

V. and J.

**U.** (2), is a girl who came to us from the maternity hospital. She was born from an uncontrolled pregnancy, exposed to medication from her mother, and was in an incubator for 24 hours due to respiratory depression. When she was a month old, she got a high fever and was in the hospital for 3 days, and from the infusion her leg swelled, and she got a strong reaction to the patch (like a burn). Later, a urinary tract infection was found, and a nephrologist diagnosed urinary reflux in the left kidney,



and has preventive therapy. The physiatrist diagnosed her with muscle hypertonus, and we took her to physical therapy. After everything she went through as a baby, now the results of everything are in order, and with controls, she is in good health. She doesn't know her family, she's attached to us, loved, accepted, and she's developing beautifully. He understands everything that is being said, and some words are still difficult to pronounce. He connects concepts very well, and interprets events with understanding. This fall, she went to nursery, where she likes to play, but sometimes she cries and doesn't want to be separated from me, and when I leave, she quickly calms down and plays. She is a calm child, with healthy lifestyle habits, relationships, accustomed to routine, has security and love, loves children and loves animals very much. She loves when we go on a trip somewhere and is happiest when we are all together. He loves our second son N. and as soon as he opens his eyes, he calls him or goes to wake him up. They are very connected, and during the summer they were together at home with me, which had a good effect on their relationship.

Her brother **N.** (4) who was in a children's home after his birth, came to our family two and a half years ago. He is a healthy boy, with a slightly more demanding character, he loves our family and is the safest in it.

While in the home, he was never outside for a walk or on the grass, nor did he ever see an animal, and the male figure was unknown to him. When we took him for a walk for the first time, and our dog with us, he didn't come close to him. In the park, he immediately took branches, leaves, stones from the floor, and would sit on the floor and cry. However, little by little, he learned the normal life and routine that we have in the family.

Today, he is an extremely lively boy who took a long time to gain affection, because before his arrival he had no one, he did everything himself, without the need for anyone, he did not ask for anyone when he slept, he would even refuse to give him a hand. In situations where children ask for the protection of their parents, he did not know this, and he would run into the arms of all the women he saw on the road. He didn't understand feelings, sometimes even pain, if he hit himself harder, he didn't cry, he didn't show emotions, and he treated other children roughly, he would squeeze, push and bite them. Now that his sister is with us, we keep telling him to be gentle. He has started a new kindergarten, he has new acquaintances. The educators noticed that he was always on the edge of the set boundaries and was just waiting for a moment of inattention to do what he shouldn't. Still, routine and boundaries create security for him. He likes to go to kindergarten, and spend time with his peers, he prefers girls because they play nicely, while he always fights with boys. He needs to be persistent in order to understand and accept the norms of behavior and rules, and he has changed a lot since he has been with us. His mother doesn't answer, and no one knows where he is.

**M.** (4) is a girl who recently came to our family, and we are her third foster family, because she was neglected in previous families. Her brother was with her, and now he is in the hospital. She is hyperactive, cheerful and immediately adapted to our family. She accepted the children nicely, and they accepted her too. When she arrived, she did not have basic life habits (waking up, eating, playing, sleeping, hygiene), but she soon accepted them with other children, and became calmer. She asks for a lot of attention and hugs, and she has the need to constantly say that she loves us and hear us say that to her. We also set boundaries for her, which she doesn't like and gets very angry, and starts answering badly, saying that she misses her brother, and that she is leaving us, but she quickly calms down when we talk. Due to hyperactivity, she often hits or falls, and immediately develops large bruises. She goes to kindergarten, where her previous foster family took her only occasionally. In agreement with the pediatrician, we began to take her for various tests, because she was neglected in that as well. She is very confused about everything she has been through, and we have noticed that she makes up bad situations or that someone told her or did something bad that did not happen. Her mother committed suicide, and her father was deprived of parental care due to problems with alcohol. She already has potential adoptive parents who call her on video once a week.

## J.G.

Our L. is 4.5 years old. She came to our family from the maternity hospital, as soon as she went through an abstinence crisis and gained weight because she was born prematurely. Her parents are addicts who don't want changes in their lives. They have the right to see her once a month, but they don't come. A few months ago, her grandfather and wife expressed a desire to see her and we nurture these relationships regularly, and she is looking forward to meeting them. No health problems, except mild



strabismus, develops nicely, attends kindergarten where he develops his friendships. She is very cheerful, playful, loves to play, dance, sing, go out to the park, loves animals. It's never boring with her! She recently got a kitten to whom she is extremely caring and responsible. She is the youngest in our family, everyone loves her a lot and takes care of her. The procedure for her adoption into our family has already been initiated, and we are patiently waiting for it.

