



Andy and Rianna Stannard



Dear friends,

Another month has gone by and we continue to experience exciting adventures alongside the occasional frustration here in Moldova. However, we continue to appreciate your prayers and support as we go through the highs and lows of settling into a different culture and climate! A few weeks ago, we were challenged with the prospect of spending 2 weeks in a Moldovan village as a language and cultural experience to help us further understand what everyday life is truly like for most Moldovans. We live in the capital of Moldova, Chisinau, where we are surrounded by many comforts so in many ways it was a challenging and humbling experience. However, it was also an opportunity to see first-hand the situations and attitudes that God wants to transform for His glory.

Arriving in the 'village' the first thing that struck me was that we weren't really in a village! We had in fact arrived at a house on a muddy road surrounded by 8/9 other houses, of which several were uninhabited. So, we were in my opinion in the middle of nowhere! We were informed that this road of houses in fact belonged to a village about a 30-minute walk away, and as a result we spent all of our time there in the family's house.

The family that we were staying with was the family of a member of OM Moldova. This in a way made the experience even more real for us as it gave us a context for our team member and their life growing up in a village. The mother is a Christian; however, the father doesn't want anything to do with the Church because he has seen some of the mistakes that the church has made. This makes for a slightly tense family situation, which is compounded by the father's alcohol problem.

The mum works in and around the house most days and 2 or 3 times a week she goes to some of the local markets to sell her produce that has been grown on the family land or made at home. The dad is a tractor driver and ploughs the fields of the inhabitants for a fee. The dad has 3 large barrels of homemade wine in his cellar each containing around 85 litres! He spends most of his time at home in his cellar and needless to say, when he appears he is very drunk. Over the years the mum has suffered a lot at the hands of her drunk husband.

The day starts early in the village, 6a.m. is a normal time to go and milk the family cows which were on a nearby hillside. It was amazing to see the speed with which the members of the family were milking the cows! We were amazed! The Mum even let us try, and by the end of the 2 weeks Rianna was even reasonably good (the less said about my milking ability the better). The cows are milked twice a day; morning and evening and it is normal to get about 2 full buckets (in the picture) of milk per day. When the milk gets back to the house the mum starts straight away with beginning the process of making sour cream and cheese.





One of our first experiences with the family was going out into one of the local fields to collect old dried out corn cobs. After being at it for 4 consecutive days, for 3 hours at a time, my back and legs were aching a fair bit but it was well worth it as we were using these dried corn cobs to get our fire going back in the house!

Part of living in the Moldovan countryside means self-sufficiency. This might mean slightly different things for different Moldovan families. For the family that we were staying with it meant; 5 cows, 30 sheep, 4 pigs, a whole bunch of chickens, geese and turkeys, 2 cats and 2 guard dogs. The family also had (rented and owned) 7 hectares of land on which they grow crops throughout the year and then sell at market or conserve in jars with vinegar for the winter.

Many Moldovan families are not as fortunate as the family we stayed with and their situations are much more difficult. These are the kind of lives that are being transformed by OM's ministries and your prayers.



(While we were there the time came to plant the baby garlics ready for spring time when they would start to grow.)

Rejoice with us for:

- The unique experiences of village life
- Throughout all these new things we are adapting to - we have a God who is in close relationship with us and who never changes

Pray with us for:

- The father of our village host family
- The MDTe3 participants (foreign, Moldovan and Romanian) who are applying and preparing to join this 5month training program in January
- Patience - we are STILL waiting to receive our Residency permits

Email us:

Andy.stannard@om.org
 Rianna.stannard@om.org

Our Postal Address:

Mr and Mrs Stannard,
 OM Moldova,
 CP 2366,
 2012 Chisinau,
 Republic of Moldova

OM Moldova Website:

<https://www.om.org/md/en/about/om-moldova>

OM UK Giving Page:

<https://www.uk.om.org/index.php/support-individuals>