God's hope-filled plans for those who love him.

Paul, the older brother of Pastor Joel Osteen, wrote in his blog that before he left, "Pastor Helen called me so excited ... she informed me that both Kipkurui and his mother had accepted Jesus as their Savior.

"Kipkurui left Tenwek hospital a couple of weeks later—on his way to regaining his health, with some new clothes and shoes, a warm coat for the cool nights, and the firsthand knowledge that there is a group of people who demonstrate the love and compassion of our Savior."

If Joel Osteen is the well-known face and voice of Lakewood Church in Houston, Paul represents that church's hands and feet.

A general and vascular surgeon for 17 years in Little Rock, Ark., "Dr. Paul," as he's known around Lakewood, left his practice at the height of success. He moved to Houston to minister at Lakewood in 1999.

About five years ago, he returned to surgery and works four to six months each year in Africa so missionary doctors and surgeons can go on furlough.

"We can't get so insulated, as the American church, that we forget poor,

suffering people," Paul says.

Influenced by Rich Stearns' book, *The Hole in Our Gospel*, Paul leads the new partnership between World Vision and Lakewood Church.

"We share the same heart to help people who are hurting," Paul says. "It's more than giving food. If we can't elevate the poor out of poverty and elevate them to become self-sustaining, we've just put a Band-Aid® on it."

Paul visited Kipkurui a year after the surgery. He writes: "When I saw his face and his smile and felt his warm embrace, I was reminded that it is such a privilege to be a small part of bringing hope and help to people just like Kipkurui." ●

—Phil Manzano

**LEARN MORE** about how to get your church involved at [worldvision.org/church](http://worldvision.org/church).





## WHY I LOVE BEING A CHILD SPONSOR

STEVE AND MARY STEELE  
SPENCER, IOWA

**Eight years ago**, we sponsored two children after attending a Jason Gray concert. Last May, Steve had the incredible experience of meeting one of our sponsored children while on a mission trip in Tanzania. Memusi, the 12-year-old girl we had watched grow through pictures since she was 5, is part of the Maasai tribe—nomadic cattle herders who live in circular mud huts with thatched roofs. One of Steve's memories from this life-changing experience:

*I gave Memusi a picture of our family and a world map on which I had marked the approximate location of Spencer, Iowa. I told her she would always have another family, thousands of miles away, who loves her. She took my hand, squeezed it, and leaned her head against my shoulder. We both had tears in our eyes. That moment will stay with me forever.*

We have since devoted our extra time and resources to promoting World Vision. Steve is a World Vision Child Ambassador and speaks to several groups about child sponsorship. It has been a joy for both of us to be able to share in this small way. This experience has given us a whole new perspective on missions, poverty, and injustice. ●

### TELL US YOUR STORY.

Why do you love being a child sponsor? Write the editors at [wvmagazine@worldvision.org](mailto:wvmagazine@worldvision.org).

## SURVIVOR STORY



The **August 1979 cover** of *World Vision* magazine captured the moment when World Vision's rescue freighter, Operation Seasweep, came upon a boat of refugees drifting in the South China Sea. On board were 3-year-old Vinh Chung and his family, crammed in among 93 people in a 30-by-8-foot vessel fleeing communist Vietnam. They had been robbed; their engine had failed; and their food had dwindled. Seasweep saved the refugees from certain death on the open water.

Vinh's family eventually settled in Arkansas, where they started over and began a new life in Christ. Today, Dr. Vinh Chung—Harvard-educated surgeon, World Vision supporter and board member, and father of four—tells his inspirational story of faith and perseverance in *Where the Wind Leads*, published by Thomas Nelson. At the author's request, all royalties due to him will go to World Vision.

**FIND** *Where the Wind Leads* in bookstores and online retailers. Read about Vinh and Leisle Chung's involvement in World Vision's Campaign for Every Child at [wvmag.org/chungs](http://wvmag.org/chungs).



## WORLD VISION'S WORK IN 2013

With the help of generous donors, in fiscal year 2013, World Vision helped transform the lives of more children than ever before. Today, **1.2 million** children are supported by more than **760,000** caring sponsors in the U.S.

MORE ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

**930,000**  
clients used  
**\$519 MILLION**  
in microloans,  
creating or  
sustaining more  
than  
**1.2 MILLION**  
jobs

**845,000**  
children and adults  
in 10 African  
countries gained  
access to clean  
water, and  
**1,263**  
wells were drilled

**404**  
major area  
development  
projects around  
the world were  
supported by  
U.S. donors

**11 MILLION**  
people were  
assisted in  
**88**  
major natural and  
human-made  
disasters

**FOR MORE DETAILS**, see World Vision's 2013 Annual Review at [worldvision.org/AR](http://worldvision.org/AR).



LEFT: Students in Anna Wadman's art class display the portraits they created based on World Vision photographs.

World Vision magazine. Each student chose a photo and researched the country where it was taken, including culture, history, and challenges the country faces today.

Students were surprised at the range of issues covered in one class—human trafficking, drought, war, genocide, girls' lack of education, and infant mortality. Each student selected the problem they felt was most important to address for the child in their photo and used paint, collage, charcoal, or pastels to reimagine the photos and highlight that issue.

"I was excited to think that even a small-scale project like this could bring some sense of awareness to what is going on outside of the bubble we live in," says Jasmeene Burton, 16, then a sophomore in Anna's art class.

The finished pieces debuted at a school assembly last October. Then the class hung their creations in the school hallways to inspire fellow students—and it worked. Students set up a class competition for loose change, and with the senior class coming in first, they donated \$2,000 to World Vision water projects and Typhoon Haiyan relief. Eleven students and their families decided to sponsor children.

"It is easy for students to see art as either highly personal or imitative," says Anna. "In this project, they thought about other reasons to make art. If we can make art that has a purpose, has meaning, and does some good in the world, I think God is pleased." ●

—Elizabeth Hendley

**GET INVOLVED** with World Vision. Find out how at [wvmag.org/getinvolved](http://wvmag.org/getinvolved).



See the paintings and photos that inspired them at [wvmag.org/summer2014](http://wvmag.org/summer2014)

ANACLETO RAPPING/GENESIS PHOTOS

# GOD'S WORKMANSHIP

*Art touches hearts as high school students step "outside of the bubble."*

**High school art students learn** about more than art in Anna Wadman's class in Westlake Village, Calif. They also learn about life.

Anna's classroom at Oaks Christian School is filled with oil and watercolor paints, stacks of sketch paper, and pencils. These are common art tools, but Anna's students recently realized they are much more.

Each year, Anna, a child sponsor since 2000, assigns her class a portrait project. Last year, she decided to incorporate an educational element into the portrait assignment and, inspired by World Vision U.S. President Rich Stearns' *The Hole in Our Gospel*, teach her students about world poverty.

"I was hoping that students would become more informed about how they can make a difference," Anna says. "We talk a lot about using whatever gifts we have to serve God and others."

With help from World Vision's photo team, Anna provided her class with a selection of photo portraits—some from the pages of

# BEHIND THE LENS



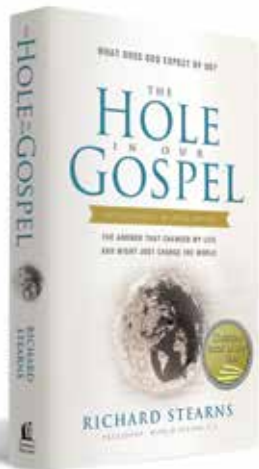
**FIND** a new photo and the story behind it every week at [wvmag.org/lifeframes](http://wvmag.org/lifeframes).

**World Vision magazine's Life Frames** blog goes behind the scenes with World Vision's award-winning photographers and into their favorite photos and iconic imagery of desperation, renewal, tragedy, and hope.

