

Spreading the Gospel in Slovakia

by Tom Edwards
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GOD PROVIDES

We were scheduled to minister to a large group of teens in Presov on our first evening, but many of us could not attend, due to a thirteen-hour flight delay. Thankfully, God provided. Ron and Marilyn Bergeron, who organize large youth conferences in Canada, arrived in time and did an excellent job.

Over the weekend, we did two programs for the Maranatha community, which has grown tremendously through its unceasing evangelization efforts since Renewal Ministries first visited Slovakia in the mid-'90s. **Many of the promising young people we met then now have families and hold leadership roles in the community.** We also held an open meeting for about one hundred people, and a retreat for forty Catholic school teachers. Mass followed the program, and most of the teachers came for healing prayer. God moved deeply in the prayer time, and there were many tears.

THE TEAM

- Tom Edwards, St. Augustine, FL
- Mary Shaw, Gainesville, FL
- Jean Thompson, Phoenix, AZ
- Ron and Marilyn Bergeron from Cornwall, Ontario, Canada
- Bohdon Novak, Presov, Slovakia
Bohdon served in many ways, including driving and translating.



Our team then traveled to the Catholic University of Ruzomberok. About 200 students and others from the town attended our presentations, which included testimonies by Dr. Mary Shaw, Jean Thompson (shown to the left), and a teaching by Tom Edwards on *Finding Our Father*. During prayer ministry, our team joined hearts with many on a one-to-one basis.

Jean Thompson shared her testimony with 200 people at the Catholic University of Ruzomberok, where some very faithful leaders, all graduates of the university, direct a vibrant campus ministry.

Our next stop was in Trstena, where Fr. Branislav Korzuch invited us to conduct a two-day retreat on salvation and growth in the Spirit for forty young adults. Some participants were members of a small community formed by Fr. Branislav—they help operate a sizable retreat center that hosts groups from all over Slovakia. Fr. Branislav has a number of volunteers who serve at the center who are not believers, but come from other countries and commit to a year's service through a Peace Corps-type organization. They participated in our retreat, so it was important to include a basic Gospel message in all of our sharing. There was notable spiritual resistance at work, but there also were very apparent breakthroughs.

A HUNGER FOR HEALING

Dr. Shaw's ministry has been in great demand in Slovakia and the Czech Republic, especially by priests and seminarians. She traveled to the country a few days before our team, to respond to invitations to teach about inner healing and deliverance. She also spent a week in private prayer appointments in Presov, while the rest of the team traveled elsewhere. The following six paragraphs are condensed from her report:

The second week of our mission began with a three-day seminar on inner healing and deliverance prayer that I led with translator Václav áp. Sixty-six leaders attended, including three priests and several sisters, and more would have attended if space had allowed.

On Friday night, we taught about baptism in the Holy Spirit and prayed for all participants. The Spirit moved powerfully through the hours of praise and worship. We also had an evening of ministry for healing mother/father wounds. In the presence of the exposed Blessed Sacrament, many wept as they took their hurts to Jesus on the Cross and then went to prayer teams for ministry. There was a powerful anointing of the Spirit, and many were healed.

After the seminar, I spent four days in healing appointments with leaders in Trnava. Leaders received healing prayer, and learned how to pray for others in a similar way.

In one small village, I had a powerful evening with thirteen Charismatic priests, a psychologist (who integrates spirituality with psychology), and about five parishioners. This group meets weekly for prayer. The priests were hungry to learn more about inner healing and deliverance ministry, and particularly about curses (since they see many of those). They were very open and attentive, and asked many good questions. It was an absolute joy to serve them!

I also taught a two-hour class on inner healing and forgiveness for forty seminarians. We discussed why inner healing is necessary. They would like to learn more.

My translator made a CD of my talks and healing prayers from previous visits. Several priests and one exorcist regularly use these prayers in ministry. The exorcist found the prayers make the actual exorcism simpler. I plan to do another seminar for forty priests near Prague, in April of 2016. It is awesome to see how God is bearing fruit in this area!

THE THREE VERONICAS

Jean Thompson, who was on our team for the second time, shared testimonies and teachings based on her pro-life and prison ministries. She said:

“ This mission was an eye opener for me. I saw anointed praise and worship, solid teaching, and prayer as a reflection of the Trinity—three-in-one working together for the purpose of drawing a soul into the heart of God. In Fr. Branislav's community, there were three Veronicas. The youngest Veronica was a rebellious nonbeliever. God reached her in the music she enjoyed and opened her to begin to receive. The second Veronica was a strong believer; what took root in her spirit and mind were the deeper truths she was soaking up in Tom's teachings, and her recognition of the varied ways our Lord manifested these truths in the testimonies of the team. The third Veronica was a deeply sad and injured believer who quietly cried through the music and teachings as the Lord touched her open wounds. She experienced the personal, healing love her Heavenly Father has for her, in prayer after the teachings. Over and over, I saw our Lord move deeply in the hearts of all who came, through worship, teaching, and prayer. What a gift this mission was to all of us. ”

Our mission concluded with a stay in a convent of cloistered Carmelite nuns in Kosice. They performed a concert; Heaven must sound like their music. Then we met with them through the grate. They asked us to lift up some special concerns in prayer. We showed them Renewal Ministries' mission videos from Africa and China. They were amazed at what the Spirit is doing through Renewal Ministries. They committed to keeping our mission efforts in their numerous intercessory prayers—prayers I'm sure will bear much fruit.

GOING FORWARD

Two significant things seem to be unfolding for ministry in Slovakia. One, a large sports arena has been secured for a possible FIRE Rally. Renewal Ministries participated in these rallies for twelve years, but the arena has not been available since 2008. It will be available in June 2016, however, and we have been asked to provide support. Also, there is an increasing desire on the part of seminaries and groups of priest to learn more about the topics we have to offer.✠



Dr. Mary Shaw (on the right) taught on *Entering Into His Rest* in Presov. Her teachings on inner healing and deliverance prayer are in great demand in Slovakia and the Czech Republic, especially among priests and seminarians.