## K.P.

I.N. (9 years old) is a girl who attends the 2nd grade of school for children with special needs, and she passed the first grade with excellent success. He loves music, driving, walking, and water. She is a very sweet and dear girl. Although she still has multiple difficulties due to abuse from her parents, but she is trying and making progress.

Parents are forbidden to have contact with her

R. is a 25-year-old Roma girl studying law, and she struggles a bit with one exam in her third year. Otherwise, she is a beautiful young girl, who is happy to help with the girl I. She loves the sea, nature, beautiful things, and her own

He sees his parents and sisters every week and they get along well



## N. and B.

L. is a 17-year-old girl and has been with us since she was 6 years old. She came to us very ill and neglected, she couldn't talk or walk. She attended elementary school according to a special program, but enrolled in high school for a chef according to the regular program. Now she is attending the second year with good success, she is very satisfied with the school and herself, she loves school, she loves practice, and she is loved everywhere. She likes to play sports, trains football and swimming. At home, she is very kind, obedient and hardworking, and helps with household chores. He has no contact with his family.

K. is a 15-year-old boy and has been with us since he was two years old. He attended elementary school according to an adapted program, and this year he enrolled in the first grade of high school for a chef also according to an adapted program and has good success. It is somewhat more difficult for him to understand and remember, but with a lot of effort he can succeed. He loves to swim, and he loves to swim.

diving. At home, he is good and obedient. Some of them keep in touch with their mother through social media, and during the summer they go to visit their mother for a few days.

His brother D. is 14 years old, and he has been with us since he was the first year of his life. He finished elementary school according to an adapted program, and this fall, according to an adapted program, he enrolled in the first grade of high school for a chef. He has a bad memory, which makes it much more difficult for him to go to school, but he is also a bit lazy. He still managed to finish the first half of the year with good success. His problem is that he does not know how to be silent, and often enters into conflicts with teachers. He trains football, loves boxing, swimming. At home, he is very good and helps the younger boy in the family. He has vision problems, and glasses don't really help him either. Sometimes he also contacts his mother, but unlike his brother, he doesn't really like to talk to her.

L. is a 9-year-old boy and came to us two and a half years ago. He attends the fourth grade of elementary school according to an adapted program and with the help of an assistant he has achieved very good success. He can be aggressive both at school and at home. He trains and loves football very much. He had contact with his mother and father under the supervision of a social worker until 3 months ago. The mother is not interested and does not have the capacity to raise children. The father is violent and has trouble with the law, and has been in prison several times. Their parents are divorced, and each of them has a different life partner. D. is a 16-year-old boy. He has been with us for two years, because he arrived from Ukraine unaccompanied. This year he enrolled in the second year of high school for a chef, but due to health problems (depression and panic attacks) he changed schools, now he is in our city, so that he can go to therapy regularly. At home, he is obedient and quiet, he loves video games very much. The mother is divorced and addicted to alcohol, and she only calls when she is drunk and that bothers him a lot.

D.V.

S., a 13-year-old boy, came to our family 8 years ago, he is short in stature and small build, but healthy and cheerful, and at home he is good and obedient. He is in the 7th grade of elementary school, and he is not a good student because he had 2 negative grades in the semester. He is often irresponsible and does not complete his tasks on time. He has no contact with his family,

L. is an 8.5-year-old girl, and she came to us 4 years ago. She is well-behaved, but difficult to understand because she has mild retardation and epilepsy. He attends the 3rd grade of elementary school according to an adapted program and has good results.

L. is her sister, a healthy girl of 7 years old. He attends the 2nd grade of elementary school with good results. Sometimes he has a problem with obedience and behavior at home. Both sisters talk to their parents every Saturday, and see them once a month.

B. is a 9-year-old boy and has been with us since the first year of his life. He is a sick child, he has a heart defect and has been operated on 4 times, he has an artificial heart valve. He is a very demanding child, he is disobedient, restless, cries for every little thing, and was recently diagnosed with ADHD. He had big problems at school, so I moved him to another class department, and now he is much better. She attends the 3rd grade of elementary school according to the regular program with good results.

S. is an 8-year-old Roma girl who came to our family a month ago. She is in a very difficult situation, she comes from a safe house because she has experienced severe traumas of child trafficking. She is now enrolled in the first grade, has a speech impediment and is slowly learning the Croatian language, reading and writing. The situation is difficult, and working with it is exhausting. She has no contact with her parents because they sold her.



J. and M.

We recently celebrated two years since the girl S. arrived in our family and brought great joy and blessing, and in January, we also celebrate her 3rd birthday. She has adapted very well, she already has some of her friends and is looking forward to going to kindergarten. At an individual interview with educators, they had only words of praise for her, she is developing well in all areas, she is very sociable and empathetic. For a long time, she was resistant to changes of educators if there was a replacement, but that changed a few months ago and she gained complete certainty.