Check back weekly for a new post like this one, an excerpt from photographer Jon Warren's account of his encounter with a young Honduran boy (shown left):

*"I met Geovani a few days after Hurricane Mitch slammed into Honduras in 1998. To get to his village, La Barranca, I had to wade across a swollen river. I spent hours sitting with his family beside their collapsed home, listening to their stories. ... For just a brief moment, Geovani gave me that look, the one that goes through the photographer. I focused manually on his eyes and was able to click only one or two frames before he turned away."* ●

# THE HOLE IN OUR GOSPEL SPECIAL EDITION



**THE HOLE IN OUR GOSPEL** anniversary edition is available May 20 in bookstores and online retailers.

For five years, Rich Stearns' national bestseller **The Hole in Our Gospel** has inspired individuals, families, and churches to answer God's call and tackle poverty. Now an updated edition has been released by Thomas Nelson. New features include:

- Latest poverty statistics
- An epilogue that chronicles the significant progress in reducing poverty since *The Hole in Our Gospel* was first published in 2009
- A 16-page color infographic section
- A section for churches to jumpstart their missions programs
- A guide for mission trips
- Stories of those who responded to the book's call to care for people in poverty
- A concordance of Bible verses on poverty and justice
- Rich's article, published in *Christianity Today*, that explains why reducing poverty is "rocket science"
- An excerpt from *Unfinished*, Rich's second book

# CHANGE AGENT



COURTESY SHAW FAMILY

**NAME** Shaw family  
**HOME** Muncie, Ind.  
**PROGRAM** Child sponsorship  
**THE BUZZ** When Jonathan Shaw was

4, he was saddened as he watched news of the 2010 Haitian earthquake. For days, Jonathan (right) asked his mother, Sarah, who would help people in need. Seeing his deep concern, Sarah and Jonathan's dad, Brian, sponsored a Haitian boy Jonathan's age. But because Brian was out of work at the time, they also searched for a way Jonathan could raise the sponsorship support.

Sarah thought the family could use her pottery experience to make and sell coffee cups—and soon Cups for Kids was born. In four years, the family has sold several hundred cups at local events and online.

Today, 9-year-old Jonathan says of his sponsored child, "I like being a friend to him." Sarah says the family has learned from this experience. "Often you think, 'I can't do anything.' Whether you're a little kid or an adult, everyone can contribute in some way."

Now Jonathan's younger siblings, Hannah, 7, and Andrew, 5, also are involved, and Hannah is sponsoring a girl in India. Brian says, "It makes me feel good that we can pull together as a family and make an effort out there in the world." ●



▲  
Twenty years ago, thousands of  
Rwandan children were forced to  
hide as violence tore families apart.

©1994 JON WARREN



In 1994,

Rwanda was as ruined as any spot on earth after an implosion of violence killed 800,000 people in 100 days. How could the country ever overcome such hatred and horror? »

R W A N D A

2 0 Y E A R S L A T E R

It would take a miracle.

# Healing

▲  
Rwanda is again a place of joy and peace, especially in its thriving churches.



# g Hearts

*By Kari Costanza | Photos by Jon Warren*

**WHEREVER ANDREW BIRASA IS**, Callixte Karemangingo is nearby. They work side by side in the coffee fields in Nyamagabe district, southern Rwanda, talking as they weed around the berries ripening to a rosy red. The men relax together with their families, their wives and children sharing meals and guitar-accompanied songs. In church, Andrew preaches, Callixte reads Scripture, and their children dance with unabashed joy.

It is difficult to fathom how anything could come between these childhood friends. Yet not long ago, a deep hatred separated them. In April 1994, when Rwanda erupted into violence, neighbor turned on neighbor, family turned on family, and love turned to hate. The genocide turned these two friends into enemies.

This is a story about what came afterward. In war-ravaged Rwanda, where World Vision began relief and development work in 1994, hostility slowly yielded to faith and forgiveness, restoring communities and relationships.



▲ Once torn apart by hate, Callixte Karemangingo, left, and Andrew Birasa are now farmers, businessmen, and best friends.



▶ Terraced hills for planting coffee and other crops are signs of Nyamagabe's healing from the wounds of genocide.







**“They did their best to hide. Some even came to my house. They were discovered and killed.”**

—Andrew Birasa



▲ The families of Andrew and Callixte enjoy a meal together in Nyamagabe, southern Rwanda. The two men and their families are reconciled, thanks in part to World Vision's peacebuilding programs that began after the 1994 genocide.

### SUDDENLY THINGS CHANGED

“I like helping people. I would have become a doctor,” says Andrew, 50, sitting in his neatly kept house. Poverty had other plans for Andrew. Unable to afford college, he built himself a house near his parents in 1985. Two years later he married Madrine, now 50, and they started their family.

“During that time, I was living a great life,” he says. “I had many relatives around me and many friends and neighbors who were like a big family. Things were very good.”

Callixte, now 42, was part of the circle of friends. The two had always been fond of one another. “He was a very sharp kid,” Andrew says of Callixte. “He was very active in school. He was always number one in writing poems and singing.”

Callixte looked up to Andrew. “He was older than me, but he liked selling things that kids liked,” says Callixte. “He sold groundnuts and biscuits, so I always came to him to buy things. He was a very good person.”

Andrew says his village was a place of “peace and harmony,” where people came together for weddings and other ceremonies. Until April 1994. “Things changed all of a sudden, and people started killing each other,” Andrew says. “People had lost their minds.”

Neighbors turned on Andrew's family. His wife, Madrine, was a Tutsi—a target for killing. Andrew tried to protect her and her relatives. “They did their best to hide,” he says. “Some even came to my house. They were discovered and killed.” Madrine survived but lost her father, mother, and five siblings.

Part of the mob that killed them was Callixte, whom Andrew had loved since childhood.

### ROOTS OF THE CONFLICT

Tensions had long simmered between Rwanda's Tutsi and Hutu tribes. “The genocide was a culmination of four decades of bad politics and ethnic injustices,”

explains Pastor Antoine Rutayisire, 55.

Europeans—first the Germans, then the Belgians who colonized Rwanda in 1916—set the stage for hate. The Belgians introduced identity cards in the 1930s, dividing people by tribe—Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa, a hunter-gatherer group.

Before, all had thought of themselves as Rwandan.

Although the Hutus were the majority, the Belgians favored the Tutsis, considering them a superior tribe based on supposed physical differences. Inter-marriage between the tribes muddied the waters, making it difficult to assign identity. To simplify the process, a child was classified based on the tribe of his or her father. If a person didn't know which tribe he was from, it was determined by how many cows he owned. More than 10 cows meant you were a Tutsi.

Tutsi kings governed Rwanda until 1959, when King Mutara III died. During that year, the peasant farmers began what would be called the “Hutu revolution,” which culminated in abolishing the monarchy. The ensuing civil war between the Hutus and the Tutsis cost 150,000 lives, including Antoine's father, in 1963.

Antoine was 5. “I know how you feel when you hate people and have to live with them,” he says.

Many Tutsis fled to Burundi and neighboring countries. By the mid-1960s, half the Tutsi population lived outside Rwanda.

Hutu leaders took power, and the government began to spread a message of hate against the Tutsis, using extremists on the radio to call upon the Hutus to attack and kill Tutsis, whom they called cockroaches.

For Antoine, being Tutsi begat blow after blow. “Every 10 years,” he says, “I had something to remind me I'm living in a country where I'm hated and taken as a second-class citizen.” At 15, he was kicked out of school. At 25, he was fired from his job. And when he was 35—in 1994—everything fell apart.

On the night of April 6, 1994, the plane carrying Rwandan President Juvénal Habyarimana, a Hutu, was shot down near the airport in Kigali, Rwanda's capital. It triggered a mass hysteria such as the world has rarely seen. In the next 100 days, nearly 20 percent of Rwanda's population would die—many by machete, blow by blow hacking away at peace, friendships, families, and communities.

One of the many scenes of carnage was near Andrew's village in Murambi. There 50,000 Tutsis were massacred in just eight hours in a vocational school where desperate families had taken refuge. Today, the site is preserved as a genocide memorial.

The mass killing stopped when the Rwandan Patriotic Front, an army of Tutsis

**“I know how you feel when you hate people and have to live with them.”**

—Antoine Rutayisire



Relief efforts after the genocide paved the way for sponsorship in Nyamagabe.



## Timeline

April 2014 marks 20 years after the genocide in Rwanda, when nearly 1 million Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed within 100 days.

