

Friends of Ahotokurom Newsletter



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.

Your support helps people to change their lives. Hear their stories in this newsletter.

July 2018

You are invited

On **Sat 29th September at 2pm** we will celebrate a Mass of Thanksgiving for 21 years of DMJ Friends of Ahotokurom. Our relationship with Ahotokurom has been so fruitful – both in terms of supporting our brothers and sisters in need, and also in developing our own understanding, relationships and creating a channel for mission and hope. It is a relationship that is by no means all 'one way'. As an expression of all the development that has been enabled through Gods love, we want to invite YOU to join in thanksgiving.

The mass will be at [Holy Cross Catholic Church, Sangley Road, Catford, SE6 2JS](#) and it will be followed by afternoon tea in the hall when Dr Mark Mantey and the DMJ Friends of Ahoto will give a brief update. The whole event and Dr Mantey's air fare has been sponsored, so this event is at no cost to our charitable funds.

Please do RSVP and **book your place** for catering purposes [here](https://21-years.eventbrite.co.uk/).
<https://21-years.eventbrite.co.uk/>

www.ahoto.org
Registered Charity - DMJ 1163470

The Harvest is Great

The team at Ahoto are reaping great rewards from the farm project! Not only do they have their eyes set on providing sufficient food for the residents of the centre, they are now also applying organic farming methods to grow food for market! The recently installed irrigation project (set up with help from Jack Petchey Foundation) has enabled year round crop growth. For the first time in the history of the centre they have not had to buy tomatoes and eggplant for 3 months!

Two years ago they decided to pilot a pineapple plantation and grew 300, this was such a success they now have over 2000 growing and the target is to double this! In addition they have planted 700 plantain suckers, 300 mango seedlings and 100 coconut trees. The centre is also going to experiment with Yam. The pig farm has been renovated and there are a few little pigs on the way!



All of this will go a long way to making the centre more sustainable and creating jobs for those who need supportive employment.

The Sun Shines on the Righteous

Another major cost saving is planned with the installation of solar energy. The good news is that two thirds of the project cost (20,000) has been secured from the Irish Embassy. Friends of Ahoto in Antrim have agreed to raise the shortfall of €11,000. A thorough commissioning process is in progress and we hope that work will be able to start soon. Recent fundraising by the Duneane Folk Choir mean that the total now stands at £4,452.....so they are well on the way!

The Wheels on the Bus



Last year the centre was fortunate to host Monsignor Gerald Robinson of St Mary's Cathedral, Middlesbrough, for a brief stay. Fortunately he has returned to the UK and enabled St Mary's to adopt a new fundraising programme for a much needed replacement bus.

As you can imagine the extreme heat, floods and potholed roads make transport an eternal problem. Every day it is necessary to transport disabled children and adults to the centre. It is a bumpy ride and the current bus has begun to become unreliable. When it is off road – it is a disaster. There is no alternative, so it is critical that this main method of transport is replaced as soon as possible. The new appeal has already got off to a wonderful start with over £13,000 raised to date! It is great to see new supporters from the Middlesbrough area on board....thank you!

A Special Place for Special Children

Holy Cross Catford parish have continue to commit their support to the children with disabilities educated at St Elizabeth's special needs unit. There are currently around 35-40 children using the facility every day. They are supported by highly motivated and committed staff, some who have their own special needs and are excellent role models as 'care helpers'. Pictured are families from Holy Cross setting out on their recent sponsored walk from Greenwich to Catford via as many parks as possible! It is great to see young and old, some people with disabilities themselves - all pulling together to raise funds for their brothers in sisters in need! We look forward to hearing how much was raised.



We are also looking forward to later in the year when **Eleanor Care**, a well-respected care provider, have agreed to support two staff from Special Unit through some 'train the trainer' teaching to train up all the staff at the centre.

Palm Crosses

Thank you to all the parishes who used palm crosses made by the disabled children and young people at Ahotokurom this year. We managed to generate £1,790 in donations. This not only brings in valuable funds but helps bring some dignity and respect to the children who can feel they are part of generating income for the project too!

Rainham Scholarship Fund - and Visit

In our next edition we will be bringing you an update on the 10 students currently being funded through vocational training courses by Rainham parish. Over the years we have seen a number of great success stories as students graduate from the programme. This summer some young people from Rainham will be travelling to the centre to experience the work for themselves. They will be helping out with all aspects of work at Ahotokurom and will also meet young people currently on the scholarship programme... so watch this space for an update!

Let's Celebrate!

So that brings us to the end of this brief news update. In today's world with so much negativity and cynicism, it is so refreshing to hear the real good news stories. We want to remind you that **YOU** are part of that! Please do come and celebrate 21 years of commitment and development at Ahotokurom on Saturday 29th September at 2pm.

A little reminder that you will find your invitation [here](#), please do RSVP so we make sure we can welcome all! If for any reason you don't use the internet then register your attendance with a quick text message to 07977 978 536, saying who you are and how many places you want.



We look forward to celebrating with you. God bless – from all at Friends of Ahotokurom.

New Bank Account:

Thank you for your patience with us as we make the transition to our new RBS bank account. We think that most donors now have the new bank details in operation, however if there is any doubt, please to

contact tkilcullen@live.co.uk