She is an extremely intelligent child, she quickly understands everything around her. He has a very advanced speech with a large vocabulary and expresses himself very nicely and understandably for his age. As she gets older, we notice a strong character and extremely strong will in her. She is a real little boss and when she is not as she imagined or does not get what she wants, she reacts very violently. After the first wave of strong anger passes, she wants us to hug her and thus completely calm down and is ready to cooperate. She is sociable, loves children and people and is open to them. She loves our older girls very much, and they are

very attached to her and we all grow and learn together with her, let's change, but in all this we enjoy the blessing and joy that she brings us. Contact with her mother - a short video call, she had only for her first birthday. After that, the mother did not call again, and she was deprived of parental rights. My husband and I have undergone education for adoptive parents, and we are waiting for her adoption. We are looking forward to the day when she will become a full member of our family.



A.i M.

In mid-July last year, our family moved to OAZA's house in Optralj. Our daughter J. started the first grade of elementary school in September, and the younger girl N. stayed at home with me. After a few weeks, a playful boy K., 5.5 years old, arrived. When he arrived, he defecated in diapers, and we immediately started taking off the diapers and creating habits of going to the toilet. The doctor found that he was growing in height and gaining weight, and that holding the stool was due to mental blockages. With a diet full of fiber, we were able to regulate digestion, and he began to defecate on the toilet. He started flipping through a lot

picture books, and we read them together, and his word font has increased. He has a little trouble stuttering, probably due to a change in family, a new situation and a new way of expressing himself. He likes cars and runways, but it is necessary to guide him in the game because he does not know how to play independently. The procedure of deprivation of parental care and preparations for adoption will soon be initiated.

The boy A. (8.5 years old) arrived in our family a few weeks after K., and the two of them were in the same foster family. When he arrived, he had inappropriate behavior, and it was difficult for him to adapt with us because we have clear rules. He himself said "I have a very nice time here, but you have rules, so I don't like it". We had situations of theft, lying, violence against other children. He often reacted violently due to frustration and was rude to objects or us. We showed understanding towards his situation, comforted him, but also set boundaries for which he had reasonable consequences. Every day we prayed together and very quickly the results were shown. He was very hardworking when he arrived, and now he is also neat and takes good care of his books and school. He is kind, loves to cuddle and solve the problem in peace. He realizes that he cannot manipulate and lie because there are very few people living in Optralj and everyone knows each other. He heard a mother call me and explain his inappropriate behavior in the park, which made him aware that the rules of good manners should be respected outside the house as well. He noticed that some of the boys avoided him, so he felt sorry for him. The changes are obvious and progress can be seen every day, which makes him happier as well. He already has the documents for adoption, but at the moment the situation is questionable. He is creative in arranging Lego, likes to make pancakes, enjoys the park on the equipment and likes hanging out with the new boy E.

The boy E. is 7.5 years old, and 2 months ago he was taken away from his parents due to domestic violence, he spent a short time in the home, and 10 days ago he came to us. He had negative parents all his life, and that's how he is now towards us, school and life. He complains about tasks, food, family plans, condemns and belittles other children and adults. He often has outbursts of anger due to frustration, but calms down quickly. He doesn't want to look adults in the eyes, he agrees to be kissed on the head but not on the face. When he comes home from school, he wants me to hug him, while we watch the cartoon he allows us to stroke his hair and back. This is a great success for us. We teach him how to express his needs in words, without shouting and crying. You can already see the change and the outbursts are less frequent. At first, he closed his ears to prayer, because his mom hates God, but after 4 days he stopped, and he was glad when we took him with us to church. In the morning before school, we all read the children's Bible together and pray for that day, and sometimes we pray for their parents to get a new heart.

We are not finished with the work in the new house yet. It is necessary to replace the windows and put a new heating system (stove, radiators, pipes, boiler, pump). We believe that with your help and the Lord's providence, we will provide children with warm winters. My husband, me and children sometimes have very difficult days. These children have gone through too many difficulties in just 5, 7 or 8 years, and we are here to help them understand the world and life.

### A. and G.

D. is a 6-year-old girl, and she came to us from a children's home when she was 1 year old. She was taken away from her mother, who did not have conditions, she lived in a house without heating and food. She gave her child to the neighbors to look after while she was with the boys. D. came to us all traumatized, she was crying all the time, she was all crouched. She recovered quickly and blended in well with our children. She started kindergarten and adapted well. The mother has the right to come to

visit 2 times a month, but he comes rarely or does not come at all. It happens that we bring a child to a meeting, and she neither answers nor comes, and that is why the procedure for revoking parental rights has been initiated.