1916

**Belgians colonize Rwanda.**



1931

Belgians introduce identity cards, detailing each person's “ethnicity” of Hutu, Tutsi, or Twa.

1959

**Riots ensue between Hutus and Tutsis. More than 20,000 Tutsis are killed, and many more flee to the neighboring countries of Burundi, Tanzania, and Uganda.**

1963

Civil war ensues between Hutus and Tutsis, costing 150,000 lives.



Jossiane, 14, sponsored child and daughter of Callixte, feeds a cow World Vision gave to the Good Coffee project. Once used to distinguish Hutus from Tutsis, cows now provide fertilizer for the Good Coffee project's coffee plants.

and moderate Hutus (led by current President Paul Kagame), seized the capital and took power in July 1994.

In the aftermath, says Andrew, “hatred developed among people in this village. Those who survived against those who killed. Those friendships that characterized this village disappeared.”

It was true of Andrew and Callixte. “I hated him,” says Andrew. “My wife didn’t have anyone left in her family.”

There were too many genocide perpetrators for the courts to try, so the government instituted *gacaca* courts in the villages, based on traditional Rwandan judicial principles. Villagers stepped forward to implicate the people they had seen participating in the killings. The prisons filled up with those convicted in the *gacaca* courts.

Andrew implicated Callixte.



1990

Rebels of the Tutsi-dominated Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) invade northern Rwanda from neighboring Uganda. The RPF’s success prompts President Juvenal Habyarimana, a Hutu, to speed up political reforms to legalize opposition parties.

August 1993

Rwanda and the RPF sign a deal to end years of civil conflict, allowing for power-sharing and refugees’ return. The transitional government fails to take off, and sides trade blame.

April 6, 1994

**Habyarimana and Burundi President Cyprien Ntaryamira, on returning to Kigali after peace negotiations, are killed in a rocket attack on their airplane.**

April 7, 1994

Presidential guards kill moderate Hutu Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiimana, who sought to quell tensions. Habyarimana’s death triggers a **100-day spree of violence**, perpetrated mainly by Hutus against Tutsis and moderate Hutus. About 800,000 people are killed. The rebels start a new offensive.





▲ Manuel, standing, and Jean Bosco, sitting with guitar, entertain their siblings. The two teenagers, sons of Andrew and Callixte, became friends after their families reconciled.

**“[The children] were very scared. They didn't know what had happened to their parents.”**

—Onesphore Uwizeyimana

**RELIEF AND HEALING**

Soon after the bloodshed ceased, World Vision began relief operations in Rwanda, assisted by Antoine.

Immediately, World Vision focused on vulnerable children—an estimated 100,000 were separated from their parents. Heather MacLeod, a New Zealand nurse, worked in centers for unaccompanied children. “They weren’t playing much,” she says. “They weren’t acting like children. I have very clear memories in Nyamata of children sweeping blood out of buildings.”

In Andrew’s village, Onesphore Uwizeyimana began working with World Vision, taking care of the many orphans of the genocide. Some were babies left in the bush, hidden by their parents so that they wouldn’t be killed.

“The first thing we did was provide first aid to those children,” he says. “Some were sick because of spending hours and nights in the bushes. They were hungry. They had spent many days without any kind of food. If World Vision hadn’t helped them, many would have died.” After meeting the children’s basic needs, staff worked to locate parents or surviving relatives.

World Vision borrowed classrooms in Onesphore’s church to house the children. “They were very scared. They didn’t know what had happened to their parents,” says Onesphore, who today is the longest-serving staff member in World Vision’s Nyamagabe sponsorship program.

It was clear the children needed more than physical help. “Healing work started right in 1994, when children were showing signs of deep trauma,” says Josephine Munyeli, World Vision’s specialist for healing, peacebuilding, and reconciliation. “World Vision was assisting traumatized children who were affected by the loss of their parents.”

In 1996, when thousands of families began to return to their villages in Rwanda, World Vision started a reconciliation and peacebuilding department.

“Reconciliation was necessary and a foundation for every initiative,” says Josephine. “If we were to do development work straightaway when people had not yet dealt with their painful past, we would be heading nowhere. People carrying deep pain cannot be productive.”

World Vision developed a reconciliation model that endures today: a two-week program of sharing intensely personal memories of the genocide, learning new tools to manage deeply painful emotions, and embarking on a path to forgiveness. The approach was replicated all over the country and embraced by the new government.

“Thousands of people went through the process,” says Josephine. “More



April 15, 1994

About 20,000 people seek refuge from the violence at the **Nyarubuye Roman Catholic Church**, where most are slain by attackers carrying spears, hatchets, knives, and automatic rifles.

April 21, 1994

The United Nations pulls 90 percent of its troops from Rwanda, leaving only 270 U.N. soldiers in the country.

April 30, 1994

**Refugees flood Burundi, Tanzania, and Zaire (now Democratic Republic of the Congo).**

May 1994

World Vision’s **Heather MacLeod**, a New Zealand nurse, begins work with thousands of children separated from their families.

May 17, 1994

**U.N. officials say that genocide may be happening in Rwanda.**



**“Reconciliation was necessary and a foundation for every initiative.”**

—Josephine Munyeli



▲  
Sponsored girls Amina, left, and Jossiane, tend to their goats. The best friends are daughters of Andrew and Callixte, and their friendship reflects the transformation that has taken place in the two families, their community, and their country.



**Sponsorship**  
A New Start for Every Child

**World Vision started** child sponsorship in Rwanda in 2000, bringing development work and reconciliation programs to shattered communities. That work continues today in a more stable country, providing support for children living in poverty—children who will help shape a peaceful, productive future.

It's often asked how World Vision selects new communities for child-focused ministry. Every community is unique with its own struggles, needs, and reasons families remain trapped in poverty. World Vision first takes an in-depth look at the country level to identify the most vulnerable communities where children need assistance.

Once these areas within the country are identified, more research takes place as World Vision works with the people to better understand the challenges, opportunities, capacities, and resources. If community leaders and families are open to partnering with the organization in their efforts to tackle poverty, staff members are hired and the long-term project work begins.

In the brand-new Simbi project in southern Rwanda, 3,000 children need sponsors. World Vision aims to boost the food supply through improved farming techniques and a livestock program; improve children's overall health; and equip the community to support the most vulnerable people, including child-headed households, widows, and people with disabilities.

Every child deserves a chance for a new start. Across the globe, World Vision tailors child sponsorship to help where and how it's needed most—aiming for life in all its fullness for children.

**TO SPONSOR A CHILD IN SIMBI, RWANDA, see the envelope attached here or go to [wvmag.org/sponsor](http://wvmag.org/sponsor).**

June 22, 1994

The **U.N.** sends 2,500 French troops to Rwanda to create a safe zone. The action, called Operation Turquoise, is not successful, as Tutsis continue to be killed in the safe zone.

July 13, 1994

**Every hour, more than 10,000 refugees from Rwanda cross into Zaire, looking for safety. There are so many people crossing the border that there is not enough food, water, or shelter for everybody.**



July 1994

World Vision begins relief operations in Rwanda. American Randy Strash is sent to Kigali to establish an office and begin distributing relief supplies to survivors.

1996

**World Vision begins reconciliation and peacebuilding programs in Rwanda.**

than 200 trainers were trained. Two thousand survivors and perpetrators went through healing training. And 2,000 youth went through PRAY—Promotion of Reconciliation Among Youth—which used dance, drama, poetry, and artwork to help traumatized children express their feelings.”

**RECONCILIATION TAKES ROOT**

Andrew and Madrine began to hear messages of reconciliation as they worked on World Vision-supervised projects, including terracing hillsides to aid farming and rebuilding the school that was used to house Tutsis before they were killed.

Andrew reels off a long list of World Vision’s support: “They rehabilitated houses that had been destroyed. They provided shelter to survivors whose houses had been completely destroyed. They provided clothes. They provided food for people who hadn’t been able to harvest for three months.”

Callixte had gone to prison in 1995, leaving his wife, Marcella, and two young children. “I struggled,” she says. “It was unbelievable. It was the first time I’d even been alone with children to care for. They all looked at me for support, and I didn’t know what to do.”

