Mark and Florenţa Hamilton are missionaries serving in Romania with the goal of building and equipping the evangelical church in Romania. In addition to encouraging and ministering to a young Romanian church, Mark and Florenţa are working to translate Third Millennium Ministries’ curriculum into Romanian.

Recently, Mark updated us on their progress and told us a little more about their ministry together.

During the summer of 2011, I travelled to Romania with my church in Nebraska to work with a small church in Târgu Jiu. Florenţa, a native Romanian, accompanied the team as a translator. We worked together to assist the pastor, his family and the church for a few months. Shortly thereafter, Florenţa and I began dating and we were married last June.

After the wedding, we moved to Florenţa’s family home in Roşiori de Vede, Romania to establish my residency status and work with Florenţa’s home church. While there, we met the Ebbers, a Mission to the World (MTW) family working in Braşov. As part of their missions, the Ebber family had been working to translate Third Millennium Ministries’ seminary curriculum into Romanian. As we visited and discussed the progress of their work, we began exploring how our abilities and experiences might fit their needs. Quickly, we realized God had provided us with a background that fit well with some of their goals and we relocated to Braşov to begin the translation work.

Florenţa’s computer background and my experience with audio equipment provided handy skills as we took over the technical parts of the work, but it was still a big undertaking to translate the materials. Every lesson has a manuscript to be translated, text within the video to be changed, subtitles to be added and Romanian introductions to be recorded. The production resources needed to do the complete voice-over work were limiting the ability to complete the materials in a reasonable time, so we decided to focus on creating subtitled versions instead. Culturally, this makes sense, as most Romanian TV programming originating outside of the country is subtitled. In fact, many Romanians learn English from subtitled movies and television shows.

As we began the work, we immediately found the interest and desire for this curriculum growing. One of our friends living in Târgu Jiu had been struggling to do one of the Third Mill courses in English. They desperately desired the theological education, but found it difficult to understand some of the English theological terms. When we told our friend about our work translating the courses into Romanian, he was thrilled and could not wait for the completion of our first Romanian translation. We were also able to supply some of the draft translations to a Baptist pastor who was straining to answer the theological questions his congregation was asking. In addition, we recently connected with a PCA pastor who is teaching Romanian church leaders how to build healthy churches. Once the translation is complete, he is interested in using the materials to assist in the education of these church leaders. The demand is so significant that even one of our translators asked if she could use the material she was currently translating in a women’s Bible study she leads in her home!

Overall, our focus in Romania is to support the leadership of the Romanian church, to encourage the Ebbers, to translate the Third Mill materials into Romanian, and to enjoy the fellowship of other believing couples, as we grow as a couple as well.

Mark, Florenţa and the team of MTW translators are nearing completion of the Romanian version of the Apostles’ Creed. Please pray for Mark and Florenţa as they continue to translate the Third Mill curriculum and minister to the people in the Romanian church.
As we announced earlier this year, Third Millennium Ministries will be playing a crucial role in the education of Indonesian children through a partnership with Yayasan Pendidikan Pelita Harapan (YPPH). In addition to this partnership, we connected executives at Berita Satu to discuss a timeline for the production of English and Mandarin Chinese. In addition, Berita Satu offered to dedicate an entire channel on their network to Third Millennium’s curriculum. Our materials are gaining so much traction in this region that our lessons will be broadcast throughout all of Indonesia, Singapore and most of Southeast Asia in the languages of English and Mandarin Chinese. Not only was Berita Satu impressed with our videos, they offered to dedicate an entire channel on their network to Third Millennium’s curriculum. Our lessons will be broadcast throughout all of Indonesia, Singapore and most of Southeast Asia in the languages of English and Mandarin Chinese. In addition, Berita Satu has assembled a team to translate our lessons into Indonesian so that more people can understand the lessons. With over 200 million Indonesians identifying themselves as Muslim, it is truly a blessing that our materials are gaining so much traction in this portion of the world.

Dr. Richard L. Pratt, Executive Director Mr. Michael Briggs and Director of International Languages Rev. Biao Chen will be returning to Indonesia later this month to attend the Asia Theological Association’s Triennial General Assembly and meet up with the executives at Berita Satu to discuss a timeline for the production of the Indonesian translation.

WHERE’S RICHARD?

Third Millennium’s President Dr. Richard L. Pratt spends the majority of his time travelling around the world and sharing about Third Mill. Here are just a few of the places he has visited in the past months:

- In June, Richard spoke at the Gospel Through Colombia (GTC) Spring with Pastor Jeff Pollard. GTC has been using the Third Mill curriculum to equip church leaders in over 20 cities in Colombia!

- In early July, Richard taught a one-day workshop in the city of Karaganda. A pastor who attended the conference wrote, “Our Evangelical Reformed Church of Kazakhstan is sincerely grateful for your willingness to teach in Kazakhstan. We hope that your coming would play a major role in uniting the Protestant denominations/churches of Kazakhstan.”

- In late July, Richard participated in a panel discussion on Christology featuring Drs. Ligon Duncan, R.C. Sproul, Sinclair Ferguson, Robert Godfrey and Stephen Nichols.

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- In mid-July, Richard spoke at the PAMOJA Conference here in Nigeria. Ever since, the resource has greatly impacted my life. The teachings on Building Your Theology have been of unquantifiable impact in my life. It has helped me understand true Biblical interpretation from a different perspective. I have even enrolled for the free CCM online course with Birmingham Theological Seminary and meet up with the executives at Berita Satu to discuss a timeline for the production of the Indonesian translation.

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MEET THE TRANSLATOR: PORTUGEUSE

Through partnerships with churches and individuals around the world, we are able to have our lessons translated in a variety of other languages including Farsi, Greek and Portuguese. Jose Arinades Santos Filho, the pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Brazil, is currently working on translating our curriculum into Portuguese. Jose first came across the Third Millennium Ministries website when he was still in seminary. He was immediately impressed with the depth and academic integrity of the curriculum, but was disappointed when he noticed there were not many Portuguese resources available on the site. After talking with his professors and praying, Jose felt it was his calling to improve his English and translate the Third Millennium curriculum for his fellow Brazilians.

I DESIRE THAT MY BRAZILIAN BROTHERS HAVE EXCELLENT THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION FOR FREE.

However, once he became the pastor at Presbyterian Church of Brazil and began pursuing degrees in Counseling and Biblical Studies through Miami International Seminary, he lacked the finances and time to continue studying English and working on translations. Jose, his church family and his Third Mill family began fervently praying that an opportunity would arise that would allow him to continue his translation work. About a month ago, our prayers were answered when a friend of Jose’s graciously opened up his home to Jose and offered to pay for his English course.

With a new sense of purpose, Jose has already completed the translation of He Gave Us Prophets and they are available to read at portuguese.thirdmill.org. We ask that you continue to keep Jose in your prayers as he balances his life as a pastor, translator, and student.