

Sharing Christ's Compassion for Ukraine

"And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come".

Matthew 24:6&14

May 4, 2014

Dear Prayer Partners:

What do I find encouraging about Jesus' statements in Matthew 24? He told us not to fear or worry when we hear about wars and rumors of wars. In the midst of His dark predictions of disasters, He reminds us that He is in control. "These things must come to pass", but the gospel will be preached everywhere! I serve the King of Kings, the Prince of Peace, the Suffering Savior, Who is Risen, and coming back to Earth in victory some day.

In the turmoil of today's Ukraine, many Christians are talking about end times. We do not know when Jesus will return, but He told us there would be war. **Is there war in Ukraine today?** The Ukraine government sent their army to Sloviansk a few days ago to dislodge pro-Russian protestors there who have occupied many government buildings. Two Ukrainian helicopters were shot down, and a number of soldiers have been killed. Many in the media call this war, while the Ukrainian government calls it anti-terrorist operations. In Odessa Friday, over 40 people were killed in a riot downtown. People here are in shock, that such violence could invade our peaceful city. It has been quiet in the part of the city where I live, and I have not been in any danger. But tension is escalating amidst the uncertainty. If it is not technically war, it is certainly violent conflict. This is bound to continue until the presidential elections May 25. You can find a lot of information at BBC: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-27274742>. ***Please pray for Ukraine!***

What is the Church's response here? Perseverance and prayer. Yesterday I wondered if our pro-life volunteers would come to my scheduled seminar, after the disaster Friday. They came! We prayed together for Ukraine, and these ladies determined to continue preparing to serve the Lord in the pregnancy care center. Though the conflict is not far from anyone's thoughts, we choose to focus on the Lord and His ministry. In May, Holly and Luba will continue the **training of our PCC counselors**, with the hope of **opening the "Women's Center" to the public in June**. This plan depends on whether we missionaries will still be in Ukraine. If the Russian army crouching on the border actually invades Ukraine, then we will have to evacuate again. Today I visited the church in Makarovo, about 60 miles from Odessa, where I do monthly clinics. They told me it would be safe there, if war comes, and they would take care of me! That is the love the Ukrainian Church demonstrates.

April 26, our "Forgiven and Set Free" post-abortion groups gathered for the closing service. What a blessing to hear the testimonies of these women whom God had freed from their guilt and depression and gave them healing from the grief over aborting their children. One group focused on miscarriage, and they found such joy in sharing their burdens with one another. These women too feel guilt and loss. *Galina shared that she realized while studying FSF that she blamed her unsaved husband for the loss of their unborn child. This was chilling their relationship, and she asked his forgiveness. Their relationship was restored, and a couple of months later, he accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior!* This is the "ministry of reconciliation" God has given us (2Cor. 5:18).

I am preparing the material I will be teaching in the **restricted access country** later this week. I fly out of Odessa May 8 and plan to return May 21. **Pray for the seminars and "Forgiven and Set Free" small group** that Carolyn Rice and I will be leading. Pray that God will give me **good health, wisdom and grace** for this venture into a new culture. Pray that I would be a blessing to my friends there and learn much from them.

Clinging to The Rock, Miriam