

Love Thy Neighbor

Ministering to Refugees in Jesus' Name

Story by Christmas Beeler
Photos by Stuart Smith unless otherwise noted

Calvary Chapel believers in Hungary ministered to thousands of refugees fleeing from ISIS in September. Surprised and grateful for their love and compassion, many hurting people, mostly Muslims, were moved to tears and openly listened to the Gospel.



Andi Horváth Kávai

Late at night in a refugee camp near the Hungary-Serbia border, believer Andi Horváth Kávai noticed the exhausted Muslim woman with an injured foot. "Have you been to the medical tent? They have doctors who can help you. I can take you there," she said kindly. The Iraqi woman, wearing a scarf wrapped tightly around her attractive but haggard face, looked surprised and asked if Andi really would help her. Later, as they waited for the doctor, Andi asked about her journey. Like thousands of others, she and her two teenage sons had boarded an overcrowded boat in Turkey to cross the Mediterranean Sea to Greece—a perilous voyage that has claimed the lives of nearly 3,000 children and adults this year. Her voice choked as she told of the boat sinking in the middle of the night. She had to float for four hours in the dark waiting to be rescued, fearing for her life and her sons' lives. Andi nodded in sympathy and concern; the woman's countenance crumbled into weeping.

Aware that outward affection is unusual for Muslims, Andi began to lightly rub the woman's back as she spoke comforting words: "You made it; you are here now. You are strong. God preserved you for your sons." The woman nodded, relaxing. The doctors came and bandaged the huge, painful blister half the size of her foot. As Andi helped her back to a tent to rest in the crowded makeshift camp in Röszke, the woman gratefully said over and over that Andi was a good person.

"No, I am not good. God is the only one who is good," Andi said gently. The woman agreed that Allah was good. Andi interjected, "I am a follower of Isa (Jesus), and He is the only good one." The woman's eyes widened in surprise at the name of Jesus. Back at the tent, one son asked why Andi was helping them since she was a Christian and they were Muslims.

"Because God loves Christians and Muslims the same. He told me to come and care for you," Andi said. Amazement registered on their faces. Later, when they were getting ready to leave—conversations were brief at camp, as everyone was frantically trying to make their way to Germany and other open countries in Europe—Andi asked if she could pray for their travels. They agreed. Andi added, "I would like to pray in Isa's name; I believe there is power in His name." The woman began to cry, asking Andi to please pray for them. Andi held their



Left: Refugees travel along the Hungarian-Serbian border en route to countries like Germany, Sweden, and others.

Right: A woman receives bread and other food from a relief worker.

Top right: Kim Farquharson, of Calvary Chapel Pécs, Hungary, provides medical relief to a young refugee.