### I.K.

S. is a 21-year-old Roma girl. She came from a family with seven children in which her father was in prison all his life, and her mother is illiterate and addicted to alcohol. She lived in very difficult conditions, without water and toilets, with everyone in one room of several square meters. She was 7 years old when she came and was about to start school. She did not know Croatian, and her mother tongue was not developed in accordance with her age. With a lot of effort, discipline and sacrifice, she overcame the Croatian language and all the obstacles in learning. She is a beautiful, cheerful, positive girl,

extremely responsible and disciplinary. In the last academic year, she successfully completed the first year of the Teacher Education Study, and due to the desire to work with young children in her life, she decided to enroll in the study of early childhood and preschool education this academic year. Now she is taking the subjects of the first and second year of study in parallel. In her free time, she plays the guitar, sings, and enjoys entertaining others. He plays drums (kahoon) in the church group. She is very attentive, gentle and compassionate. She feels just right in the family - like at home and we are the only family she knows. She has very rare contacts with her family, most often she contacts her two sisters who are also in a foster family by phone, and her parents never contact her.

This year, little P. came to our family, a 5-year-old boy, who comes to us from home during the school holidays. He spent this summer with us and comes to us for the winter holidays. He is a boy with a hearing impairment, he cannot hear or speak. He and his three sisters were removed from the family and placed in a home.

P. is lively, cheerful and is a very playful child, requiring a lot of attention and individual work. In the time spent with us, he made tremendous progress during the summer and the professional service of the home concluded that significant changes can be seen in his behavior. He is in the process of getting a hearing aid, but it is still not known how much it will help him hear.

### A.A.V.

I was a foster parent to my protégé M., who is now a mother of 2 children. She has a very messy and bad life, with frequent changes of partners, and I help her and the children as much as I can. It is very difficult for her at the moment, she is a tenant and she has finally got a job and works as a cleaner in a nursing home. Because of the children, she often misses work and stays on sick leave, and her boss is understanding for her, so she takes absences on weekends. M. tries as hard as he can, but he has no help from anyone. Her children are A. a 9-year-old boy and S. a 5-year-old girl.



A. is a third-grade student. He is very playful, he loves football very much and does not like to learn. He has good results in school, is lazy and often does not have a homework

homework. They have recently moved, so everything is unknown to him, a new school, teachers and new children. He's had a lot of health problems throughout the year. In the spring, he had tonsillectomy surgery, and he is currently in the hospital, my pulse is low (below 50 beats) and he has chest pain. They still don't know the reason for this, and he is undergoing tests.

His younger sister S. attends kindergarten, she is very playful, cheerful and singing. She also had tonsillectomy surgery at the same time as her brother, and it took them a very long time to recover from the surgery.

A.K.

A girl named L. (18 years old) was adopted in our family, and she arrived in the family when she was 5 years old. She comes from a Roma family and has six other siblings, of which she is the eldest. Dad spent most of his time in prisons, and Mom lived in very poor social conditions alone with the children, without electricity, water, toilets. L. was in the worst state of health and malnourished of all the children. After arriving in our



She was diagnosed with a rare disease of adipose tissue deficiency (generalized lipodystrophy) that makes her look very thin and requires special diets, skin treatments and constant check-ups, daily injection therapies. He attends the 4th grade of general gymnasium with very good results. At school, her classmate and professors praise her, she is active, communicative and loud. Her classmate says that L. has a lot of potential, and she is the one who fights for fairness in the class, makes sure that other girls have everything they need, but even when something bothers her, she can't do it

go unnoticed. She is also so combative at home, loud, quarrelsome when something doesn't suit her, when she feels rejected she is also very direct. If she needs to do something from household chores, she does what she is tasked with, and helps with our little girls when she is told. He has behavioral fluctuations, partly due to illness, partly due to puberty and due to his personal problems. She does not want contact with her family.

P.i R

My husband and I have three children - two of our girls aged 8 and 6 and an adopted boy of 8 years old who we had 4 years ago. D. is a boy of Roma origin, he was separated from his family at the age of one and a half years and placed in a Roma foster family. He had stunted growth in other areas as well, and doctors estimated his age as a two-year-old. By the age of 4 he had more diapers, very badly



He spoke and moved slowly. When he came to our family, he blossomed! Progress has begun to manifest itself in all areas. Today he is a beautiful, warm, cheerful and communicative boy full of life force. He is a student of the 1st grade of elementary school, very zealous and motivated, and in addition to his school obligations, he also trains football.



A.i N.

