

New Connections, New Horizons in Croatia

By Zoltan Kunsabo

This past March Deacon Steve Thomashefski and I teamed up for a mission to Croatia that proved to be an extraordinary trip in which we were led by the Holy Spirit to the right and prepared persons to light God's fire in their hearts. We began the mission in the city of Zagreb, staying in a hotel owned by the friend of Josip Loncar, a community leader and our programme organizer for the week.



We had our first meeting in a reserved hall of the hotel with approximately 25 persons. Dcn. Steve and I sensed the Spirit urging us to give our testimonies in a very simple way, encouraging them to live a more devoted life with Jesus. After the two talks some people asked us for personal counselling and ministry. One of them, was our translator who works for the archdiocese of Zagreb in many areas. After I prayed with her, she offered to find more ways for us to touch the Croatian Church with our vision of evangelization and renewal. I also spoke about our experiences of the City Mission of Budapest in 2007. She was very opened and I expect a lot from this connection in the future.

The next morning we prayed for six more people from the previous evening's group. There were very different cases from very well founded believers, to a lady who was just on the road to leaving New Age practices. We had the opportunity to pray for a wonderful couple, Juraj Pasevic and his wife. Juraj was the second man in the former Croatian government--a very talented person with strong faith. But they suffered a lot in the midst of the political attacks. We were very happy to communicate God's healing and peace for their family. Throughout our time in Zagreb many people came to us for prayer!

After the ministry time we visited the family of the hotel owner in their home. The whole family came together for lunch to see us. We prayed personally with the parents and their very kind children: Nina (17), Petra (20) and Ivan (22). All of them very open to prayer and the Lord really sent His love into their hearts. I will never forget Nina as she looked up with tears in her eyes and asked, "Is this really true? How can be the Lord Jesus so close? My whole body is on fire!"

After this great afternoon we hurried to the community meeting of the Dobri Pastir (God Shepherd). It was a great joy to see again Vera and Tomislav, their leaders. The meeting started with about 150 community members and visitors. We taught on the way of holiness. I spoke about the possibilities for sin in the deep, dark and hidden parts of our hearts. We asked the Holy Spirit to shed light on those areas, and to help us recognize the bad desires say 'no' to them with the power of the Lord! The answer was great and we prayed over almost everybody until midnight!

The following day we continued the personal counseling and prayers. Mate, a local businessman came back to us with his wife and two teenager kids. We evangelized them one by one and then we prayed over the whole family. After lunch we left to visit the small city of Lupoglav. There we met Fr. Drazen Radigovic, the parish priest and the leader of the countrywide Dobri Pastir



Community. We started with a holy Mass, then we continued with a renewal evening. The church was filled with approximately 300 believers, with a very good number of young people. Dcn. Steve began with a more evangelistic message, and then I continued with a holiness theme. All the 300 persons followed

our talks very carefully from their bibles, busily taking notes, which is a very rare sight in amongst Catholics. After the talks we prayed over everyone– they were short but very powerful prayers.

The next morning we met with the different local leaders for strategical planning. Everybody was very happy with our time there and they invited us back many, many times. It was very hard to say goodbye. After that we drove up to the northern part to the country not very far from the Hungarian border. We visited a parish center in the small city of Krizevci and the two priests there were more than kind with us. At 5 pm we started our service in one of the city churches with an hour long adoration in front of the Blessed Sacrament, followed by the Mass with Dcn. Steve's great homily, based on his journey to God. After mass I had the opportunity to tell my story about my own story. Fr. Ivan, the parish priest, was very touched and he invited me to come back and give a longer retreat to his parish.

Our time in Croatia was an extremely rich and fruitful journey with a lot of very important connections for the future. Praised be God who gave new horizons for us in Croatia!