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The Day I Sold My Guitar



I was flying back from Bulgaria having spent a few days with a remarkable Baptist church in Sofia Bulgaria to see the work they were doing with those most in need for myself. As part of the trip we had visited an orphanage some two hours out of Sofia near Rila Monastery, a tourist hotspot.

By all accounts this orphanage wasn't bad by some standards, but as we handed out fruit and chocolate I had choked up. Here were children and teenagers with nothing. They weren't orphans, they were abandoned or their families were too poor to look after them. They were largely unwashed and uncared for but they proudly showed us their bedroom which contained four bunk beds, a filthy carpet and a few dirty teddies.

All I could think was that they could be my kids if I had been born and brought up here in their circumstances. I have two teenage daughters and here were girls who were the same age and had virtually no chance at all. I managed to hold it together until I got in the minibus back to the hotel, but I am not ashamed to say I was in bits.

As I reflected on this on the flight home I thought I really needed to do something; I was already giving my time to the project but that wasn't enough. In comparison with these kids I had so much, and whatever I needed to do should cost me.

That's when the idea of the guitar came up. Like most blokes I like things, but most especially guitars. For years I had dreamed of

owning a handmade Kinkade guitar and now I had two and boy did I love them. I had worked hard for them and they were very precious. Then the thought came into my head that one of them needed to go. The proceeds could go to support the work of the project and give a better life to these kids. I had a three and a half hour wrestling match with myself but by the time I landed it was clear that that was what should happen.

I sold it to a friend who had always wanted a Kinkade at a price he could afford and, with the gift aid, we managed to raise a decent amount.

The interesting thing is that I don't miss that guitar at all and I enjoy the one I still have so much more.

As for the project (www.bulgarianpartners.org), a church community centre in the heart of Sofia, we just need to fit out the inside and get it going so homeless and elderly people can have a hot meal each day and teenagers coming out of these orphanages can get some training so they don't end up being trafficked in Western Europe or drawn into crime. ■



Richard Pendlebury founded Changing Tunes a project which takes music into prisons and is currently the director of Emmaus Bristol a charity for homeless people.

Do something amazing

Help give a chance
to children and young
people with no future.



Raise £1,000 and we'll pay for you to jump out of an aeroplane

We need **600** amazing people to help us raise **£600,000** in order to complete a Church Community project in Bulgaria.

The project will give training and education to young people coming out of orphanages who are likely to end up either in crime or worse – trafficked and abused.



What you can do

- Look at our website
- Pray about how you might help
- Sign up for our on-line newsletter
- Think about a challenge that will raise £1,000 (we will even pay for you to jump out of a plane)
- Become one of the 600

What others have done

- Leapt out of an aeroplane
- Ran the Great North run
- Sold a guitar (much less effort!!) see article opposite
- Cycled hundreds of miles in Bulgaria

Interested?

For more information contact us at:

Telephone: 0117 933 5506

E-mail: mail@bulgarianpartners.org

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