A., a 13-year-old girl, and her 16-year-old sister, A., are children from a Roma family, and they have been in our family for more than ten years. The first to come in 2013 was my younger sister, then only six months old. She was urgently separated from her family due to a severe form of neglect and starvation, which almost led to her death. Until she was three years old, we regularly took her to a special clinic to recover from the effects of neglect. Although she recovered very well physically, the real challenges came only

when she started school. Her struggle to survive at an early age, as well as her mother's addiction to alcohol,

They left traces on her emotional development. Experts at the hospital confirmed that he is emotionally delayed by two to three years, which is most evident in relationships with peers. She attends the 7th grade of elementary school and has very good results. Although she is reluctant to study, she is now at the stage where she began to notice that bad grades bother her and began to study independently and keep up with her obligations, which is a great victory. She is currently thinking about her future and what she wants to enroll in after elementary school, and she still dreams of being a police officer. Her great passion is cooking, she loves music and acting, sings beautifully, goes to the 4th grade of music school (violin major) and trains karate. We met her older sister, A., through contacts with her mother, who in 2015 herself asked us to adopt her, then six years old and ready to go to the first grade. She did not know the Croatian language, so she initially put in a lot of effort to achieve good results in school. When she arrived, she was very wild, and in addition to the language, she had to learn basic hygiene and social skills – how to defecate, wash her hands, store her things, and understand and respect the rules. She loves music, enjoys drawing and likes to hang out with her peers. He attended the 2nd grade of secondary music school (cello major) and the 3rd grade of high school (hotel and tourism technician), where he had very good success. He has heart problems, so he is under regular medical supervision and must avoid major efforts. He has exemplary behavior at school. At home, both sisters often try to push the boundaries as much as they can, but at the end of the day, we manage to work everything out. In our family, they have many more opportunities for advancement than they would have had if they had stayed in their family. They generally have no contact with their parents, except for the older one who sometimes hears from their mother. They are very connected to their sister S., who visited us and has a particularly positive influence on them.

#### M.i V.

M. is a 3-year-old girl. She was placed in our family when she was one year old and weighed only 5 kg. Due to the disease, we fed her through a nasogastric tube for a year, but now she eats on her own and is progressing beautifully. We keep in touch with our parents once a month at the Center for Social Work. L. is a cheerful four-year-old girl who has been with us for two years. With mild intellectual disabilities and developmental delays, she regularly goes to the Center for Early Intervention, and is progressing nicely. We look forward to her soon being adopted by our close and dear friends, which means that we will stay in touch even after her departure from our family. Waiting for her new beginning, she is currently in the phase of getting closer to her future adoptive parents, so everyone is eagerly



We are looking forward to the day when they will get their permanent family and lasting parental love.

M. is a thirteen-year-old boy, a student of the seventh grade of elementary school and has very good results. He came to us at the beginning of the fifth grade with very poorly developed reading. He was full of frustration that he often expressed himself openly at school. It is wonderful to witness his incredible progress. Today, he is a cheerful, kind and extremely affectionate boy, who radiates happiness. He maintains contact with his family once a month.

E. is a sixteen-year-old girl, a student of the first year of high school for caregivers with excellent results. She came to us as a baby, with a series of difficult diagnoses and surgeries, and when she was nine years old, we managed to adopt her. Her sister M. (15 years old) is a student of the first year of high school for caregivers, and she has been in our family for the second year. She is an extremely kind, kind, attentive and diligent girl, which is confirmed by her excellent school results. Although we are not obligated, we allow the sisters to visit the father from time to time. Both are very happy to be able to live together now. N. is a 33-year-old young man, but due to mental retardation, he is psychologically at the level of a six-year-old. He still attends the Center for Education, and he likes to spend his free time playing. He is very sweet and affectionate, and all children love him very much.



V. and M.

My wife and I adopted a 5-year-old girl, and she came to us when she was 6 months old from a children's home. It develops well with constant visits and controls, special education specialists, sensory and occupational therapists and psychologists due to diagnosed ADHD. Visits and all treatments have a positive effect on further development and progress can be seen. She is very attached to our family and feels safe and loved. She is enrolled in a kindergarten where she also has her personal assistant with whom she has made good contact and progress can also be seen. He trains judo and fits well in the middle. Contact with parents is once a week for 45 minutes with

control. The parents have recently been deprived of parental care and we hope for adoption soon.

M.P.

B. is a boy who recently turned 2 years old. On is very cheerful, lively and sociable, he eats independently, with a little help he takes off his clothes and dresses himself, he brushes his teeth on his own. He likes to play with his older brother and listen to children's songs and play with cars, tractors and large stuffed animals. He quickly remembers the melodies of the songs and sings them when we ask for it. She still regularly goes to the neuropediatrician,

His motor development is a little slower, but satisfactory. What is most necessary now is to encourage his speech. He already speaks a lot of words with meaning, understands and executes simple and everyday orders, only slower than he should for his age. We are grateful for B. and for his life that has been entrusted to us.

His brother S. has just turned 3 years old. He is a healthy, very cheerful, curious and sociable boy with a wonderful smile. For his age, he talks a lot, understandably and maturely, and is very skilful in motor skills. He likes to be independent in everything and do everything himself, e.g. put on and take off clothes and shoes, brush his teeth, blow his nose, help his dad carry wood. This week, while he was sick, he wanted to inhale himself. Since last summer, she no longer wears diapers, except when sleeping. She loves music very much, often wants to listen to songs in her room even in a foreign language, and remembers the melody and words very quickly. We are grateful that he is also part of our family.



