

APRIL 2021

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PROGRAM FOR
HUMANITARIAN AID

PHA is “Being Family”

FAMILY TIME

by Andrey Belokonniy

The Happiness

“Happiness means living not for yourself. When people do not live for themselves, but try to live for God and society, then there is no need to seek happiness elsewhere.”

I read about this definition of happiness in the book by O. Torsunov, “How to Raise Good Children”, and just a few days ago before that I had a conversation about happiness with two young girls, orphanage students.

On Saturday morning I drove to the orphanage to pick up children to spend the weekend with them. So, I am already riding in my car with two happy girls. As usual, at the beginning of the journey, we talk about everything and nothing at the same time. We discuss events and incidents at school, news of the small town in which the boarding school is located, and together we experience the emotions of joy from the opportunity to leave for a different environment.

The girls are studying for the last year, so towards the end of the school year, the main topic of their conversations is the prom and outfits. We talked about the beautiful dresses that the graduates had last year, about how happy they seemed at the Last Bell (Graduation) celebration.

I asked the girls what they knew about the life of the graduates, all the graduates of the previous years, boys and girls who left school during all those years while they were studying at the orphanage.

They were silent for a while and said that they knew almost nothing. I was surprised and began to ask

them about any graduates they know. Maybe they know at least something, about guys or girls who managed to create families, have children and a place to live, a house or an apartment, maybe a dorm room, a permanent job, who in their opinion can be called happy? I understand now that quite a few observations of past graduates give a clear picture of the future of almost all orphanage graduates. But the children were not even surprised at my questions, they simply told me that they did not follow any of the graduates on social networks and in real life, they knew very little, and only

about those who had recently left the orphanage.



Approaching Zaporizhia, I asked the girls where or through what all people feel happiness.

We talked about how a person receives a signal from his limbs or other parts of the body to the brain, and the brain gives a signal to the muscles to respond, we agreed that our different emotions may already be the result of some kind of internal sensations or experiences.

Family Time continued...

“What part of our body helps us to feel and understand happiness?” I asked them.

All the girls’ explanations were bound to people’s heart and soul, they were saying it’s something inside us, close to our heart. It’s hard for them to talk about it because they can’t understand to the full extend what this is- the soul that feels happiness. I asked them to recall the feeling of happiness that they lived through recently. They wondered for a while and weren’t able (or didn’t want to) tell me about their recent happy life moments.

“Do you know the real reason for what is happening now? Why we are riding in the same car?” I was asking the girls and continued talking without waiting for an answer. “Maybe somebody’s telling you or you think yourself that my family and I are in relations with the kids from the orphanage because we work in the charity non-profit or because of our own kindness, maybe because of our Christian religion? Do you want me to tell you what is really happening now?”

They both started asking me to tell them the real reason for this. “For sure you have to know this. When you are close, when you’re in my family I feel happy!” I said trying to look into their eyes.

After such confession, the girls were silent for some time, I also kept silence. We drove to the shop to get goods and when we got back in the car, the kids took turns telling me that they felt happy meeting our family and our friends, and that now they, like me, feel happiness staying next to me. Maybe it was just a common childish logic that pushed them to tell me about this, or perhaps they decided to say so not to offend me. Whatever the real reason was, it really makes me happier because it gives me hope. The hope that these children will begin to think about their present and future happiness.

For the next couple days, at any suitable moment, we confessed to each other that we were happy being together. Our family is grateful to God for the opportunity to become happier in the PHA Family and to spread happiness among those children and teenagers who need it so much.

**-Andrey Belokonniy,
PHA Director of Ukrainian Operations**

POLTAVA THOUGHTS

by Fedor and Nastya Chernichkiny

Recently, approximately since the New Year, the hours of the Poltava Domik grew. Officially, we serve in the Domik facility Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. I don’t know the reason, only God knows, since the New Year, children began to call and even come to our home on their own. These kids are the ones who came to our classes from the orphanage before the quarantine. They came and asked permission, so that after school (classes end at 3pm) they could come to Domik. We talked together and I said fine, but not on Monday. These days we spend a lot of time just play ping-pong, chess, board games, a game console. And yesterday (Thursday) there were a few of us (Sasha, David, Misha, Bogdan,



Yarik) I asked them what is the purpose for them to come to Domik, thinking that they would say they like to play or enjoy food :). But the answer was different, “Nobody shouts, is not

rude and does not dominate us”.

My heart sank, for some reason it hurts inside, after all, a small child, these teens and even adults, we all want warmth and kindness, pure speech without cussing, warmth and care. How is this all is lacking in this world?

I thank God for PHA, for your work and for the opportunity for our family to be with you. Strength to all of you, God’s mercy and abundant blessings

on God’s field. The main thing is that when we receive God’s grace, to always share it with the people surrounding us.

**-Fedor and Nastya Chernichkiny,
PHA Ukrainian Ministry Partners: Poltava**

DOMIK KAMENSKOYE

by Ilya and Zina Parkhomuk

How many kids would you like to have in your family?

Each couple is asking this question.

The believers often say: “as many as God would give”, but to be fair, I am sure everybody has a limited amount in their thoughts. 1, 2 but not more than 3 kids, this is the most popular decision amongst the young couples in Ukraine.

Kupriy Family:

Nowadays Valentina, the mother, that has 9 kids, 7 of which live with her has a very uneasy life.

Everything has started good, beloved husband, stable income, 2 kids.

They didn't have too much concern, everything was moderate and in

a position to be solved. But, the difficulties were around the corner. Her first husband leaves the family leaving her pregnant. The second “great father” makes 5 more kids. He sees alcohol as a normal way of life. Before the 8th kid was born, he was run over by a car.

