

Friends of Ahotokurom

Newsletter Edition 31, June 2015

Registered Charity-DMJ 232421

Dr Mark Mantey's visit

"A man suffering from leprosy came to Jesus and pleaded on his knees saying, 'If you are willing, you can heal me' " (Mark 1:40-45). This gospel on Sunday 15th February became very tangible as Dr Mark Mantey from Ahotokurom was visiting Holy Cross Catford. It was a very busy time for him in the UK, with many meetings to deepen our friendship, to bring news from the Centre and to visit potential funders.



There have been significant changes at Ahotokurom. Sr Pat became the DMJ Africa Provincial in 2014 and moved to Uganda. The Board used the opportunity to undertake a strategic review and as a result with renewed energy and a clear picture of the issues facing the Centre, the team was restructured. One of the most significant changes was the appointment of Dr Mark Mantey as Director! Perhaps his parents had 'Divine' inspiration when they gave him his middle name of 'Moses'! Moses who led his people from slavery to freedom!



A welcoming Guesthouse

Aware of the dire financial situation, Mark has reviewed all the services and prioritised the work. Ahotokurom aims to become more self-sufficient. They hope in particular to generate more funds themselves in Ghana. To this end, a newly renovated 'guesthouse' opened recently and is available to anyone who would like to visit Ahotokurom and Ghana. This is part of a strategic plan to create income generating projects. There are 3 bedrooms, sleeping 6 in total, a fully-fitted kitchen, a washroom with 2 big showers. All rooms have ceiling fans too!



If you would like to visit Ghana and want more information, do not hesitate to contact us!

Cape Coast University getting involved

There is growing local support for the Centre. On St. Valentine's Day the University of Cape Coast Business School arrived at Ahotokurom for a morning of activities with the children from Enyindakurom and Childcare. As well as cash, they donated a large amount of food too.



On another occasion a group of local friends including some young people who had been supported by the Centre, returned to make a generous donation. They wanted to 'give something back' and decided the best place to start would be a place where they all had a deep connection.

Financial Crisis immanent

It is clear the local communities are recognising and appreciating the work of Ahotokurom. Nevertheless, and despite all the efforts, Mark & the leadership team face a huge challenge. The Italian Franciscans have changed the focus of their mission in Ghana and the Centre no longer receives its core funding from them.

The turnover of Ahotokurom is around £70,000 a year. This doesn't seem a lot to support so many disabled people, but in a country where the average professional earns £7,000 a year (that's IF you are in a job), and where many people still live on subsistence farming earning less than a £1 a day – then it is quite a lot of money to find!

IF YOU CAN HELP - THEN PLEASE DO CONSIDER INCREASING YOUR DONATION IF YOU CAN! MEDAASE (THANK YOU)!

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

We wish Mark and the management team all the very best as they reshape the work and develop ways to earn more of their income themselves.

New Sisters

Ahotokurom have welcomed two new DMJ sisters - Sr Eleanora from Burundi who will stay permanently and Sr Catherine from Uganda who will stay for six months. Both sisters are working in St Elizabeth's Special Needs Day Centre and are a great addition to the team. Sr Pat visited the Centre for the Christmas period. She is doing well in her new role based in Uganda.



Good news from Joe!

A little update from the Assessment Unit in the Special Needs Centre. The children are progressing and developing and it is wonderful to see this change.

As a great example, Joe arrived at the Centre nearly two years ago. He is three years old now and has Downs Syndrome. When he arrived he was very weak and couldn't sit up or feed himself. Now Joe is even walking! Everyone is thrilled and there's no stopping him. He's flying around the place and full of energy! He is so cheerful and is loved by everyone.



Leadership Award

The worthy recipients of the Jack Petchey Achievement Awards received their certificates and prizes

in May. The latest recipients are Grace Adongo and Samuel Eshun from Enyinndakurom, along with Stephen Acquah from the Training Centre at St. Elizabeth's Special Needs Day Centre.



This award scheme provides the recognition and praise due to the young people in the community who show leadership capabilities and who can inspire and motivate their peers. Ayekoo (well done) to them!

Sponsored Walk

Holy Cross, Catford is organising a Sponsored Walk to support the work of Ahotokurom. Join them on Saturday 11th July, or you might want to sponsor Fr Doug by sending a donation to the address at the bottom of this page! Thank you!



In our next edition we will focus on some of the vocational scholars being supported by Rainham parish. Meantime we say "MEDASSE - THANK YOU" for your continuing support.



10,000 Palm Crosses

As another income generating activity, everyone at the Centre has participated in the yearly tradition of making palm crosses to be sent to the UK for Easter. It has been a massive team effort with all staff, students and others around Ahotokurom. An impressive amount of 10,000 crosses have been produced in total!

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