G. and D.

There are currently seven children in our family. We could never have imagined that we would have so many children, even though we have four of our own, three of whom are already independent. Our experience is that we are blessed with each child, both in good qualities and in the challenges they bring. We believe that every child came with God's intention for us.

A. is a 16-year-old Roma girl and is the oldest in the family. She accepted her role, and when we are not at home, she takes care of the smaller children and helps them in different situations. We can rely on her to keep her

opportunities to help with household chores. She often remembers that she wants to make cakes and is getting better and better, so now she can make simpler cakes herself. At school, she is doing well both in class and in her relationships with other children. She has a special friend with whom she has connected more and is happy. She is no longer so angry with her parents (they sold her as a girl), but she still says that she does not want to return home. She attends the eighth grade of elementary school according to an adapted program and is an excellent student. There are no health problems, except for the spine, but less so when exercising. Her sister E. turned 14 at the beginning of the school year and is becoming more and more mature in her relationship with her sister and others. She also attends the eighth grade of elementary school according to an adapted program and is an excellent student. This year, in meeting and talking to other foster children at the camp, she realized that there is a difference between her parents who did not take care of her and foster

parents who take care of her. Until then, she had mostly idealized her parents and complained about foster parents, and after the summer she began to understand that her parents had done many wrong things and that was why she was outside her family. Now she often thanks God for being with us in the family. She wants to find a husband who will love her as her foster father loves his wife, her aunt. She is excellent at school due to the facilitated material that is not difficult for her to master. There are no health problems, except for ingrown toenails.

Their brother A. is 8 years old and is a joyful boy, and he is making good progress. He likes to play and be in company, he attends the second grade of elementary school with excellent results. He is accepted at school and masters the material with ease. The teacher noticed that he was no longer so interested in learning, and this can be seen at home. After we took him to an interview with the Ombudswoman in October, who told him that he would not return to his family because his parents would lose custody, he became irritable about small things and overreacts with crying and anger. He often has the need for cuddling and likes to be praised. We understand and hope that this is a passing phase and reaction to the news he has heard, and we believe that with God's grace he will get through this period.

B. is a 9-year-old Roma girl, and she has been with us for a year, which can be physically seen in her because she has gained weight and is not so timid. She is in the third grade, she has adapted well to school, she has good grades, and the teacher is satisfied with her progress. At home, she is less often frustrated and reacts more mildly to situations when interacting with other children. He performs his duties diligently and wants to do his household chores. L. is her brother of 8 years old and is in the first grade. He is making progress at school, regularly writes homework and reads well. He likes to hang out with his friends, but after stealing his classmate's smartwatch (which he returned after it was discovered), he has problems with his peers. We hope that he has learned his lesson and that he will not repeat it again. He and his sister were allowed to see their parents once a week, but their parents did not come for 5 months. Last week, the mother came, after receiving a summons to court, because the children have been with us for more than a year. The conditions in the family have not improved, nor have the parents been employed, nor have the housing conditions improved.

M. is a boy of 10 years old, he came to us at the end of the summer. At the beginning of the school year, he had a big birthday party with a lot of kids in the class and a lot of relatives. Relatives noticed that after only a month with us, she talks much better and looks better. His parents neglected him, and his siblings took care of him as much as they could, but he often came to school dirty, in small clothes, and hungry. My father worked in Germany and didn't come home for three years, and my mother wandered around. The boy was often locked in the house with a computer, sometimes he wandered in the dark looking for his mother in the village. When he arrived with us, he did not have any hygienic or work habits, he did not want to do his homework, nor did he want to write in written letters at school or participate in classes. He came to us with his tablet, but we never turned it on. After the first semester of the third grade, he has already adapted, he has started to write homework and writes in written letters, although not very neatly, and now he has very good success.

D. is his older brother of 14 years. He is very polite and wants to help everyone, he gets along great with everyone in the house. He did not live at home, but with his grandfather, who is crying because of his departure. The situation was difficult at my grandfather's, but better than at home, but after my mother left for two weeks, someone reported them to the Center.

D. is an excellent student and very intelligent, all teachers praise him. Physically, he has now recovered, he is constantly hungry because he was very malnourished, he gained 8 kg in four months with us, and it is still almost not visible on him. We are grateful to the Lord who gives us the strength to take care of all the children entrusted to us. Our prayer is that their stay in our family will be a good way in life. We are grateful to Jesus and for you who help us in the vocation that he has prepared in advance to live and serve in him.

L.J.G.

