

together | everywhere

Together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ
1 Corinthians 1:2

A Long Way Home

by Larry and Katie Winckles, Hungary

We first met her 14 years ago when she came to inquire about our weekly English class. E., a single woman in her early 50s, fit right in. She had some previous English language instruction and was thrilled to have an opportunity to use it. Naturally outgoing and friendly, she soon accepted our invitations to attend outings, get-togethers and, eventually, a small home-group.

When invited to the small group, E. quickly pointed out she was not “religious.” As a matter of fact, she didn’t believe in God. Born outside of marriage in the early 50s, her mother had to bribe the priest to christen her. After her parents’ marriage, her mother continued to be haunted by that shame, and when E. was a small girl, her mother committed suicide. “How can I believe in a God that would allow that to happen?” E. asked.

How do any of us discover there is a God and that He is good, despite or even in the face of, the ugly facts that make it seem otherwise? Usually we experience His love and goodness through another person. As our friendship with E. grew, we prayed for God’s irresistible goodness to become real for her.

She married and moved to a small village outside of Budapest. Her journey after that was not an easy one. After a couple of years her husband died, leaving her alone in a difficult financial situation. During that dark time, she asked Katie for prayer. Gradually she felt God’s comforting presence and her heart turned toward Him. She began attending faith classes at one of the two village churches.

Two years ago, Katie and another friend were invited to witness E.’s confirmation in faith. That day was also her birthday, so we celebrated her two births! As a memento of the day, she gave Katie a copy of a sketch of Jesus’ face she had bought many years previously from a homeless man. On the picture she had written the story of how it touched her “before she even knew that she would be converted.” The verb, “megtéрни,” (to be converted) also means “to come back,” “to return” in Hungarian. E. had finally “come home,” and to this day she thanks God for His goodness to her.



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