



# love the little children

kelly hornsby... loving the little children of Romania with the love of Jesus!

Dear Friends & Family,

As most of you know very well, the title of this letter speaks of the passion that God has put in my heart. The Lord has given me a desire to love little children for as long as I can remember. Those of you who have known me the longest will remember the day camp that I ran in my backyard starting back when I was only in fifth grade. Others have been a part of my life as I have invested in the lives of those in church youth groups over the years. My life has been greatly blessed through teaching for the past eleven years! Loving kids and investing in their hearts and minds has given me great joy and taught me a lot in the process. Over the past eight years I have had the privilege of working at Trinity Christian Academy where I have been given the gift of investing in the spiritual lives of children as well.

This passion to love little children stretches beyond the borders of my backyard, my local church, and my school. This passion has come to burn most apparently in the love God has given me for the children that also hold a special place in His heart, the orphaned. Those who are little, but act tough. Those who smile in the midst of hopeless situations. Those who need a touch, a prayer, a friend and the love of Christ actively demonstrated in their lives. I have had the opportunity over the past six years to be a part of short term mission trips to Romania. It is hard to describe the feeling of returning to Romania each summer, hoping to see the children that I have come to love and invest in over the years. At the same time I wish with all my heart that somehow they would not be there; that somehow their situation will have changed; that they will be with a loving family. The problem lies in the fact that this would be a rare thing indeed! The children that I have come to love and care about so deeply are the unlovely in a society that has a very broken down system in place to care for them.

Over the past several years, I feel that God has been gently wooing me to Romania. I remember vividly sitting on a swing with a little boy named Sergii last year on the fourth of July; telling God that I didn't understand how He loved these kids just as He loved me and yet, I had everything compared to them. I have been blessed with a wonderful family, parents who love and support me, all that I need and most of what I want in this world, an education, a great job, fantastic friends, and the opportunity to have grown up learning about Him and having a relationship with Him. I sat realizing that this little boy, along with all the others I knew like him had none of what I so easily take for granted. I told the Lord that day that I did not want to take what He had given me for granted and I wanted to go and do whatever He desired.

This past summer, I had the opportunity to return to Romania and continue to invest in the lives of children that I knew and loved. Again, the Lord had more in store for me. I had my eyes opened to the bigger picture of the ministry of Livada Orphan Care. I not only loved the children at camp; I was able to see many more orphanages, a group home, and spend more time with the babies. I was able to see on a much broader scale how God was using this ministry to not just touch the lives of kids, but invest in them, nurture them, be a safe place for them and share the great love of Christ with them.

During Christmas this year, I had the opportunity to take my first winter trip to Romania. As many of you know, the first graders at Trinity collected change this fall to bring change to the orphans in Romania. It was incredible to see all we were able to do with the money. We were able to buy clothes, diapers, Bibles & other books. During this trip, God continued to work in my heart most of all. He showed me over and over how I could be a part of what He is doing in Romania. I recognized that God was calling me to be part of what He was doing in the lives of Romanian orphans in a new way; a way that stretched beyond what I was able to do during a short term trip. I realize that God doesn't need me to fulfill His purposes in Romania, but I feel a true sense of excitement at the thought that I could have the privilege to be a part of it all.

Having shared a little of my past with you, let me share where I believe God is leading me in the near future. I have recently applied and been accepted to serve with Livada Orphan Care on a two year STINT. A STINT is a Short Term International Team. Yes, this means that I will be leaving my wonderful job at TCA, giving up my cute little apartment in Dallas and hardest of all, moving far away from my family and friends. But, I believe in my heart that God is giving me a unique opportunity to know Him better, depend on Him in new ways and in some way to be His hands and feet each day among these forgotten children. I can't wait to have the opportunity to love the little children of Romania with Him. Let me answer some of your questions..

### What is Livada Orphan Care?

"Livada" is the Romanian word for orchard. It serves as a symbol of the type of care that every orphan needs and what Livada Orphan Care desires to give... nurturing Romanian orphans to bear fruit that will last. Livada is committed to helping these orphans find their place in this world, through a blend of Christian social work, humanitarian aid, and ministry. It begins with nurturing them in the cradle and ends with them becoming independent, contributing members of society. This happens through many different avenues. Children are prayed for by name, held, read to, sung to, and loved as babies. They have Romanian and Western staff and volunteers building nurturing mentor relationships with them, investing in their lives, and holding weekly ministry programs with them. They are given the opportunity to attend a Christian camp each summer, where the gospel is shared and they are given love 24/7. As these children grow into teens they are being trained in life lessons. They are being taught job skills, people skills, independent living skills and how to grow in a relationship with the Lord. If you would like more information about Livada please ask me or visit the website at: [www.livada.org](http://www.livada.org)

### What will I be doing?

I would be happy to serve in any way that would benefit the children, the ministry of Livada and bring glory to God. My first love is the little ones. My hope is to be able to invest in the preschool and young school-aged children. I also plan to spend time each week holding babies! The orphan care system of Romania is changing rapidly as Romania works toward becoming part of the European Union. The goal is to move the children out of the institutional setting. Livada is working even now to be a part of providing Christian group homes for as many of these children as possible. Timing is something that remains to be determined. It is most likely that I will have the opportunity to work directly with children of this age in a group home setting. It would be wonderful to have several small groups of children to call "my own" and be able to invest in them on a consistent basis and watch them grow, develop, and come to know Jesus. It is also a possibility that I will have some part in putting together a program for the preschoolers who are still in the orphanage setting. I will keep you updated as my specific ministry develops.

### What do I need?

As I move toward God's calling for this next season in my life, I need your prayers! I know that the Lord will go before me and will walk each day with me. I believe in the power of prayer and will be committed to keeping you updated on requests and praises throughout this adventure. I also need you to come alongside me financially. I am responsible for raising my financial support. I will need to raise \$23,000 in start up costs. This will cover airfare, apartment set up costs (the old communist block apt. comes totally empty), a car & car insurance (with the growth of group homes, kids are much more spread out in the villages and transportation is key for effective ministry). This will also provide the means for me to travel home once a year to report on ministry to folks like you and see my family. I will also be responsible for raising \$2100 each month for my living and ministry expenses. It is my desire to head to Romania in September. For this to be possible I will need to have raised the start up costs and have pledges to cover my monthly support. Please pray about how God may want you to be involved in this ministry opportunity. All checks should be made out to Livada Orphan Care with my account # only in the memo line. My account number is #020. Please visit my website at [www.lovethechildren.com](http://www.lovethechildren.com) for more information and pictures of these beautiful children. I cherish your prayers and am thankful for the important role you already play in my life!