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AK:SCO May 29, 2020

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS IN OUR BRANCH TERRITORY

Re: Help for Publishers During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Dear Brothers:

The current worldwide COVID-19 pandemic has a profound impact on the way we carry out our ministry. However, many encouraging reports show how the publishers have reacted in a flexible way. Surely this can be attributed partly to your example and your wholehearted commitment as shepherds. We are very grateful to you for this!

However, as you know, some find it difficult to continue having an active share in the ministry. Perhaps they are simply discouraged if their alternative efforts seem to have yielded little response so far. Or they lack ideas to open up new ways to talk “about the magnificent things of God.” (Acts 2:11) This is why we ask you for your support.

As a *body of elders*, please consider promptly and prayerfully how you, as teachers and shepherds, can encourage the publishers to continue yielding spiritual fruit. (*w15* 2/15 pp. 15-18) Remind them lovingly and gently that we want to “preach the word” of God with zeal even in “difficult times.” (2 Tim. 4:2) But please take care to never give publishers the impression that their ministry is inadequate or is not valued.—Luke 21:1-4; Heb. 6:10.

We ask in particular the *field service group overseers* to continue maintaining regular contact with the publishers. In doing so, provide practical suggestions on alternative preaching methods. For instance, show them how some find addresses of people in their personal territory to write them witnessing letters. (See letter to all bodies of elders, dated May 12, 2020.) Could you or other experienced publishers systematically meet with publishers who need help and make arrangements for the ministry, for instance to write witnessing letters together? Are there relatives, work colleagues, former Bible students, return visits, etc., who can be tactfully reached with the good news, perhaps even by phone? Are they using every opportunity for informal witnessing?

Likely, you have already tried one or the other method. These suggestions are only intended to encourage you not to give up in helping Jehovah's sheep continuously to fulfill their desire to preach. Please be assured that Jehovah will bless your special efforts in this regard very much! (Prov. 21:5) We are pleased to send you our warm love.

Your brothers,



ZWEIGBÜRO ZENTRALEUROPA

c: Circuit overseers