

To God be all the Glory!

Calvary Chapel Magazine:
A Vision Becomes Reality



Tom Price, editor of Calvary Chapel Magazine, marries Olga Csizmadia at CC Esztergom. They met as Tom traveled through Hungary, documenting the Calvary Chapel movement. God's work in Tom's life was powerfully evident.

PhotobyKáposztásMartin

"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts."

Isaiah 55:9

Standing at the altar of Calvary Chapel Esztergom, Hungary, he was for the first time in a foreign country without his camera gear. Tom Price, the editor of Calvary Chapel Magazine, had journeyed around the world for three years, documenting the Calvary Chapel movement. This time, however, he was not covering an event for the publication. Instead, a beautiful Hungarian woman from CC Esztergom was walking down the aisle to become his bride. They had met on the mission field. Her life's passion was to serve Jesus Christ.

The miracle of restoration that God had done in Tom's life was powerfully evident that day. The magazine that had become his mission in life had seemed impossible in the beginning. Various Calvary Chapels had attempted several publications. The high cost of printing had always drained ventures that had come out of even large congregations. Tom's home church, Calvary Chapel of Fredericksburg, Virginia, had 200 faithful at that time. It seemed improbable that a small church would be able to back a venture like this.

A 20-year veteran news photographer and writer, Tom had journeyed to Russia to chronicle the Christian movement in the former Soviet Union. While documenting the work of George Bryson and Calvary Chapel Church Planting Mission, Tom learned of the extensive mission work in progress in Eastern Europe.

"Isn't there some type of publication that documents the work that missionaries are doing?" Tom asked George Bryson.



"No. Maybe you're the man God is calling to do it," replied George. Tom pondered the thought. He had a wonderful job at his local newspaper, and it seemed rash to give it up for a wild idea that could easily end in failure. Besides, he had come through a devastating divorce and was finally recovering from that experience, both financially and emotionally.

When Tom returned home a month later, reorganization with new management turned his workplace into a hostile environment for a born again Christian. "I can see now that God had to give me a hard nudge to get me out of the comfortable position I was in," said Tom.

A visit to the Bible College in Austria and the material he had gathered in Russia made up the content of the first issue. Tom's pastor, Chris Brown, encouraged him to put an inkjet version together for Chris to present to Pastor Chuck Smith and others at the 1999 Senior Pastors' Conference.

Chris returned, enthusiastic about the response he received at the conference. CC Fredericksburg offered to pay some of Tom's living expenses during the start-up phase.



The timing was incredible. "On that same afternoon that the church offered to help me, a close friend at *USA TODAY* asked me to consider two different full-time openings there," said Tom. "He thought I was absolutely crazy to disregard the job offers for a venture that seemed to have little hope for success. I simply explained to him that I felt God was calling me to do this, and I had a great sense of peace about my decision."

Pastor Joe Focht from CC Philadelphia sent upgraded inkjet versions of the magazine to



Olga Csizmadia and Tom Price are pictured through a cross in the balcony of CC Esztergom

different pastors, asking them to pray about seed money for the first issue. Support was raised to pay for the first printing.

Since then, Tom has had the opportunity to observe missionaries reaching out to street children sniffing paint in Bucharest, as well as in the poorest slums of Brazil, where raw sewage flowed under their cardboard homes. He has been summoned to a Cuban prison with three other Calvary pastors, slept underneath an active volcano in a Philippine jungle, been swatted by kangaroos in Australia, nearly apprehended by guerillas in Colombia, broke an ankle in Russia, and photographed a Muslim wedding in Kosovo and Hassidic Jews at the Wailing Wall in Israel. He has watched the Gospel spread in Guatemala, Puerto Rico, Chile, Yugoslavia, Slovakia, Mexico, England, Scotland, Ireland, Italy, and the Ukraine. He has observed the Calvary Chapel movement throughout Hungary and witnessed the birth of the Bible College there. He has had the privilege of sharing his faith in Christ at Ground Zero after the World Trade Center tragedy.

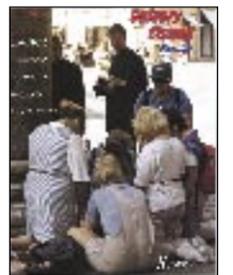


Photo by Ed Compean

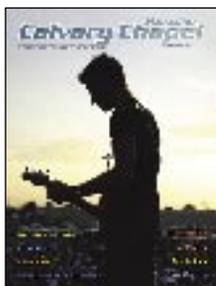


Today, Calvary Chapel Magazine has a readership that extends around the globe. Pastors Chuck Smith and Brian Brodersen screen story ideas. When the magazine

nears completion, it is sent out again for review, first to Romy Godding, of CC Costa Mesa, and then to Ana Steele, of CC Fort Lauderdale, for the final story edits and corrections.

After three years of operation, the magazine has recently been able to bring on one of its steadiest volunteers as an assistant editor and office manager, Beverly Becker. She is the first full-time worker besides Tom. Vinny Basuino has accompanied Tom on several trips and as a volunteer has overseen the distribution of the magazine. Dave Fugate serves in the financial area while Jim Hall coordinates the praise and prayers from missionaries around the world. Dave Beeler is a graphics designer, coming on during completion for the finishing touches.

On the West Coast, Steve Oppenheim, with the help of Kim and Mike Kollen from CC Costa Mesa, brought the magazine on-line. Liz Oppenheim contributed pictures on several stories. "We have also been blessed with the excellent photo-



graphic abilities of Ed Compean and Geraldine Wilkins, both accomplished newspaper photographers in the Calvary Chapel movement," said Tom.

Many from CC Fredericksburg have helped with unloading the magazines when they arrive at the church, as well as assisting in preparing them for shipping. Others have volunteered their computer skills. Their efforts have helped the publication to flourish.

Even with the volunteer resources the Lord has provided, there are still expenses involved with publishing the magazine. Numerous Calvary Chapels order in bulk, but the vision is to have individuals in the Calvary Chapel family offer support through prayer and subscriptions.



Letters, cards, and e-mails have been received from those inspired by what the Lord is doing through the magazine. Pastor Chuck Smith has heralded the quality of the publication and the purpose that it serves.

"It has been an incredible privilege to observe and share in what God is doing around the world," said Tom. "The missionaries truly serve Jesus by loving those to whom they



minister. Our mission is to glorify God." Now, with his wife Olga, he wants to continue to document the Lord's work and encourage missionaries as they tell about the saving grace of Christ. ☞

So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

Isaiah 55:11



CCM volunteers (clockwise from front): Beverly Becker, Vinny Basuino, Preston Thompsen, Dave Fugate, and Tom Price