In 2000, World Vision began the Nyamagabe development project, supported by U.S. sponsors. (Today, U.S. supporters sponsor more than 26,000 children in Rwanda.) Sponsorship funds continued the important work of healing the psychological wounds left by the genocide. The funding also provided projects to rebuild Nyamagabe—education, water, sanitation and health, economic development, and peacebuilding.

Community volunteers were needed to watch over sponsored children, reporting any health issues and making sure they are going to school. Among those who volunteered: Madrine and Marcella. They still avoided each other. Callixte remained in prison, and Andrew still resented the family.

But in spite of life’s hardships, Marcella wanted to give back. World Vision had built her a house, provided school fees and books for the boys, and opportunities for her to work. “Knowing that World Vision was supporting my children, I stood up,” she says. “I wanted to support other children in my village.”

Both Madrine and Marcella were picked as community volunteers. “[Madrine] didn’t blame me,” says Marcella. “She didn’t look at me with the bad eye. But the hatred between our husbands kept us apart.”

The gulf between the couples kept their children apart as well. Many of the children were of the same age and wanted to be friends. Andrew’s son, Manuel, remembers this troubling time. “We were forced to keep a distance,” he says. “They wouldn’t let us mix. But we wanted to play with everyone.”

Working together on projects, focusing on sponsored children, and learning



▲ Andrew, in the background, encourages Callixte as he reads Scripture at their church, where Andrew preaches and their children sing, dance, and worship.

December 1996

Rwanda’s first **genocide trial** opens under the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

March 25, 1998

**U.S. President Bill Clinton delivers an apology in Rwanda, acknowledging the U.S.’s failure to respond to the genocide.**

April 2000

The U.N. Security Council announces that it did not do enough to prevent the genocide in Rwanda. It compares the genocide in Rwanda to the Holocaust in the 1940s.

April 2000

**Paul Kagame is elected president of Rwanda.**



2000

World Vision concentrates on long-term, child-focused, and community-based development in Rwanda.





**“It was as if the pastor was talking to us. He looked right into our hearts.”**

—Marcella Karemangingo

▲ World Vision renovated Bwama Primary School in Nyamagabe after the genocide.



▲ Coffee beans from the Good Coffee project are ready to be picked.

about peace and forgiveness melted both women’s hearts. “At first I hated her because of what her husband did,” says Madrine of Marcella. “After training and listening in church, I came back to my senses.”

Madrine began to take food to Marcella. She took on a maternal role with the younger woman, healing through helping.

### ONE DAY IN CHURCH

During the 13 years Callixte was jailed, he began to heal, Marcella says. “My husband changed a lot in prison. He is an artist. The songs he sang and performed affected him. He went through reconciliation workshops. At the end he felt, ‘What happened happened. I need to live a new life.’ ”

Callixte was released from prison in 2007. He came back to the village and was Andrew’s neighbor once again. With their families involved in World Vision’s programs that emphasized reconciliation, the stage was set for their reunification. But for Andrew and Callixte, the process was an arduous one.

Appropriately, the light of forgiveness shined on the families in church. “We went to church and heard the pastor preach,” says Marcella. “One day we were all at the same service. It was as if the pastor was talking to us. He looked right into our hearts. After church we said, ‘We have got to talk.’ In 2010, we got back together. Since then, we have been close.”

“Our children saw us change,” says Madrine. They watched their parents’ hatred turn into friendship. Today, their sons, Jean Bosco and Manuel, both 19, are like brothers. “He’s my best friend in life,” Manuel says of Jean Bosco.

A World Vision project featuring cows and coffee cemented the relationship between Andrew and Callixte. Villagers were given cows to raise for milk and fertilizer. The fertilizer was used to grow coffee plants. Villagers combined their plots to create bigger farms on which to grow the coffee. In every group were genocide perpetrators and survivors so that World Vision would continue to talk through the issues of healing and reconciliation.

The men, who are in a group called Good Coffee, are looking forward to their first coffee harvest. They also are starting a side business with cows, walking together to purchase cows from the market and reselling them for a profit.

Cows are now just cows, says Callixte. They symbolize nothing but opportunity. “Cows are no longer seen as a way of dividing social classes of people.”

Today, Andrew and Callixte go to prisons together, visiting genocide perpetrators who are still incarcerated and talking with them about reconciliation. Learning

2000

**World Vision begins the Nyamagabe development project, supported by U.S. sponsors. Today, U.S. supporters sponsor 26,637 children in Rwanda.**

Sources: *World Vision* magazine archives and research, Reuters

## Emerging from Misery

**Christine Wihangayika** was only 5 when the genocide began. She lived in Nyamagabe district with her parents and three siblings, all Tutsi. Everyone in her family was killed, but she escaped with a family friend to Zaire (now Democratic Republic of the Congo). In 1997, she returned home when the government encouraged refugees to come back to Rwanda.

“Life was not easy for me,” she says. “I was very young and I had no choice. I had to come back to this village. At that time, I hated everyone. I felt so bad to live in a place where my family was killed.”

A World Vision staff member, Assumpta Uteimbabazi, a survivor herself, became an agent of healing, guiding Christine to participate in reconciliation sessions.

Sponsorship also helped Christine emerge from her shell of misery. She was connected with a U.S. sponsor, and she began volunteering at the World Vision office, transcribing information about children to keep their sponsors informed of their progress. “When World Vision started supporting me, bringing me close to them, hope was restored to me,” she says.

Assumpta was always there to guide her. “She was a loving person and a Christian,” says Christine. “All of that helped us to believe.”

But she wasn’t quite ready to forgive—until World Vision started a project in the village about cows and coffee. Christine joined a group with Andrew and Callixte called Good Coffee (see page 23). At first, she was very quiet. But as they worked together, her heart began to shift. “I started loving all the other members of the cooperative,” she says. “I started looking at them as my brothers, my mothers, part of my family.”

One member was particularly kind to Christine—Emile Bizumuremyi, 27. He was moved by Christine’s situation. “I realized that she had no one to be close to her, talk to her, and encourage her. I took that initiative. That’s how love started between us.”

It was a love that could only happen between two people trained in reconciliation. Emile’s family were Hutus. His cousins and uncles had gone to prison.

Community members point to Christine and Emile as a glowing example of how reconciliation brought peace to their village. Their baby girl, Christella, is a miracle child—one parent Hutu, one Tutsi—the perfect combination of them both.



**“[Learning to forgive] has set us free, me and him. It has set our families free.”**

—Andrew Birasa



◀ Christine Wihangayika with her husband, Emile Bizumuremyi, and their baby girl, Christella, in their home.





▲ Now friends, Madrine Birasa, left, and Marcella Karemangingo visit together. Marcella's husband, Callixte, was part of a group that killed Madrine's entire family during the genocide. Now working side by side with World Vision's sponsorship program, the women bear witness to the power of transformation in Rwanda.

to forgive has made all the difference for the two friends and their families. "It has set us free, me and him," says Andrew. "It has set our families free."

### FORGIVENESS TRANSFORMS

Sometimes transformation is physical: a school with new classrooms, sturdy desks, and paint still wet to the touch. Sometimes transformation happens within groups: a community learns to work together toward a common goal. But the most intoxicating transformations happen when hardened hearts change.

"You see in every country, people get wounded. People get hurt. They need to forgive. They need to reconcile," says Antoine, who today is a pastor in Kigali, an author, and an international speaker. "Your life becomes better when you repent, confess, and reconcile."

After working with World Vision in the beginning, Antoine chose to minister to the church. He was asked to stay on by World Vision International's then-President Graeme Irvine, but he had other plans. "I'd like to go around and bring together pastors, build some hope, and put them back into activity," he told Graeme.

Rwandan churches were in a terrible state. Many had been used as staging grounds for killing. There was mistrust among the congregants.

Before the genocide, more than 80 percent of Rwandans said they were Christians—which meant that many of the perpetrators thought of themselves as believers. Antoine knew the church had failed Rwandans, and he was bent on setting things right.

World Vision funded his work. "I remember the first money we used for reconciliation with churches was given by World Vision," he says.

