

Hosman, Autumn 2016

*Dear friends,*

„Do you have a clarinet which I could play while I am here?“, Moritz asked. Then he let rip - we were staggered! From then on every evening in our house brought us a concert: rap, jazz, gypsy songs. It wasn't long before more and more players congregated, even children who had not joined in for weeks. Shy Maria sang along and our adolescent troublemaker Flavius struggled with his saxophone. All were practising for our music school's annual summer festival, the Dance of the Raven, to which more than a thousand children from the villages Hosman, Nou and Tichindeal come with their families. Moritz conquered everyone's hearts and egged our volunteers on to ever greater achievements.

It all had started with an email in which a young man asked if I could give him hints for a social project in the Kosovo. Moritz is a Jesuit, age 26, and his order had sent him to the Loyola secondary school in Prizren to do something, together with the students, for the Romanies who live on the edge of town in a kind of ghetto. Before starting out, he would like to ask for our advice and inspiration, he wrote. For that, however, more than a simple telephone conversation is needed, so I invited him to come and stay with us. I explained to him how we live and work and what we have to struggle with. He wrote back, "I feel as if I am almost setting out on religious exercises."

Soon a tall slender young man with light brown curls and brilliant blue eyes arrived in our village. He came with only a small bag for the ten days we had planned. We hit it off so well and I was so impressed by his alert mind, his faith, his enthusiasm, that I asked him if he wouldn't like to stay until our great festival. Without us really noticing, he learned Romanian in next to no time. Our guest Moritz became our most important musical collaborator for the Dance of the Raven and a great gain for our community.

A dream has been born: for Moritz, for me and for our young people. We want to support the Romany youth in the Kosovo as partners. To assume the role of the helpers for once will give our youngsters self-confidence. As Moritz departed on the feast of Saint Ignatius, he said that on the day he decided to stay longer with Elijah he wrote in his diary: "I hope to catch fire in these days." And now he could say: "I am ablaze." Our young Roma have ignited this flame. Elijah's fire will blaze on, here and in the Kosovo.

After the summer the children start a new year of school. We want to smooth the way to school for many, with music, cleanliness, new clothes and the invitation to come and study at the long table in our social centre. In warmth and light, and not with an empty stomach! We hope that heaven will once again send us volunteers and assistants with burning hearts.

Dear friends, you are our community's safeguard. We have you to thank for being able to take in more children and build new houses for poor families. God bless you, your home and those entrusted to your care.

Affectionate regards from Elijah's fiery chariot,

yours,

*Fr. Georg Sporschill SJ*



5th Dance of the Raven 2016, on Fr. Georg's 70th birthday