

Chabad's Children of Chernobyl Welcomes Our 82nd Rescue Mission

Every CCOC rescue mission is a miracle. Each flight is crowded with children who are eager to begin healthy lives; and each plane is fueled by the generosity and determination of the CCOC family and donor base. Every child CCOC rescues from Chernobyl has a unique story; but all 2,562 children CCOC has rescued throughout time will share a common story—the story of Rabbi Raichik and the miracles he helped accomplish.

The Director of Chabad's Children of Chernobyl, Rabbi Yossie Raichik (z"l), dedicated his life to rescuing children from the toxic environment created by the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. He worked day and night to ensure that children who suffered from cancer, heart maladies, and crippling birth defects as a result of their exposure to the radiation were given the opportunity to live healthy, vivacious lives in Israel.

As the children who were rescued grew stronger, Rabbi Raichik was diagnosed with a serious medical condition and, unfortunately, rapidly grew weaker. Hours before his lungs collapsed and he went into a coma, Rabbi Raichik spoke with the CCOC staff in New York informing us of the severity of his condition and asking that, despite the events that were to unfold, we continue the rescue missions with full force.

On Sunday, September 21, 2008, while Rabbi Raichik was surrounded by family and friends in his hospital room in Israel, 15 sick children were boarding the 82nd Rescue Mission to Israel. We received the exciting news about the young lives that were saved just moments before we received the devastating news about a monumental life that was lost.

We imagine that Rabbi Raichik was sitting in the co-pilot seat—singing and clapping along with the children and telling them all about the wonderful opportunities that would be waiting for them in Israel.

If you would like to share your condolences with Rabbi Raichik's family, please direct all emails to: ccocatccocdotnet.