In 20 years of ministry in this shattered country, World Vision has provided practical aid and programs that brought people together. Sponsorship focused on children, the hope of the country. But the real progress is something that might only be detected in the laughter of friends after church on a Sunday afternoon, or the sight of children kicking a handcrafted soccer ball, or in a calm moment when wind whispers through the leaves of a tea plantation.

"World Vision has done many things in this community," says Jonathan Gahima, an early church partner in southern Rwanda, "but to me as a pastor, the most important thing was healing people's hearts." ●

*Martin Tindiwensi of World Vision in Rwanda contributed to this story.*



📁 For multimedia coverage of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Rwandan genocide—including videos, historical photos, and slideshows—go to [wvmag.org/rwanda](http://wvmag.org/rwanda).

## [ Pray for Rwanda ]

- ▶ Praise God **for the reconciliation programs** that have brought people back to faith and healed their broken hearts.
- ▶ Pray **for children**, who are the majority of the population and have no memories of the genocide. Education and economic development offer them means for breaking the cycle of violence.
- ▶ Pray **for leaders of churches**, that these former scenes of slaughter can be redeemed as houses of worship for all Rwandans, united by the love of Christ.

# Righting Wrongs

for Romania's Children

By **NATHALIE MOBERG**

Photos by **LAURA REINHARDT**

**A quarter-century ago,** images of emaciated children locked in Romania's stark orphanages were broadcast around the world, crying out for a compassionate response. World Vision responded, launching innovative solutions for thousands of orphans—and other vulnerable children as well.



▲  
Nine-year-old Vasilica Cirebea and his family thrive on a remote and impoverished Transylvania mountainside, thanks to hard work and the generosity of a World Vision sponsor.



**WITH ITS UNDULATING HILLS,** imposing castles, and quaint cottages, many parts of Romania seem to step out of a fairytale. Yet the charm belies a nation battered for decades at the hands of ruthless Communist rulers.

In the 1980s, former President Nicolae Ceausescu and his wife, Elena, lived in extravagance while the nation covered in fear and poverty. Finally, the people unleashed the courage to overthrow communism, executing Ceausescu and his wife on Christmas Day 1989. But the terror lived on—notably for tens of thousands of Romania’s innocent children. Ceausescu’s legacy became international news as the world witnessed the shocking images of abandoned children tethered to beds and confined to cages in overcrowded institutions. No fairytale façade could hold back the nightmarish reality for these children.



▲ The nostalgic beauty of Romania’s landscape and traditional lifestyle is marred by the reality of extreme poverty in rural areas.



Following Nicolae Ceausescu’s execution, orphanage doors opened to reveal thousands of young children neglected in their cribs.



SHERYL WATKINS/GENESIS PHOTOS



World Vision was one of the first humanitarian organizations to respond to the dire needs of institutionalized children, and it's one of the few international organizations still serving in Romania. The child protection and childcare models World Vision launched have proved so effective that the Romanian government adopted them throughout the country.

Romania's former Secretary of State for Social Assistance Theodora Bertzi says, "World Vision continues to have a strong presence and concern with ensuring the well-being of the most vulnerable children—even when other organizations have closed."

Yet much remains to be done in a country still in transition. Formerly institutionalized children are now adults facing an uncertain future. Romania's entrance into the European Union brought both opportunity and challenge. Meanwhile, rural families remain in persistent poverty, and the children continue to need innovative solutions to ensure a stable future.

### CHILDREN WITHOUT ROOTS

As communism gasped its final breaths in Romania, a newborn drew her first breath and wailed. Hours later, her mother fled the Transylvania hospital, leaving her infant behind. Overwhelmed by large families due in part to Ceausescu's reproduction policies, untold thousands of parents—most of them living in poverty's relentless clutch—left their children at the doorstep of the nation's many orphanages.



▲ As one of five children in a very poor rural family, Andreea Tiron receives essentials such as warm clothing, food, and blankets from World Vision.



▲ Andreea gleaned few skills from her orphanage years, but now is on track to a promising future.

**“I stood at the door waiting for my parents. But they never came. I would cry.”**

—Andreea

Today, that baby is a young woman who bears the psychological and social scars that mar the tens of thousands of children consigned to Romania’s notorious orphanages.

When Andreea\* turned 18, the orphanage released her to the streets. The only things she took with her were the few possessions she owned and her rage, which had built over two decades of being locked in crowded rooms with other unwanted children. She stood on the unfamiliar street, utterly unprepared for life. Andreea, now 24, had never been to a grocery store or handled money. She had no idea how to cook a meal or wash her clothes. She had no job skills, no place to live, and no ability to access social services.

After surviving a childhood devoid of love, Andreea also had nowhere to turn for help. “I always wanted to know who my parents were,” she says, explaining how she used to see other parents visit their children in the orphanage. “I stood at the door waiting for my parents. But they never came. I would cry.”

Andreea would later learn that she has five brothers—and that only she and one brother were institutionalized. For years, Andreea steeped in despair at her abandonment. “I didn’t feel happiness. I was afraid,” she says.

Children like Andreea, who learned to rock themselves because no one else would give them comfort, were commodities. Earmarked as the future factory workforce that leaders calculated would make Romania an economic power, the children relegated to orphanages were underfed, understimulated, and undereducated. But then the rest of the world discovered them, setting off a groundswell of support.

### HOPE FOR FORGOTTEN CHILDREN

World Vision had a small staff on the ground in Romania as dissent boiled over in late 1989. Within months of the fall of communism, ABC’s “20/20” program documented life inside the orphanages, including an interview with a World Vision staff member who had gained access to the highly restricted institutions.

World Vision began working with the government and other nonprofit organizations, first gaining trust by improving conditions in the orphanages. Staff also set the foundation for groundbreaking alternatives to institutionalization that flourish today. These new models were designed to replicate family environments, encouraging healthy child development. Among the earliest successes was a foster home system for many children who could not be reintegrated into their families.

Niculina Petre, a former director in Romania’s Child Protection System, says World Vision brought the “know-how and human and material resources” to make significant advances in how abandoned children were treated for decades in Romania. “World Vision proved the viability of a new child protection system and became the foundation for the Romanian government to change,” Niculina says.

When child protection reform became a government priority, World Vision was invited to participate in the process and influenced innovative and sweeping

\*Last names of formerly orphaned children are withheld to protect their privacy.



## Timeline

The roots of disaster were planted for thousands of Romanian children decades before they were born. Here’s how the orphan crisis—and World Vision’s response—unfolded.

1947

**People’s Republic of Romania replaces monarchy.**

1965

**Nicolae Ceausescu** becomes Communist Party leader.

1977

**World Vision responds to Bucharest earthquake that killed some 1,500 people.**

1984-89

A government austerity program drastically reduces food, fuel, and the nation’s standard of living. More children are placed in orphanages as poverty and desperation grow.



legislation that passed in 1997.

In addition, maternity support and shelters—including therapy for children with disabilities and counseling for their mothers—provided the critical care to keep parents from abandoning their children. And to protect young people like Andreea as they emerged from orphanages, World Vision created Hope House.

Andreea lived at Hope House for more than two years, learning skills and anger management to help her transition to life on her own. Now three crosses dangle on cords around her neck, a constant reminder of the most precious truth Andreea says she learned at Hope House. “My inner strength, my optimism are from God. My trust is in God,” she says with a brilliant smile.

Andreea and her 23-year-old friend, Sabina\*, share parallel life stories. Relegated to an orphanage shortly after birth, Sabina also was unprepared when she was released at 18, and she stayed at Hope House for a year to master new skills.

World Vision staff helped Sabina secure an internship at a local food company, where she was soon hired full time. Her manager praises her work. For Sabina, life in the orphanage is something she tries to forget. “What has been has been,” she says.

The shy Sabina and outgoing Andreea live together in a modest apartment in the city of Cluj’s largely abandoned industrial area. Rent is reasonable here, and their peach-washed building is a bright spot in the otherwise drab surroundings of decaying brick and shattered windows. Despite their environment, Andreea and Sabina dare to dream about the future.

Sabina is determined to have an apartment of her own. Andreea plans to advance in her job of sewing clothes, with a goal of “helping people who went through what I went through.”

