



Latest
News

▶ Anca is visiting a future beneficiary in Timișoara. The beneficiary is learning to use the white cane and her principal routes. Once she has mastered these she may progress to working with a guide dog in the future.

▶ Mega Image has officially changed its policy towards guide dogs, including guide dog puppies in training. Admission to stores requires a guide dog ID certificate. This makes Mega Image one of the first supermarket chains in Romania to admit guide dogs.

▶ Ana and GD Bramble became a working partnership this summer. Ana is 26 years old and became blind 6 years ago following surgery for a brain tumour.

▶ Four visually impaired people were assessed over the summer for pairing with future guide dogs.

▶ The Light into Europe team, along with GD Bobby went to Parliament, together with children from the deaf school at Dămăroaia, in București Noi. They met with the Minister of Disability, Mrs. Săftoiu. Displays included pictures the children had drawn.



▶ Fraser Kleyn, trainee ophthalmologist from UK visited Light into Europe to conduct assessments with groups from Bucharest, Brașov and Arad

▶ David Diaconu visited for one week's work experience

▶ Recent media interviews with Agerpres news agency, Trinitas TV and Radio România Actualități

Adrian & Veronica & GD Max meet with Pope Francis

by Ruth Rusby

This year, Adrian and Veronica, together with GD Max, decided to venture beyond the shores of Romania to explore Rome for a few days. They booked a flight online with Wizz Air, (Timișoara – Rome), found a hotel and off they went.

“The crew on Wizz Air were very kind,” says Adrian. “They allowed us to choose our own seat, offered GD Max some water, and joked that Max should have his own seat and not have to lie on the floor!”

The crew knew that the threesome were coming, as Adrian had found the accessibility contact information on Wizz Air’s website, called them up and asked for assistance.

“The airplane captain joked that Max was the most wonderful



passenger he’d ever had onboard!” said Adrian.

Arriving in Rome, they were met by their aunt who had been living in Italy for the last 25 years as a Catholic nun. Adrian and Veronica were surprised at how well they were received in Rome with GD Max.

“It seems as though everyone in Rome is used to guide dogs,” says Adrian. “Public transport was no problem – people offered us seats and generally helped us. The treatment we received by the Romans was very good.”

Adrian and Veronica, and GD Max visited St Peter’s Square in the Vatican City on the Wednesday morning, 13th September, when the Pope was due to be present.

“There were some 5000 people in the square that day,” says Adrian, “and the security guards kindly guided us through all the crowds so we could be near the front. Pope Francis then walked down to the crowds and went to all the people with disabilities near the front, including us. We spoke to him for some three minutes.”

Although Adrian’s aunt had been a Catholic nun in Italy for 25 years, she had never met the Pope.

“She waited for us to get there!” jokes Adrian. “As a Catholic myself, meeting with the Pope had always been my dream. It was amazing talking with him. He wasn’t at all afraid of GD Max in his harness.”

Adrian tried talking to the Pope in English while Veronica attempted Spanish. They ended up speaking a mixture of the two languages.

Pope Francis offered Rosaries to both Adrian and Veronica and he asked GD Max what his name was.

“Pope Francis said unfortunately he didn’t have a Rosary for Max,” says Adrian, “but he was very kind to Max and impressed by his behaviour.”

Whilst in Rome, Adrian and Veronica visited many other famous sights, including the Trevi Fountains, the Colosseum, the Roman Forum and even the seaside.

“Security staff helped us everywhere we went in Rome,” said Adrian, “finding elevators for the disabled and access to places.

In the evenings we always ate traditional Italian food, including pizza and pasta, and of course we drank red wine!”

The hotel they stayed in was also very accommodating, with lifts for accessibility.

“Five days was too short!” says Adrian, “We had to come back here and work but we would love to go back someday.”

One of the things that impressed Adrian and Veronica the most was the respect for the disabled that was shown everywhere they went. Because of this they were able to visit most of the tourist sites.

“Even in the very crowded Metro, Max managed to make some space for us!” says Adrian. “We were walking some 12 km every day on this trip and Max was so happy! But when we got back to the hotel in the evenings he would eat his supper and then sleep extremely well!”

Max even attended Mass inside one of the churches.

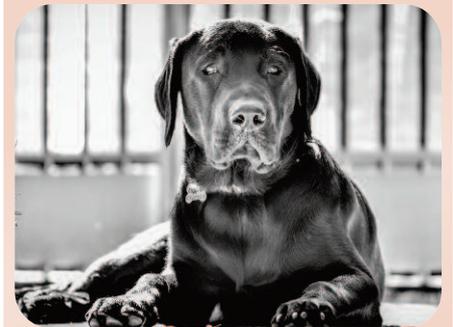
“In Rome it seemed normal to bring a guide dog into the church,” explains Adrian. “In Arad we have to start everything from scratch each time.”

Veronica explained that Max was probably the only dog to ever enter into the Vatican Grottoes beneath St. Peter’s Basilica where the tombs of several popes and saints are to be found.



GUIDE DOG AND PUPPY UPDATES

► Bobby, Betty, Basil and Bryony are in full advanced training and waiting to be matched with new beneficiaries. Basil’s acceptance of the harness and willingness to work has improved greatly in the last few weeks.



- Tommi is due to begin training shortly.
- Clifford has started training in harness and is the first of Misty’s “C” litter to do so!
- Bella is now working as a therapy dog with an autistic child in Lipănești, Prahova.
- Bailey continues to work as a therapy dog with Ștefana.

Upcoming Events

- World Sight Day 5th October, IBSB



- Bonfire Night
3rd November, Hotel Caro

- Caledonian Ball, 18th November,
InterContinental Hotel

Published by Light into Europe

Editor: Ruth Rusby

Layout design: Alexandru Ionescu

Photos: Severian Pavel & from Facebook