

# How is your money spent?



Autumn 2011



This booklet contains accounts<sup>1</sup> of Les Amis projects, written by volunteers who work so tirelessly for us in Burkina Faso. They are the ones who know the individuals whose lives are being changed by your generosity. We think that what they have to say is inspirational and we hope that you will agree.

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<sup>1</sup> All the accounts have been translated from the original French

## **THE YOANN FOUNDATION (IN OUAGADOUGOU)**

*Brother Vianney (Franciscan Capuchin friar)*

*Pélagie Kabré (the mother of the late Yoann)*

*M François Compaoré and Mme Compaoré and other members of the Secular Franciscan Order*

During this year the Yoann Foundation has undertaken its usual activities which include helping the elderly and the widows (financially and with food) and the handicapped (with funds for their physiotherapy and general help). We meet with all the women and children six times per year in order to distribute the help we give.

We met in October, December, February, April, June and July. In December we met twice, the second time in order for our beneficiaries to participate in the joy of Christmas. We organised a big shared meal for everyone to mark this occasion.

In July seven of the children who benefit from the Yoann Foundation received the sacrament of Baptism in the Franciscan friary where the Foundation is based. Brother Vianney celebrated the Mass which was followed by a big meal for those newly baptised and their families and other members of the Yoann Foundation. It was a wonderful day for us all.

### **Children's Schooling ...**

Above and beyond the aid of food and money which we give (which helps to pay for physiotherapy for the handicapped), we also help those women living in poverty and with children money in order to send their children to school. In this way, we give the children the opportunity of a better future for them and for their families.

## Much success this year!

This year, the Yoann Foundation has achieved particular success with a number of individuals who really needed our help: Narcisse, Adama, Bibata and Pascline. But let them speak for themselves ....

My name is **Narcisse**. After having been badly burned on my leg, my foot had become atrophied. According to my parents my chances of recovering the use of my foot were almost nonexistent and, because of that, it was no longer possible for me to go to school. Today, thanks to the Yoann Foundation, the wound which was open and seeping for a long time is now healed and I also had surgery to straighten my knee and flex my heel. I am now able to walk again.



Narcisse



I am **Adama**. Whilst I was born with a handicap, my twin sister was born normal. Since coming into contact with the Yoann Foundation, I have been able to follow a programme of physiotherapy to correct the malformation in my feet. Also, I have had callipers fitted which help me to walk. I am very happy to wear them.

Adama

My name is Bibata. I was born deaf and dumb and have grown up without hearing or being able to talk. I have been lucky to meet the Yoann Foundation because through it I have had proper examinations into my disabilities. After all these tests the doctor treating me said that I have a chance of hearing if I wear a hearing aid. Having been deaf since

my birth it is difficult to understand what people are saying because I don't understand the language. But it is good to hear sound. Today, thanks to the Yoann Foundation, I have a hearing aid and I am happy for my parents, too.



Bibata

My name is Pascaline (no photo of Pascaline) and I am 23 years old this year. Born normal, I lost the use of my legs when I was in Year 3. The lack of funds meant that I have not been able to get back the use of my legs, but thanks to the Yoann Foundation I have been able to get physiotherapy in the first instance, after which I hope to get prosthetics. I am delighted!



I am Yannick. The Yoann Foundation has helped my parents to pay for special shoes to correct the deformity in my feet. Now that this has been achieved, I am happy.

Yannick

We normally meet all our beneficiaries at the friary, when they come to collect their aid. However, we also enjoy visiting them regularly in their own homes in order to see how things are going and to help them to overcome any difficulties they may be encountering.

### **May he rest in peace ...**

Very sadly, the Yoann Foundation announces the death of Hendrix Ribgolongo at the age of 11 years old. Hendrix had been suffering from a kidney defect and had been receiving medication with the help of the Yoann Foundation, medication which his family could not otherwise have afforded. Gillie saw him last October cycling home from school looking well and happy. Everyone was very shocked and saddened, therefore, when he passed away suddenly this year without warning. May he rest in peace.



**Hendrix**

We end this report by entrusting the work of the Yoann Foundation to the motherly intercession of the The Holy Virgin Mary.