Children still are institutionalized, but in “placement centers”—equipped facilities with trained staff—not the cruel child warehouses of the past. Hope House’s former work of preparing young people with core life skills is now part of children’s ongoing education in some of the placement centers.

## A PLACE TO CALL HOME

World Vision also collaborates with the government to test group homes as an alternative for children growing up in placement centers. In Bucharest, five apartments house 40 children, segregated by gender and managed by live-in caretakers.

The children decorate their rooms, go on field trips, attend regular schools, help each other with homework, buy and prepare food, and do laundry. The group homes are just minutes from one another so the young people gather often for activities and meals. Some are siblings; a few have disabilities. But they all function as a family, helping and protecting one another.



Read more about World Vision’s work in Romania and see additional photos at [wvmag.org/summer2014](http://wvmag.org/summer2014).



Sabina packs lunches to be whisked to Cluj businesses. She chooses not to think much about growing up in a local orphanage.



1989

Following **violent uprisings and protests** against the government in December, Ceausescu is captured, tried, and executed.

1990

World Vision responds to the orphanage crisis, creating **care models** that remain core to the government’s child protection work.

1997

World Vision introduces **child sponsorship to impoverished communities**.

2007

Romania enters the **European Union** but remains its poorest member nation.

2014

More than 20,000 Romanian children are sponsored through World Vision in seven areas.





Casandra sits while Monica braids her hair. The girls growing up in World Vision's group home are like siblings to one another.



The young people share stories of how Romania's child protection officers removed them from their families' appalling living conditions. Others were abandoned. Some of their parents are incarcerated.

Casandra\*, 16, grew up in a tent with her impoverished parents and 11 siblings. Her illiterate parents didn't send their children to school. Casandra and her older siblings spent their days caring for the younger children or scavenging for discarded iron, plastic, paper, or anything else to recycle for money. In 2006, the Romanian government placed Casandra and three younger brothers in an orphanage.

Casandra seldom sees her parents, who move around to find work. But she frequently spends time with her 12-year-old brother, Sandu\*, who lives nearby in one of the homes for boys.

The dark-eyed teen with long, thick hair says she's happy in the group home. Casandra attends school, competes on a dance team, and plans to one day work as a reflexology masseuse. "This is a totally different life," she says with a smile. "Here we try to have life in a family, and we learn life skills. In the orphanage, I was just one of the crowd."

Of the five group homes in Bucharest, the government's child protection office has assumed ownership of two apartments. World Vision is preparing to transition the other three as well, freeing the organization to focus on other vulnerable children.

#### **ABANDONED ONCE MORE**

Romania joined the European Union in 2007, which opened its borders and attracted foreign investment. But because it's the poorest nation in the EU, jobs and income-generating opportunities remain limited in rural areas. This has created a new problem.

At least 2 million Romanian adults have crossed into Italy, Spain, and other



The Adam family looks forward to a better future with the help of sponsorship and agricultural opportunities.





countries in search of higher paying jobs, often leaving their children behind with aging grandparents or older siblings. In Romania's remote northeast Vaslui County, where more than 27,000 adults left in 2010 alone, children are especially vulnerable to this new form of abandonment.

At 78, Janeta Gilca is caring for two—9-year-old Toader (right) and 11-year-old Parascheva—in the low-ceilinged, two-room cottage she's lived in for 35 years. Janeta has hypertension and diabetes, and her only prayer is that she lives long enough to see her grandchildren finish high school. Without her, the children have no immediate family nearby.

Janeta's son and older grandchildren work in a rubber factory in the Czech Republic, sending her \$250 a year to help support the grandchildren. The children's mother initially stayed to care for them, but soon left to live with another man.

When Janeta's son left, he gave her two pigs, which produced 15 piglets. One by one, Janeta has been forced to sell them. Now only one pig is left. Janeta stares at the floor and shakes her head. "I do not have the heart to think of myself. I think only of my grandchildren," she says, wiping tears from weary eyes.

Parascheva and Toader study hard in school, earning A's and B's. They worry about their grandmother and help out by doing chores—feeding the pig, making the beds, hanging the wash to dry, and tidying up the small yard. They say Janeta is kind and patient.

The sun provides no warmth as Janeta walks cautiously out to the yard, supported by her cane. Framed against the white house with a green door, she looks up and jabs a crooked forefinger toward the heavens. "Our faith is there," she says.

World Vision recently began working in Vaslui 2, a U.S.-funded development project that uses child sponsorship support to address education, child protection, economic development, and Christian faith.

Toader is newly sponsored, but Parascheva and many other Vaslui 2 children have no sponsors yet. When they are linked with U.S. sponsors, some of their prayers for help will be answered.

### FORTIFYING FRAGILE FAMILIES

Since the fall of communism, Romania has become a nation of contrasts. Joining the EU benefited many urban areas with billions of dollars in aid for rebuilding sagging infrastructure. Yet seven years later, many rural families barely survive in poverty. These include Roma families, an ethnic group marginalized in Romania for centuries.

Roma children experience deep discrimination and poverty. Families in remote, underdeveloped regions lack basics like running water and decent housing. Many are farmers who could capitalize on their crops, livestock, and other products if they had access to markets—but most do not.

The Adam family barely makes ends meet in rural Transylvania. A horse and cart serve as their only mode of transportation. The three children are sponsored and receive clothing and school supplies. In 2012, World Vision provided the family with six goats, which produced four kids. The Adams shared two with other families in need. This is part of a growing World Vision livestock program, designed to not only give children milk and cheese to eat at home, but also to expand small farms so parents can sell their animal products.

Soon the Adam family also will be part of a local cooperative World Vision is helping organize so that rural farmers can work together, pool their products, and



**"I do not have the heart to think of myself. I think only of my grandchildren."**

—Janeta Gilca



Janeta Gilca wipes her eyes as she talks about her grandchildren.



# Sponsorship

A New Opportunity in Romania

**World Vision's presence** in Romania may be decades old, but new efforts are still needed to reach vulnerable children. In Vaslui 2, a new World Vision community, families are anxious for the work to begin—but that will only happen with the support of sponsors.

Hundreds of Vaslui 2 children need sponsors to help them navigate the pitfalls of growing up in rural poverty. Many of these children's parents can't find work, and families live in extreme poverty with little food or other basic resources.

The winters are bitterly cold in Vaslui, where temperatures dropped in January to 11 below zero. Sponsorship provides the children with warm clothing, education, nutritious food, clean water, and more. Parents also receive training to run small businesses and earn income to support their families.

**TO SPONSOR A CHILD in Vaslui 2, see the form between pages 20 and 21, or go to [wvmag.org/sponsor](http://wvmag.org/sponsor).**



Antonio Moldovan, 11, reads Bible stories to his grandmother, who is illiterate.

Sorin Popovich and his son, Danut, care for the family's major source of income—100 hives that produce generous quantities of honey.

ultimately have greater access to profitable markets. Florin Adam, 36, does day jobs to trade for goods or earn cash while he waits for the cooperative's legal paperwork to move through the regional courts. "If I am part of this, I will be able to afford more goats and increase what we can sell," says Florin.

For generations, Roma families have lived in isolation from the rest of Romanian culture, clustered in extreme poverty. This is the case in Camarasu, another rural Transylvania town of 2,000, where World Vision is helping the mayor make big changes.

In a significant departure from the norm, Mayor Marcel Mocean demands that Roma families are treated like the rest of the community. He says his faith dictates this. Once he took office, the mayor welcomed World Vision into the community, and today, 254 children are sponsored, including 100 Roma.

World Vision is partnering with the Camarasu community and its mayor to ensure all families have access to running water, electricity, agricultural development, and economic opportunities. Donations from World Vision's Gift Catalog also provide cows to qualifying families, and some of the calves are given to others who are trained in caring for livestock.

The mayor's goal is to equip and educate the next generation, including Roma children. "All we own belongs to God," Marcel says, "and we are responsible for the children. They are a gift."

World Vision and the mayor's office also built a learning center for Roma children in first through eighth grade, who gather each day after school. Staff members help the children with their homework, provide snacks, and, on occasion, distribute warm clothing provided by corporate donations. The center is widely seen as a major step toward breaking the cycle of poverty that afflicts most local Roma families with illiterate parents.