But Valentina didn't leave the kids and after the 8th child was born, she found a man. Hooray! Here is the one that will be taking care. But, everything wasn't like this and after a year living together, the birth of the 9th kid and a divorce.

The mother is all by herself. The village is 10 km away from any transportation and it takes more than 5 hours to get to the city. Except for the grandmother that lived in the neighboring village there are no relatives. No work, and the oldest son is pretty headstrong, and the governmental payments are just for 2 kids. They live in an old clay house with wood-burning heating. The kids are educated in the orphanage for the under-developed kids (only this orphanage was able to take them).

We got acquainted in December 2019 and by that time Dima (21 years old) lived separately. He and his girlfriend gave a birth to the baby girl and they called her in the honor of my daughter Sofiya (this has happened 5 months ago).

Olya (19 years old) got married and moved to another city. Without getting acquainted but hearing how often her family's using this name she delivered a son and named him Ilya. He is 6 months. Only two days ago I was able to meet this young man!



The others I will just name: Evgeniy, Viola, Tanya, Andrey, Snezhana, Lena. As I was writing about some from this family separately. All of them lived with their mother when we met. Mom didn't have any bad habits...

We as a family were praying and thinking for a long time about how we personally and PHA could help this family. What is their biggest need? This was not an easy process.

Thanks to God and PHA we were able to help this family move to Kamenskoye, resettle into a house and buy the most needed items, a boiler, a

washing machine, and a refrigerator.

The house conditions in the very beginning weren't very pleasant, but we made everything possible on our side and then here is the question!? What are they going to do with this? (Jesus's talents parable pops up in my head). They moved in September, and for the agreed time lived on the older kids' stipend and a little non-profit help. In December they received a yearly help. And where you think the mom decided to spend it?

Two weeks before the New 2021 Year they as a family made good repairs! Our help was only in buying the building materials, the rest they've done on their own! Their life in the city became more diverse, kids are coming to Domik totally amazed, and they're often visitors to the Church! Valentina is studying Bible lessons and we believe that not only material but spiritual state of this family will be developing!

-Ilya and Zina Parkhomuk,

PHA Ukrainian Ministry Partners: Kamenskoye



Bing Crosby could have sung- I'm dreaming of a... PHA Camp, just like the ones I knew before...

The Oak Ridge Boys could have sung- Dream on, dream about the Camp we're gonna live in one fine day.

But the kids in Ukraine truly are dreaming of PHA Camp this summer!

After missing the opportunity to love on kids at camp last summer, PHA is busy preparing for camp this June and the kids cannot wait for the experience!

You can partner with us to help make the dreams of the vulnerable Ukrainian youth we serve a reality!

They are dreaming about things we often take for granted, such as:

- Bible lessons
- Crafts and sports
- Singing and skits
- Wholesome food and fellowship
- Connections and Christ-centered support

Please join us as we pray over PHA's Camp plans for June of 2021! If you would like to make a donation in support of PHA's camp program, please write "Camp" in the donation notes.

NEW NORMAL

by Tanya Ilmeyer

New normal. For the last year we've heard this phrase so often. And we're getting used to it, to the phrase itself and to the different life and rules that have to be followed because of COVID. But it was inevitable due to the pandemic that has caught the whole world unexpectedly.

We're trying to stay safe and sound and to take care of the ones next to us. Unfortunately there's the pandemic that is over the humanity for years in a row now, the pandemic of sin and the loss of wisdom.

People aren't getting married and live together thinking it's normal. People are having abortions. They give birth to the kids and leave them in the children's homes and orphanages. People are taking drugs and obsessively drinking alcohol in front of their kids. People are beating their kids for no reason, being violent with them and with the others in front of them. They do

not feed their kids, do not clothe them. Don't take care of their education, their emotions, their life, or their existence.

Are these things worse than swearing, thinking bad of somebody or of ourselves? Are these worse than not loving our neighbors? No. But it hurts so much. It hurts to see the kids in these poor conditions. Material, spiritual and moral.

There are so many souls living like this. Of course, there is no way for us to help and cease this kind of pandemic but there is hope at least for some. God gives us opportunities and shows the ways how, thanks to your help and support and thanks to your open hearts.

Stay safe from any kind of pandemic and may God bless you!

-Tanya Ilmeyer,
PHA Ukrainian Ministry Partner: Kiev



FROM THE DOMIK KITCHEN

by Marina Belokonnaya

Stewed Potatoes with Porcini Mushrooms

It seems to me this is the simplest and most wholesome dish. I remember these dishes from childhood, when we were coming to my grandmother in the village, she filled them and put in the oven. Yes, I remember that relatives in the Western Ukraine had a wood-burning stove, because the coal in their area was very expensive.

I remember once we were visiting my grandmother in winter and she fed us with the delicious potatoes. I will share this recipe with you today.

Ingredients:

For two 500 ml clay pots:

Potatoes 4 pcs

Onion 1 pc

Pork 200 grams

Porcini mushrooms 50 grams

I bought dry mushrooms, so before starting to cook, I poured boiling water over it and let it brew for 30 minutes. We do not pour out the water, we use

this liquid instead of the broth, we will stew the potatoes in it.



Fry the meat cut into small pieces in a pan, salt to taste, pepper. Add the chopped onion in half rings, after the onion is slightly browned, transfer the meat and onions to the pots. Cut potatoes into small cubes, add to the pots. Take the mushrooms out of the liquid and cut finely. Mix everything, pour the liquid from mushrooms over, check for the salt and set to stew. Sprinkle the finished dish with herbs. Enjoy your meal!

**-Marina Belokonnaya,
PHA Ukrainian Ministry Partner: Zaporizhia**



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Donations can also be made through the PHA website: www.programforhumanitarianaid.org