



GCCM UPDATE
January 13, 2017

Wow, the last two months since our last newsletter have flown by very fast. During that time my wife, Valbona, had her birthday, my mother had her 85th birthday and it was our official anniversary. Interesting how we put the ages of our parents but don't dare do it for our wives.

Happy Valentine's Day
Exciting news coming in next newsletter!

It is already time to wish you a Happy Valentine's Day. I trust this day you will not just go through the motions but show your true love your feelings. For those of you who haven't got a card yet for your spouse, boyfriend or girlfriend I saw this once. "I nose you are my Valentine:



Youth Valentine's Party

The youth just had their Valentine's party and invited a young couple from a village close by to come and speak. There was a great turnout and they had a good time listening to the speakers, playing games and having an enjoyable time with everyone.



Remember that what you donate to GCCM and our ministry around the world, is tax deductible and goes to see lives transformed by the power of God. What you give today affects eternity.

This Christmas we were so thankful that we were able to food bags to hundreds of children, widows and families. We want to thank all those who gave to the Christmas food bag ministry. Here are some pictures of those who received your gift.



Albanian Classes to Read and Write

When Laura was in Albania for her year of ministry she along with our assistant cook, Eni, started classes for children who weren't going to school and couldn't read or write Albanian. Laura has left to go back home but Eni is carrying it on and the results are fantastic. They are excited and learning. One of the young girls Klea, said.

"I am thankful to God because now i can write and read. I asked the teacher if i did good on my homework and she said well done. I was very happy. Went i went home i said that my teacher said so, and my mom

gave me a kiss. I went to tell to my grandmother too, she was sick. But when she heard the good news she was very happy. All my family is very happy."



PRAYER REQUESTS

- Pray for the family of a Pastor friend from Kosovo. Just after Christmas he was changing the gas container for the stove and it blew up. He died a number of days later, his home and church were destroyed. He left his wife and 3 young children. If you would like to give to help them out please contact us.
- Pray for all our Leadership team, our workers and our missionaries that God would protect them, give them wisdom and supply all of their needs.
- Pray for the giving for Albania. January is usually a low month but this January and so far in February it has been the lowest ever. We are in great need.
- Pray that God would supply Valbona with a full time job and pray for me as I show God's mercy to the world around us as I assist people to get out of debt and develop a financial plan for their future.

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The Legend of St. Valentine

The history of Valentine's Day—and the story of its patron saint—is shrouded in mystery. We do know that February has long been celebrated as a month of romance, and that St. Valentine's Day, as we know it today, contains vestiges of both Christian and ancient Roman tradition. But who was Saint Valentine, and how did he become associated with this ancient rite?

The Catholic Church recognizes at least three different saints named Valentine or Valentinus, all of whom were martyred. One legend contends that Valentine was a priest who served during the third century in Rome. When Emperor Claudius II decided that single men made better soldiers than those with wives and families, he outlawed marriage for young men. Valentine, realizing the injustice of the decree, defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret. When Valentine's actions were discovered, Claudius ordered that he be put to death.

Other stories suggest that Valentine may have been killed for attempting to help Christians escape harsh Roman prisons, where they were often beaten and tortured. According to one legend, an imprisoned Valentine actually sent the first "valentine" greeting himself after he fell in love with a young girl—possibly his jailor's daughter—who visited him during his confinement. Before his death, it is alleged that he wrote her a letter signed "From your Valentine," an expression that is still in use today. Although the truth behind the Valentine legends is murky, the stories all emphasize his appeal as a sympathetic, heroic and—most importantly—romantic figure. By the middle ages, perhaps thanks to this reputation, Valentine would become one of the most popular saints in England and France.

Come, give, pray

that they might have life!

David and Valbona Pennoyer

In Canada

#406, 917 – 85 Street SW
Calgary, AB. T3H 5Z9
Suite #224 (put after address)
Phone: [\(403\) 472-2720](tel:4034722720)
Fax: (403) 249-4938 Att: #224
E-mail: dipennoyer@gmail.com

In the United States

P.O. Box 305
Danville WA 99121-0305

In Albania

Kutia Postare 227
DURRËS, ALBANIA

Phone/Fax: [011-355-52-233-772](tel:011-355-52-233-772)

Cellular: 011-355-6920-556-42

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