Among the children who spend time at the center is 11-year-old Antonio Moldovan, who prefers the Bible when it's time to practice reading. Antonio lives in a two-room house with his family of eight, including his grandparents.

The adults can't read, so when Antonio's grandmother received a Bible from a local church, Antonio began reading Scripture to her. His favorite Bible story is David and Goliath. "It's a great battle between a giant fighter and a little guy. And



the little guy wins,” he says with a grin.

On a recent day, as he does nearly every day, Antonio nestled on a bed next to his grandmother and read the Bible aloud. His grandfather listened too, tears spilling from his eyes.

“We are happy someone can read to us,” says Antonio’s mother, Minerva. “By listening, we understand what is good and bad, and we think about God and faith.”

### A SWEET SOLUTION TO POVERTY

If rural families are to stay together, they need to leverage local natural resources—even if they don’t own large parcels of land. In Vaslui County’s Negresti community, that takes the form of beekeeping. Negresti is close to the forests and fields bees need to produce honey.

World Vision provides entrepreneurial families with training, hives, and equipment to launch a beekeeping business. Once trained, the beekeepers receive five hives and can join a local association to share information and learn new techniques for expanding their hives and selling honey.

In his tidy home, 46-year-old Sorin Popovich’s living room shelves sparkle with jars of golden *miere*—the precious honey he has extracted from his hives. He is a founding member and president of the local beekeeping association, which World Vision helped launch.

Applying years of experience, Sorin manages 100 thriving hives. He sells his honey mostly by word of mouth and at a local market. Less experienced beekeepers come to him for advice, and Sorin often visits beekeepers at their hives to demonstrate how to improve their beekeeping. “It’s my passion,” Sorin says proudly.

The association buys beekeeping supplies in bulk, yielding savings that are passed on to its members. Meanwhile, World Vision teaches beekeepers how to access EU funds that allow them to better manage and market their honey businesses—not only in local communities, but across Europe. Thirty-five of the association’s 62 families have successfully tapped these funds.

“In areas where there has been a problem with unemployment, now many are using beekeeping as their main activity,” Sorin says. “And they are providing for their families.”

Once beekeepers have their World Vision beehives stabilized, they give one bee family to a beekeeper who is starting a honey business. As the resources are shared, the industry grows.

Gheorghita Barbuta, 36, was unemployed when he learned about the beekeeping opportunity at Negresti City Hall. With training and hives from World Vision and help from Sorin, Gheorghita has already produced enough honey to sell some in his first year as a beekeeper.

Gheorghita and his wife, Florintina, are thankful for the free hives that have set their family of five on a path to new financial stability. “Other organizations have come and said they are going to do something in agriculture, but it doesn’t happen. I didn’t believe it until I saw the hives at my house,” he says.

The results are promising in a country still working to right the wrongs of communism and oppression. Rebuilding trust has been slow.

In Romania, as in every place in need, World Vision stays to create lasting solutions to the issues that keep children and their families in poverty. As this happens, once-neglected children like Andreea, Roma youth, and other children in poor communities will achieve perhaps not a fairytale existence, but lives imprinted with love, stability, and opportunity. ●

*Gabriela Grama, Adrian Popa, and Aurora Popp of World Vision in Romania contributed to this story.*



▲ The fruit of the beekeepers’ labor is transforming life for Vaslui families.

## Pray for Romania

- ▶ For decades, thousands of children with disabilities were isolated in orphanages. Today, World Vision supports a complex in Bucharest where children receive therapy and parents find support to care for their children at home. Pray that all **Romanian children with disabilities** have opportunities to grow up in their families.
- ▶ The Orthodox Church was highly persecuted and suppressed during Communist rule. Pray that this primary **expression of Christianity** in Romania continues to regain strength as it reaches out in creative ways to the younger generation.
- ▶ Many children growing up in Romania’s rural regions struggle to access food, education, and other basics. Pray for **improved infrastructure** in the rural regions, including food, roads, running water, and economic opportunities for families.

## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



SOMLUCK KHAMSAEN/WORLD VISION

## CHANGING HEARTS AND MINDS

SPONSOR'S GENEROSITY EMPOWERS THAI WOMAN TO IMPROVE HER COMMUNITY'S HEALTH

BY SOMLUCK KHAMSAEN

**A**mong neat rows of blue notebooks and piles of patient paperwork at Song Suem Sukapab Hospital, Sumitra Boonyuen (left), a former World Vision sponsored child, is seemingly worlds away from the hardships in her impoverished hometown.

However, the hospital's clean, professional setting rests just miles from Ban Pai, Thailand, where local farmers toil in rice fields and children used to forgo school to join them.

Fifteen years ago, children in Ban Pai were virtually cut off from any future outside their community. The poor condition of the road to the village made traveling difficult, and the path to education often terminated when children dropped out of school to work in the fields.

The rice farmers in Ban Pai are never far from Sumitra's thoughts, even as she sits at her computer. Because Song Suem Sukapab Hospital serves the population of Ban Pai and its surrounding area, Sumitra's work as a database manager directly contributes to the health of her community. She organizes and updates patient medical files, guaranteeing that doctors and nurses have current, accurate information as they treat patients.

Sumitra, now 27, overcame the challenges all children in her community faced—with her sponsor supporting her along the way.

As one of the first children registered for sponsorship when World Vision came to Ban Pai in 1999, Sumitra received help with school fees, uniforms, supplies, and transportation, ensuring that

OPPOSITE PAGE: Sumitra Boonyuen and World Vision staff member Ponsawan Eeukeng outside the hospital where Sumitra works.

she could continue her education. Her Canadian sponsor, whom she calls “Uncle George,” provided practical help and constant encouragement.

Though her family was poor, Sumitra’s parents, Sawat and Kammao Boonyuen, worked hard. With the same work ethic, Sumitra completed high school and set her sights on a university degree.

She was accepted to Lampang Rajabhat University, but her parents couldn’t afford the high price tag of tuition, deterring Sumitra’s plans. She explained her predicament to World Vision staff. They talked with Sawat and Kammao, who agreed to provide whatever they could afford. And, thanks to Uncle George’s continued assistance, World Vision helped her with tuition and other expenses.

“If it were not for World Vision’s support that day, I would not complete my bachelor’s degree and have the honor of working and helping sick people in my hometown,” says Sumitra.



SOMLUCK KHANSAEN/WORLD VISION

While Sumitra earned her degree, Sawat also received an education. He began attending World Vision-organized meetings and livelihood training. Soon, he received four piglets, which he raised, bred, and sold.

“I sell them, and I get [about \$91] each time to pay for our family expenses during the school term,” Sawat says. “I raise the next group of pigs with the income that I get.”

Others in Ban Pai benefit from World Vision’s holistic development model, which

rests on child sponsorship’s strong foundation. In a village where many parents pulled their children out of school to earn extra income, 70 percent of parents now acknowledge the importance of education.

“Their lives have improved,” says Sumitra. “World Vision helps children with school fees and supplies. Parents receive livelihood support and they have more opportunity.”

Other sponsorship-funded projects in Ban Pai include water filters in schools for clean drinking water; ponds for fish farming; and new techniques, training, and loans for farmers. As farmers implemented different methods, incomes increased and living conditions improved.

“World Vision is a friend to the poor. They understand the problems of families at the grassroots level and provide the best solution for the situation,” Sumitra says.

The best solution for Sumitra was pursuing higher education. With hard work and Uncle George’s support, she graduated in 2010 from Lampang Rajabhat University with a degree in computer science—the third person from her village to earn a bachelor’s degree.

After using what she learned to earn a living and impact her community, Sumitra has plans to do more.

In 2012, she returned to college to pursue an additional degree in public health. With a job waiting at another hospital—which provided a scholarship for her new degree—next spring Sumitra will begin a new career teaching others how to stay healthy.

She says she owes all of this to the generosity of Uncle George, who not only provided the funding for her first degree but also wrote her letters of encouragement.