### *Brother Vianney and Pélagie Kabré*



## **FATHER PAUL NAZOTIN**

*The money which is sent to Father Paul is spent in a myriad of ways, from the buying of medicine to the buying of cows, from setting up a young seamstress in business to paying for an ambulance for a dying child. Countless nameless individuals are touched by this charity through the work of Fr Paul and this remains, for us, one of the most powerful, important and exciting methods of our giving.*



*Fr Paul*

### **A young dressmaker ....**

As regards the dressmaker, the project began towards the end of 2010. It was in order to help a young girl who found herself in difficulties having trained to be a dressmaker but who, for lack of funds, was unable to set herself up in business and was working in a shop for car parts. She had just lost her job when we had the idea to help her to start her own business. With money from Les Amis we were able to buy her what she needed to open a small shop. The project includes the payment of her shop rental (£30 per month) for a year, that is to say, until November 2011. The idea is for her to be self-sufficient and covering her costs after a year. We are hoping that this will help to overcome the great difficulties of many kinds which she has already had in life.

### **Helping the sick ...**

The sick child had been suffering for some time already from a heart complaint. I had been able to use Les Amis funds to help his family in September 2010. In February 2011 he became acutely ill. This was a boy of just 17-years-old. He and his sister were both born with severe heart malformation. An NGO which had prepared the documentation to get them to Europe for treatment had given priority to his sister and was then waiting to be able to do the same for the boy. In February Gillie and

I found the boy in his village hut and in a desperate situation, being looked after by his mother. His body was very swollen. He should have been in hospital and not there, in the village, without proper treatment. We made contact with his doctor and, thanks to God, despite the very difficult logistics of getting him out of the village, the boy was taken to the capital (Ouagadougou) and into the care of his doctor that same day. It was without doubt too late to save him. However, we were consoled by the thought that he died at the hands of caring professionals. The suffering that he had known whilst he lived was indescribable.

### **Cows and donkeys ...**

Part of the money is used for the purchase of animals. Four people were able to benefit from this part of our project this year. Two families each received a pair of working cows. The families are poor and had never before had cows to help them plough their fields. They were identified by others in their village as needing



help. Everyone is now hoping that, if the rainy season is successful, they will have enough of a harvest to feed themselves without having to look elsewhere for food. Two further people benefited from the purchase of a donkey each. They made the request of me without knowing of the existence of this particular fund, and I take that as a Providential sign. One of them lives not far from where I live and is a man incapable of feeding his family. His poor wife goes to superhuman efforts to make ends meet. He needed the donkey in order to help them in their work. The other beneficiary of a donkey had, every year, to borrow a donkey for his work. This year, he has his own donkey and that will change much for him.

The rest of the Les Amis money was spent in the usual ways ...

- 21 children and adolescents received support to help them with school, health and food
- About 30 families received help notably for food
- Increased use of the money for reasons of health and the purchase of medicines
- Eight people received help for their training in a trade, of which seven were girls

Help given to individuals varies greatly. One example among many is that of Noëlla who is a 15-year-old girl. She is an orphan who has to work in order to go to school. During the holidays she buys bananas which she sells on in order to buy books, pens and to pay her school fees. Thanks to Les Amis, she now has no worries about the forthcoming school year.

Another case is that of Éliette, a girl who came to town to work as a housemaid in a family in order to help her mother. She continues to work with this family in the hope of recovering arrears of nearly a year and, by so doing, return to the town from where she comes originally.

I remain very grateful to Les Amis for this precious help. It gives relief and help to so many people in both direct and indirect ways. The recipients greatly appreciate this discretion because most come to me, personally, and not to an association.

For myself, I pray daily that the Lord will remain close to those supporters of Les Amis, both known and unknown, who make so much happiness possible here in Burkina Faso.

