

# The Gypsy Gal

## On mission with God

### EXPERIENCES...

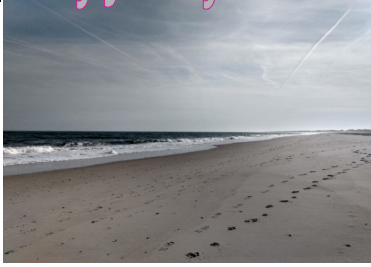
For all of February I was home caring for my mom as she recovered from major back surgery on January 31<sup>st</sup>. I was able to stay with her in the hospital and continued round the clock care once home. The hardest part was the nerve pain that came down her legs and would last for hours. Now in week 5 from surgery, the pain is finally subsiding and she is becoming more active, yet is still restricted from bending, twisting and lifting. Many have been praying over her and we are very grateful and blessed! Meanwhile I continued to promote and prepare for the WIM (Women In Ministry) Retreat as much as possible via internet and texting. We have 15 so far that will be participating! Please pray over each one, that God's presence will fill the place, renew hearts and bring each woman there that needs to come away. Ana has continued my ministries faithfully while I am stateside, which is a huge blessing! Ladies Bible study on Tuesday nights has had spotty attendance but the Wednesday group is going strong. Classes at Omega are good, yet challenging. If only there was a special potion to make children pay attention and stop talking! I have connected with several supporters over the last week and am so thankful for these special moments! Geta had her 23<sup>rd</sup> birthday and the young adult program she is in has her scheduled to move out on her own shortly. Please continue to lift her up, for the Holy Spirit to truly work in her, giving strength in her spirit to overcome the flesh!

### At home with mom



### My Jersey Home

### Walk with a friend



*"And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." Mark 1:35*

## Come Away . . .

As the time for the WIM Retreat approaches, several have asked me about this outreach. Since I returned to Romania in 2019, the Lord has burdened me with reaching women through mentoring, discipleship, Bible study and friendship. Half of my time is spent working with women that are fellow missionaries, which may seem odd on the surface. You may think that I should be spending more time and resources on girls and women that are unbelievers or baby Christians. Yet a recent survey of 40,000 missionaries and 600 missions agencies found that 43 % of missionaries do not fulfill their long-term commitment to their field. They come home. They quit. At times, they even walk away from ministry and church all together. One of the leading factors in this exodus from the field is stress. Yes, we all experience stress on a regular basis, but here's a perspective you may not be aware of.

"In Holmes and Rahe's original study on stress, they found that when people scored 200 points or more during a given year, the cumulative stress had an impact well beyond that year. They found that 50% of those scoring 200 points were hospitalized within the subsequent two years for heart attacks, diabetes, cancer, or other severe illness. The average cross cultural worker scores around 600 points on average. With around 800-900 points the first year in ministry." (Heartstream ministries)

Ouch, those are some crazy numbers for missionaries – triple or more the average person! Sadly, I have witnessed this stress in co-workers and one evening in January, 2021, a friend and I were sitting on my couch talking about it after Bible study. How could we be a part of the solution? It was from that evening's conversation that the WIM Retreat was born. Right there and then we began looking for a place and finding a time for the women we worked with to go away from the stress, be with the Lord and fellowship with like minded sisters in Christ. The last weekend in February, 9 of us from Targu Mures, drove an hour away to a retreat center in a small village and hit the pause button on ministry. For two days we rested, spent quiet time with the Lord and went for long walks in the countryside. It was the break that we all needed in order to continue serving well.

In 2022 we were a group of 11 women at the retreat. Then after attending a global workers retreat and sharing about WIM with the ladies there, we numbered 5 staff and 13 attendees in 2023! So far we have 4 staff, and 11 attendees for 2024 with enough donations for 6 ladies to attend with a scholarship! Praise God for growing this outreach to minister to women that are weary, to come away for rest and renewal, so they can advance in ministry. I am excited to see God move and meet with each one in special ways, drawing His daughters close to His heart.

One important part of this retreat is the sweet hour of prayer each morning after breakfast. Every woman finds a quiet place alone with her Bible and notebook to sit at Jesus' feet. This time is the whole point of why the WIM Retreat exists. So friend, may I ask, when was the last time you spent an uninterrupted hour with the Lord? Just you and Him – away from the stress, responsibilities and burdens. Often when the demands on Jesus became great, he would go to a solitary place to be refreshed by His Father and to renew His Heavenly perspective. All of us need this too, whether you are in full time ministry, a teacher, office worker, parent, manager, builder, emergency worker, etc. Whatever your title, it comes with a load of stress that you can not handle, but your Heavenly Father is able. In the week to come, schedule your own sweet hour of prayer and do it now, right at this moment. Far too often we have good intentions that never come to pass because we lack action. Dear friend, I pray that will not be the case for you today.