I. is a 21-year-old boy, diagnosed with mild mental retardation, and has been in our family for eighteen years. My husband passed away 4 years ago, and he and I live alone in a small apartment. My foster care permit expires next spring, and the Center for Social Welfare will not extend it because I am already seventy years old. I would



be very happy if I. went to a new family, and I would continue to maintain my connections and visits. There is also another possibility: that this apartment be a form of organized housing called inclusion, in which he and a single retired person would live, so that he can take care of it. I. is finishing his education this year, he can't read, write and count, and it bothers him the most if he is told so; It would be good to see his possibilities. He takes care of himself, communicates, takes care of the hygiene of the premises, washes dishes, floors, laundry, cooks simple dishes; It is strong, so it can carry heavier things, everything under control. I believe God has a job for him. He does not move around the city on his own, not because he does not know how to reach his destination, but because of malicious people who lurk at every step (I speak from experience), and at the same time because of the danger in traffic. He is a handsome and handsome boy, but he has certain stereotypical forms of behavior; such as swinging, holding keys in hand, and the like.



M.O.

The boy D. (7.5) came to our family from a children's home in 2023. There, he had a hard time tolerating situations when other children's parents came to visit, and him very rarely, and he was not motivated to learn and make any progress. When he came to us at the age of 5, he was still using diapers for sleeping and could barely speak. He was ill due to problems with his tonsils and shortness of breath, and could not eat solid food. After tonsillectomy, his general condition improved. We continued follow-up with various specialists due to developmental delays

(geneticist, neuropsychiatrist, physiatrist, psychologist, ophthalmologist, ENT, etc.), and after two years in the family, most of the findings were normal, and now we only go for check-ups. He has made a lot of progress in his motor skills, he trained Judo, and now he goes to folklore, and in his free time he likes to play football. This fall, he started first grade and since then we have been going through a very turbulent period. Undesirable behaviors intensified, especially at school in relation to teachers. Interrupting classes, disrespecting authority, physical confrontation with other children and the like. According to the assessment he underwent before starting school, education according to the regular program with an individual approach was recommended. We believe that the teachers were not prepared to work with children with disabilities and apply an individual approach. After several serious conflicts with other students at the school, the pedagogical team assigned him a teaching assistant, and he was additionally transferred to another larger school. This improved the situation a little, because the pressure on him decreased. He absorbs the material well, he knows all the letters, he is good at mathematics. Difficulties are visible in writing due to weaker graphomotor skills and in speech, which is why she still goes to a speech therapist.

Behavioral difficulties are still present, both at school and at home, in communication, expression, acceptance of boundaries and in performing routines and tasks (brushing teeth, tidying up, eating, playing, etc.). In interactions with our biological son (8 years old) he can be rude, although they get along well. Because of all of the above, we asked for psychological help, and we received the services of a mobile team, where we drive him once a week and he has play therapy, and once a week with an educational rehabilitator. In the evaluation, it turned out that he had ADHD combined type, and he was ordered for a test to determine if he had difficulties from the autism spectrum.

The diagnosis helped us understand his behavioral difficulties, and we believe that they will also help the professional staff at the school. This period is difficult for him because of the responsibilities that are required of him at school, although he was very much looking forward to going to school. He is a child with serious difficulties that we did not even know about, but my husband and I are trying to provide him with the necessary professional help and so that he has security in his family so that he can progress and so that both he and we can learn to cope with these difficulties.

He does not ask about his parents, and previous encounters have not had a good effect on him. His parents have not visited him for two years, and his mother has stopped asking for him on the phone, and the procedure for depriving him of parental care is underway.

## M. and M.

N. is an 11-year-old boy, goes to music school and learns to play the clarinet. She is very fond of cycling and exploring unusual plants and animals. In the summer, he sails and drives a small wooden boat. He is generally excellent at school. He loves company and by moving to the 5th grade, he tries to fit in and make new friends. He loves his younger brother and sister, and although they sometimes disagree, he treats them protectively. His brother D. is a 7-year-old boy and this year he started 1st grade. This is a big news for him and it was not easy for him at the beginning because it is a new type of separation and new serious obligations, but he has fit in perfectly and solves his tasks every day. He loves football very much, so often like others



The boys want to stay on the game after school. He is very musically gifted and enjoys playing the drums in our music studio next to the house. He takes his older brother as a role model in everything, even in mischief. B. is a 3.5-year-old girl, playful, cheerful, affectionate, smart and talkative, she knows what she likes and wants and what she doesn't. She goes to kindergarten, in a mixed group and has fit in nicely, she is happy to participate in all activities, sports and music, she has her favorite friends with whom she does hairstyles and paints nails, which is her favorite. She loves her brothers very much and is very attached to them, but sometimes she competes to prove that she is already great.

As a family with three children, we are very grateful to God for the blessing of parenthood and for the opportunity for us to adopt them as the Heavenly Father adopted us. And we carry within us the certainty that this is the perfect plan for us, so we have never questioned this decision of ours. We are happy to encourage other people to foster care or adoption and occasionally hang out with other similar families. We are grateful to the OAZA organization, which helps us and connects us so that we can be of help and encouragement to each other.



