

Emilia's New Friend

By Francesco Dragas, Moldova¹



Emilia wonders if anyone will notice her today. Winter will soon set in. That will make it much more difficult to get by on her tiny monthly pension, worth less than five dollars.

In better times, Emilia had been a nurse. Her country had been communist, but life had been good for her. She had had enough money. Prices had been low. People had respected her. They had liked to talk to her. They had thanked her for being a nurse, for helping them.

Now she is old and has no one but a bedridden older sister. She must beg for two, standing all day in front of a high-class shop, waiting for someone to have mercy and give her a few coins. Last winter she thought she would die of hunger.

Will this winter be any better?

As Emilia thinks about these things, she doesn't notice a little boy coming toward her, money in hand, or the young woman who follows a few steps behind. Three-year-old Emanuel wants to give Emilia the money because the young woman, Rebeca, has told him that the old woman is very poor and needs their help.

"And there is something else you can give her," Rebeca has also told Emanuel, "something even more important than money. You can give her Jesus." Emanuel loves Jesus and

he knows that Jesus loves him.

Emanuel has never seen the woman before, but she looks nice. He is excited about being able to help.

"Repeat after me," he tells her, after handing her the money. "Jesus, please come into my heart. ..."

Emilia is so surprised that a little boy would give her money and then want to pray with her that before she has time to think, she hears herself repeating Emanuel's little prayer. But then the strangest thing happens. Immediately she feels more optimistic. She feels loved.

Emanuel is thrilled as only children can be. He had watched his parents pray with other people to find Jesus, but this was the very first time he had been the one to lead the way.

Emilia wants to get to know Emanuel and Rebeca better, so she invites them to her humble apartment and insists on cooking something for them. They become good friends.

Emanuel goes back to visit Emilia from time to time, sometimes with Rebeca, and sometimes with his mother, Priscila. Each time they take Emilia and her sister food and a little money. Each time their new friends talk with them about Jesus and pray with them. Jesus is now Emilia's best Friend too.

This winter will be *much* better.

What one person can

Do

If you stop to think about it, there's no limit to how useful your life can be. The Family has specific goals of preaching the Gospel and helping others, so our lives involve constant giving. But anyone can lead a useful life, no matter who or where they are, if they really want to.

You can show love to the unlovely, give sympathy, be friendly and congenial, and lend a listening ear or a helping hand to someone in need. You can ask the Lord to help you to always be cheerful, to see the positive side of every situation, and to help others do the same.

You can give out tracts. You can talk about the Lord and His Word. You can reach out to others in need, and show love and understanding wherever you go. Anyone who wants to can really make a difference in the world, and can motivate others to do the same.

—Maria David²

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