“If I did not receive help, I would be in great trouble today,” Sumitra says. “If I have a chance to meet Uncle George, I will thank him for helping me to have a new life and good future.” ●

**TO SPONSOR A CHILD** fill out the form between pages 20 and 21 and enclose in attached envelope, or go to [wvmag.org/sponsor](http://wvmag.org/sponsor).

World Vision

### WHO WE ARE |

World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice.

### WHOM WE SERVE |

Motivated by our faith in Jesus Christ, we serve alongside the poor and oppressed—regardless of a person’s religion, race, ethnicity, or gender—as a demonstration of God’s unconditional love for all people.

### WHY WE SERVE |

Our passion is for the world’s poorest children whose suffering breaks the heart of God. To help secure a better future for each child, we focus on lasting, community-based transformation. We partner with individuals and communities, empowering them to develop sustainable access to clean water, food supplies, healthcare, education, and economic opportunities.

### HOW WE SERVE |

Since 1950, World Vision has helped millions of children and families by providing emergency assistance to those affected by natural disasters and civil conflict, developing long-term solutions within communities to alleviate poverty, and advocating for justice on behalf of the poor.

### YOU CAN HELP |

Partnering with World Vision provides tangible ways to honor God and put faith into action. By working together, we can make a lasting difference in the lives of children and families who are struggling to overcome poverty. To find out how you can help, visit [worldvision.org](http://worldvision.org). ●

# Reflections and Remembrances

BY BOB SEIPLE

**A**nniversaries: events deserving of reflection, reconnecting with memories. Some come with celebration, some produce perpetual grief. In the past few years, Margaret Ann and I celebrated our 70th birthdays and 47 years of marriage. It doesn't get any better.

Others remember what was lost on Sept. 11 or recall how they felt when told of the premature passing of a loved one. In all cases, anniversaries draw us back to the critical events in our lives, unleashing memories while providing ongoing opportunities for reflection. What has changed? What is worth renewing? And, when events have been exceedingly painful, have there been any defining moments of redemption?

At World Vision, given its mission to a hurting and vulnerable world, most events have painful beginnings. Two that seared my conscience when I was president of World Vision U.S. are now being remembered as anniversary events: Romania, and the exposure of a country of warehoused children following the execution of President Nicolae Ceausescu in 1989; and Rwanda, 20 years after “the most efficient killing since Hiroshima and Nagasaki,” according to Philip Gourevitch, who wrote an account of the genocide.

These two horrific events will forever be a part of my memory. I cannot dislodge the visual impact of being in the midst of what had to qualify as man's greatest inhumanity to man. World Vision colleagues, for example, may remember how difficult it was to talk about the thousands of dead bodies that clogged the rivers and streams of Rwanda. The emotions were simply overwhelming.

Two years ago, I was sharing the horrors of Rwanda with a group of Army chaplains. Eighteen years had passed since I stood on a bridge over the Kagera River in eastern Rwanda, transfixed by the palpable evil unfolding beneath me. As I recalled that moment, I began to cry. The emotions were still too strong to hide, impossible to contain.

Suffice it to say, we are marking two anniversaries that still



ABBY STALSROTEN/WORLD VISION

Bob and Margaret Ann Seiple at World Vision's U.S. headquarters for the organization's 60th anniversary in 2010.

*“Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant ... .”*

—GENESIS 9:16

haunt me. I will take them to my grave.

In Romania, a morally bankrupt government and a decrepit medical system went hand in hand. Children were the first to feel the effects. When medical attention could not heal a child's problems—from bedwetting to autism—they were sent to a “home for the unrecoverables.” The words continue to reek of hopelessness and condemnation.

Following my first visit to such an institution in 1990, I penned the following:

*The chatter of the children was constant, and the stench of urine filled every room, mattress, and rag of clothing. Flies were ubiquitous. Filth covered everything. But it was the visual images we couldn't escape.*

*Ten little boys huddled in a corner of the same bed and fought for the same blanket. No one could exist alone—not the autistic children, nor the Down syndrome children, nor the crippled children. Some rocked quietly, while others engaged in more violent self-stimulation.*

We were advised to “hold on to their smiles.”

*Smiles dominated broken faces, twisted bodies, and undeveloped minds. Irrepressible smiles provided the only façade to the gloom of our environment.*

It gets worse. Once a child became too sick to live, their names were taken off their cribs, and they were placed down into a windowless cellar. There, their lives would end, alone.

Burial was not always assured. In the summer months, when the ground was soft, a grave would be dug. Once the ground froze in winter, however, the lifeless child was simply laid on the surface, susceptible to marauding dogs and the final indignity for Romania's discarded youth.



**Bob Seiple visits with Rwanda refugees near Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo (then Zaire), after the 1994 genocide.**

In the genocide that was Rwanda in 1994, there were too many human corpses to bury. Weapons had been stockpiled, lists of Tutsis and moderate Hutus had been compiled, gangs of radical Hutu youths—the *Interhamwe*—had been trained to kill. They were effective. In less than 90 days, 800,000 Rwandans would die. For many, their final resting place would be a nearby river or stream. Again, my thoughts, written in the summer of 1994:

*Grotesquely bloated bodies floated down the river, silent testimonies to a world yielding to sin, a world increasingly incapable of dealing with humanity's deepest differences. We stood transfixed.*

Anniversaries of these horrific events need a redemptive moment. As the bodies collided beneath the bridge, a mist from the river began to ascend, ultimately challenging a brilliant African sun, producing a massive rainbow. The rainbow became my focus.

For me, as well as for Noah millennia before, the rainbow was a reminder that God was still in charge. Even at points of deepest suffering and seemingly total destruction, God is in control. He is a promise-keeping God, one promise being that his grace is more abounding than any and all of our sin.

Similarly, Romania also experienced a redemptive moment. In late 1991, an ecumenical gathering took place around an indigent cemetery—the same cemetery that loosely held the final remains

of that human way station known as a “home for the unrecoverables.” All of the great theological traditions of Eastern Europe had chosen this place to gather.

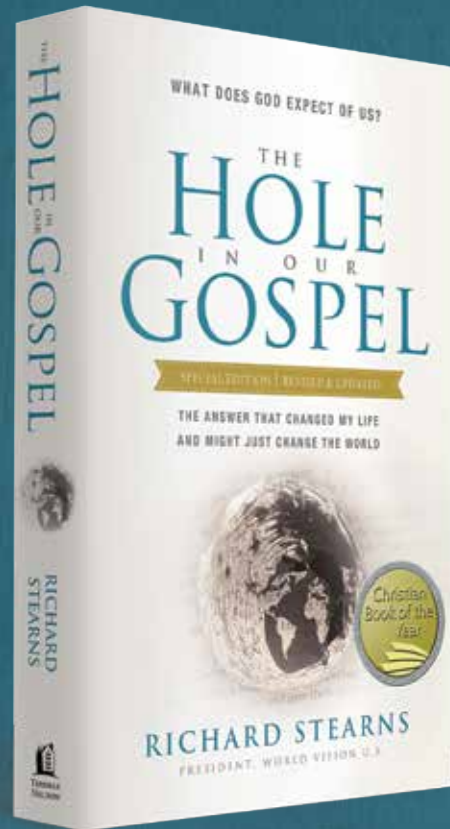
The service began. The pathos of the moment produced a common pain. Tears were shed and hearts were broken. Most importantly, ethnic differences gave way to a Christ-centered love. Scripture was read, followed by Holy Communion. Another premature death and a body broken were remembered, making the ground holy. Legitimate hope for a better future became a reality.

Hope is the anticipation that tomorrow's reality will be better than today's. This expectation, however, is made more credible if there is something tangible in the present that helps to authenticate that hope. The rainbow was tangible. Holy Communion is equally tangible. Both were designed to help us remember, and to celebrate anniversaries.

Scripture tells us that we “do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope.” We have anniversaries. They anchor our past experiences and relationships. And, like the empty tomb, they justify our hopes and dreams for the future. ●

**Bob Seiple was World Vision's U.S. president from 1987 to 1998. He later served as the U.S. State Department's first ambassador-at-large for international religious freedom. Following government service, he and his wife, Margaret Ann, founded the Institute for Global Engagement, a think-and-do-tank working with persecuted people of faith in the world's most difficult places.**

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