## R.i M.

L. is a 15-year-old girl who has been with us for 7 years. She has a slight intellectual disability and one shorter leg, but now after the surgery she is almost exactly the same. She is quiet and kind with no behavioral problems. She attends the 8th grade according to the adapted program and has very good results. Her mother has died, and her father cannot take care of her, so she sees him once a month.

V. is a 10-year-old girl, and she has been with us for 2 years and has fit in well with the family. She attends the 5th grade and has a very good

success, and the grades are much better this year. He gets along well with the other children in the family. Her mother is a drug addict and her father is an alcohol addict, and they don't live together. Every 2 weeks they see each other for a short time, and she really likes to visit her grandmother during the holidays.

D. is a 6-year-old boy who has been with us since birth, and we adopted him. Both parents are bullies and alcohol addicts, and this left a mark on his brain during pregnancy, so we struggle with ADHD and language disorder and developmental delay. He goes to kindergarten and therapies with a rehabilitator and a speech therapist. T. is a 6-year-old boy and has recently arrived from another foster family. He is eager for attention and love and has fit well into our family and with other children. He recently underwent a severe surgery for a cyst on the pancreas, and is now recovering. His mother has passed away, and his father cannot take care of him.

## V.N.

V. is 7 years old, and she is a cheerful and good Roma girl, obedient, willing to help whenever needed. He still attends kindergarten, because we postponed going to school. According to experts, she is not ready yet, and together with her sister M. Learn numbers and letters.

Her sister M. is 6 years old and attends kindergarten, and together with her sister will start the 1st grade in the fall. She is also cheerful and obedient, learns quickly and likes to help with household chores. The surgery successfully removed the sixth toes on the feet that were superfluous. Both get along very well with the people they know and are just getting to know. Sometimes they have phases of self-will, but it lasts for a short time and everything happens quickly.

Solve it with a conversation and agreement. S. is a Roma girl who is 4 years old and has been with us since the spring of 2025. She quickly got used to our family. When she arrived, she had roundworms, she had parasites (lice) in her hair, she was traumatized and full of fears. Today she is a happy and cheerful girl, well fed, she has grown, she gets along with everyone, she loves kindergarten and play, she learns Croatian very quickly and is obedient and calm. He has contact with parents 2 times a month in the premises of the social welfare center.



V.i R.

R. is an 8-year-old boy who came to our family at the age of 5 from a Roma family with nine children, all of whom are already placed in foster families. My parents have problems with alcoholism, and because of this, they have very poor housing conditions. Unfortunately, parents have not been asking about their children for a year now, although we were ready to continue contacts for the sake of the children. R. is smaller, and a bit thin like his parents. He came to us

with a large ear infection, and had impaired hearing, and due to untreated ear infections, a punctured eardrum. After a few months, he was operated on and now he can hear well and no longer has problems with inflammation. Unfortunately, this was reflected in his speech, which is quite unintelligible (he could not hear and could not reproduce words correctly). This year, he started the first grade at the Center for Education, where he has a professional service and a speech therapist at his disposal on a daily basis. Day by day we see progress in speech and we are very happy about it. He is in the school out of 6 students in the class, the best both in terms of learning and behavior. The teacher teaches him that he is free to make mistakes, and that nothing will happen if he does something wrong. He is also very good and obedient at home, and he is the one we can always rely on from the three children in the house. He is very meticulous and diligent, but we teach him that even if he makes a mistake or fights for his right – we are still here for him. She loves to eat well, play games, and she also loves animals - she takes care of our two ducks. He gets along very well with our son J. (7 years old), as if they were brothers. We hope that he will stay in our family, that we can really help him until he becomes independent. He was very attached to his parents and often asked when he would see them, but since his parents did not come, he realized that it was their fault that he did not live with them, and he relied more and more on us and considered us his own. His sister M. (6 years old) came to us together with her brother, when she was 3 years old and is completely different from him. She is also smaller, healthy and very smart, and as calm as her brother is, she is fiery. In the beginning, we had a lot of problems with her, she lied, hit her brother, and destroyed things that were around her, but all secretly. Thank God, she changed after staying with us, she became more obedient, she doesn't hit other children (who are older and much bigger than her), and she destroys things less. Before, she had no feelings for anyone but herself, (due to her family situation), and now she shows interest in others, of course in accordance with her age. She is very sweet and cuddly looking and is preparing for school in the fall. The kindergarten now has only words of praise for her – unlike before, when she had to go to the pedagogue for interviews because of bad behavior. She is talented in dance and music, and we promised her that we would enroll her in majorettes. She never asked

about her parents. We, as foster parents, are happy for these children, and if it were possible to turn back time, we would like these children to come and stay with us again.