*Ab Paul Nazotin*

## **PROTECTING GIRLS IN THE KOUPELA DIOCESE**

### **Keeping Orphans in Education**

The help given is valuable in itself, not to mention incalculable. It deserves a gratitude expressed over and over again. Therefore I am once again happy to reiterate the gratitude on behalf of the orphans who are supported by Les Amis. St Monica's [a home to the older girls who are orphans] is still able to give an education to ten of our secondary school girls and to 20 others who have been able to attend primary school thanks to the support of Les Amis. Unfortunately the academic year was generally disrupted by unrest and strikes, disturbances which spread throughout the country. In our own area, particularly, the unrest compromised the school year. Thanks to God everything is now calm once again and lessons were able to continue, despite the unrest. With the help of Les Amis, children were able to complete the year and get encouraging results. Some examples include ...

### **Our secondary school girls ...**

We are delighted to tell you that Nathalie has succeeded in her BEPC [a French qualification]. Her father has died and her mother, a widow who suffers from a mental illness, is not able to give her daughter any support or help with her education. Thank you for having saved this girl from her very difficult life. This qualification gives her the chance of finding work. However, the best thing is that she can now continue into the final year of her Baccaalaureate.

Simone (who does not have a mother) is preparing to take her Baccaalaureate in 2012. Simone is hoping to pass her exams in order either to enter a profession or to continue her studies at university. For the moment she is the first of these ten orphans of St Monica's to have got this far in their studies. Without the help of Les Amis she would have been expected to stay and work within her home.

## **Our primary school girls ...**

Juliette has lost both her parents and lives with her aunt who, herself, has been a widow for a long time. Juliette was about to leave school because of a lack of funds. This poverty was made worse by chronic rheumatism. With the help of Les Amis this orphan has not only been able to get treatment but she has also done well at school. Juliette will be moving on to secondary school this academic year (2011-2012).

Nathalie's father died unexpectedly following a short illness. This death traumatised the family and left them feeling hopeless. Very often in Africa it is not known what illness one has or why people die because it is not easy to get access to healthcare. Help received from you is a breath of fresh air, a lifeline in taking care of Nathalie.

Nathalie's story is sad, but future happiness is possible thanks to Les Amis. Orphans in this situation have made the best of this help because they have been successful in their primary education. Next academic year they will be going to secondary school. With Les Amis the future is promising for them. Thank you very much for your generosity of heart and for your sensitivity to the orphans' difficulties. Thank you very much and God bless you.

*Abbé Pascal SILGA, Aumônier du foyer Sainte Monique*

## **Helping girls who have run away from forced marriages**

Aspects of some of our traditions unfortunately mean that we still have young girls who are obliged to run away from their families in order to escape forced marriages. This year the refuge has welcomed and looked after thirty young girls in this situation. They are offered a secure shelter from an otherwise tragic future, fed and taught skills that will help them towards a more independent life. At the start of this year the girls who have been receiving lessons in reading and writing in Mooré for the past two years, all passed their exams. We are not continuing with these lessons because most of the girls have now benefited from this course.

On the other hand, weaving and other activities have continued as in previous years. They make some lovely things.

The biggest thing of note this year is the building of the dormitory. Indeed, our wish to see these young girls benefit from decent buildings for their life and their work has been possible with the financial help of Les Amis. The finances received allowed the building of the dormitory plus annexes (shops) and the furnishing of the dorms with beds, sheets and mosquito nets - everything necessary for a more comfortable life. This new building is also air conditioned to make it more bearable during the hot season and the floor is tiled which helps them to keep it clean. For these young girls from rural backgrounds this building is a virtual paradise. A secure wall has even been built to guarantee security. This has been a wonderful contribution to the refuge and to the safeguarding of these girls.

It is therefore with a heart overflowing with gratitude that I write these words to tell you how much your help is creating a new future for many young girls in this country. May this bring you many blessings. Thank you very much on behalf of all the beneficiaries. We keep you in our prayers and ask God to bless you.

*Abbé Charles Ouemenga,  
Econome Diocésain, Diocèse of Koupéla*



**Gillie with some of the girls at the refuge**

# YADA CARDS

Mr Oumarou Yada is an artist who makes the most wonderful cards. He paints oils onto cotton and then the cotton is stuck onto the card. Every single card is individually painted by hand and is therefore a unique work of original art.

We are delighted to be able to help Mr Yada by selling his cards here in the UK. Without such support he would find it very difficult to make a living.

Cards costs just £1.50 each and are available from our website and also from Gillie directly.





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