

Stamatis Status – March 09, 2008



IBIA has ended the second week of our second term. The students have now completed one term and experienced their much desired first break. As always everyone has to make adjustments. There are new people, new environment, new daily schedule, new living situation, new responsibilities, etc. These guys are developing a good camaraderie.

Deborah and I usually arrive at the school in the mornings about 30 minutes before our period of devotion. As we walk past the kitchen we enjoy seeing the guys all seated at the kitchen table praying before they dig into their breakfast routine of bread, butter and jelly.



For the first two weeks of the first term a very small part of Durres was without power from 6 to 8 hours every day. The IBIA facility was part of that unfortunate minority. Once the power problem was remedied (we never found out why we did not have it) we began experiencing a shortage of water. For three straight days, we had no water. Wow, what a problem for a residential facility. On the fourth day we began to receive about 15 minutes of water in the evenings. This water shortage lasted for about two weeks.

If you are not familiar with Albania, there is not a 24 hour free flowing source of water for the municipality. Depending on the city or town water is sent out 2 or 3 times a day. Each house has a tank or “deposit” in which the water is collected for use until the next time the water is sent out. The house or apartment must have a pump that moves the water up and into the tank.

In Durres there is water only sent once a day. So 15 minutes a night was not even beginning to fill the buildings tanks. We could not determine what the problem was, so IBIA purchased our own 1000 liter tank and a pump in which we would take the water coming into our apartment and store the excess for if and when the water stopped coming.



What a firestorm this unleashed with all the neighbors. They demanded that this was not fair. We could not store extra water if they could not. They demanded that either we get rid of our extra tank or else buy everyone in the building their own private tank. Needless to say, we were not going to do that.



Eventually with the cool heads and Christ like character of Alfred Dimce and Kristofor Findiku, we were able to calm the neighbors down and assured them that we were not stealing their water.

Fortunately now, we have both power and water. It is amazing how we can so easily take for granted all the small blessings.

We have started a new tradition at IBIA. On the last week of each term we focus on one nation during our time of devotion to God. We familiarize ourselves with the demographic data, the number of congregations of the churches of Christ and the number of Christians. Our international focus culminates at lunch on the Friday of the last week. Our lunch is composed of food from that nation. Our first International Day nation was Italy. Our cook, Rita, made the best lasagna. We are looking forward to this next International Day meal in two weeks. Ruth Byrne will be helping us enjoy the food of the Philippines.



We have such a great support system of people both in the United States and here in Albania. We are blessed with your continued financial partnership



with us. It is a blessing to have two of our graduates giving so much of their time and advice to these new students.



There are many here that continue to encourage us in what we are trying to accomplish.

It is vital that we remember why we are here. Our purpose is to train servants of God that will be able to glorify Him through their life and their service of the Word. Our prayer is that all of this will be able to be used by God to expand His Kingdom. By His grace we are in Christ, but there is a world full of lost people. We want to equip prepared workers to bring in the harvest of souls that God is working in the world to bring about.

To His glory,
Steve Stamatis