

# Friends of Ahotokurom

Newsletter Edition 33, September 2016

Registered Charity-DMJ 232421

*Ahotokurom, also referred to as Padre Pio Rehabilitation Centre, was set up 1983 near Cape Coast in Ghana as a centre of Christian hospitality for the disabled and disadvantaged. Friends of Ahotokurom support their work to provide health care, social care and education, encouraging personal growth and independence.*

## Walk Like A Ghanaian

Driving in your own car to go somewhere in Ghana? Well, rural areas do not have good roads and the majority of people cannot afford a car, so they would walk. Walking is essential for Ghanaians and it does not surprise that people there are fit and they also enjoy it.



The sponsored walk in Holy Cross Catford has become an annual event of fun and physical activity while raising awareness and funds for Ahotokurom. Everybody gathered in Greenwich Park in the early morning hours, the youngest "walker" just being 3 months, and also the senior members of the parish were present. The 3 miles walk to Catford in the sun was a nice opportunity to connect with each other. And what a treat to finally have buffet lunch in the parish centre and get a certificate of

attendance. 1,726 GBP were raised! And how fit did we feel afterwards!

## Not Getting Anywhere

The team in Ahotokurom currently has a big affecting all children and carers from St. Elizabeth's special needs unit: The main bus has broken down and the team is currently using a smaller replacement bus.



Unfortunately that means that two trips have to be made and some of the children and carers have to wait for over an hour to get the bus to go home. They also have to get up earlier to go to centre. This is just one of the many issues the team has to deal with on a regular basis. We hope the bus can be repaired very soon!

## Screw Business As Usual

Imagine you are a manager and you are having a business meeting to discuss finances of your project on which lots of people's wellbeing depend. But to have this meeting you first have to travel 5,000 miles. This is what Dr Mark Mantey, the manager of Ahotokurom, does once a year! The funds to enable this

came from a very generous benefactor who wanted to ensure Mark could meet key funders.

Sister Monica and Sister Pat joined Mark on his journey to meet with people across the UK to talk about how to finance Ahotokurom. The team presented an idea of building a residence for young nurses next to the hospital in Cape Coast. The idea of this project is to support professional education for young woman, to connect with the local nursing school, to generate income through renting out the rooms of the residence and to provide a safe and clean shelter for young nurses. A large financial investment is needed but Mark and Sister Monica portrayed an inspiring vision for a project beyond the compound of Ahotokurom.



Mark delivered messages of love, prayers and thanks to all who have listened to his story of hope and success. He spoke of his wish for parishes to come with him in his journey of delivering the practical support that has transformed the lives of so many people in Ahotokurom and Enyindakurom. He invited parishioners out to Ghana where 'you will be welcomed with open arms'.

## With A Little Help From My Friends

The Ahotokurom team made a lot of new friends during their stay, and as a result there is also a new parish supporting Ahotokurom: **Parish of Duneane** in Northern Ireland with its 3 Churches - Our Lady of Lourdes Church (Moneyglass), Sacred Heart Church (Cargin) and St Oliver Plunkett Church (Toome). They already raised a total of £4,463 at the door collection on the weekend of 22nd May 2016!

Mark was also able to visit **Rainham Parish** to update and thank people for the commitment to the scholarship programme for a period of 15 years. At his visit at **Catford Parish** he thanked the team of very dedicated parishioners for their huge commitment to the Special Needs unit.

They also made a link with a couple of Special Needs schools that we hope will lead to exchange of ideas and training. They met with **Eleanor Care** to explore a possible staff training programme and connected with the **St Frances Leprosy Guild** who we are very pleased to report have once again given a grant of £2,500 to support the work with leprosy sufferers. At the same time, people in Ahotokurom celebrated mass in thanksgiving for the guilds 125th anniversary.

We would like to thank **Selsdon Parish** for their loyal support for over 10 years now. The funds raised have helped to cover urgent unforeseen

medical emergencies and ensured that all those connected with the centre can receive essential medical support. Fr Douglas hopes to come and celebrate with the parishioners and next year will see the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his ordination which took place in Selsdon parish in 1987!

Ahotokurom were also successful in gaining a £750 grant from **Jack Petchey Foundation** as a result of Joe's leadership skills - the Head Groundman at Ahotokurom. He will be developing a water saving and irrigation project that will save costs on water, take the pressure off during water shortage and enable the young people to continue to grow crops.



## The Impact Of Brexit

As a consequence of the Brexit vote there has been a massive change in currency values and as a result our last payment to Ahoto was worth almost 12% less than usual. Unfortunately, currency fluctuations are likely to severely impact on what we can send out to Ghana and therefore impacting adversely on the most vulnerable people. We would ask that you continue your

support, raise awareness of the work of Ahotokurom and try to bring new supporters on board – we are happy to report that as all the work in the UK is done on a voluntary basis EVERY SINGLE PENNY that is donated is passed out to Ghana to support the work there.

## With Sympathy



We offer sincere sympathy to Dr Mark Mantey and his family on the death of his mother Dada. Mark's mother was the eldest resident of St Clare's. She was not sure of her age and has no birth certificate but she believed she was over 100 years old and this was corroborated by dates of events she can remember from her childhood. Also a resident of St Clare's was Kojo who died aged 25 due to his disabilities. We will always remember his infectious laugh, a laugh that got everyone going and broke the ice. His greatest gift was his love, he had time for everybody. May they rest in peace.



To make a donation please send a cheque (payable to DMJ Friends of Ahotokurom) to:  
The Treasurer, Holy Cross Parish, 208 Sangley Road, Catford, London SE6 2JS

visit  
[www.ahoto.org](http://www.ahoto.org)