

## Carina Saarloos in Mali



## Newsletter December 2009

**Dear family, home congregation, friends and supporters,**

December has arrived. Just a few more weeks to go and the year 2009 will be over. A lot has happened these past few months. Since I regularly write updates on my weblog <http://carinainmali.blogspot.com/> it feels like I have to do some sort of research to find out what I can put in my newsletter. I do not want to repeat myself but at the same time I do want to inform those people who can not access my weblog of the lock, stock and barrel here in Mali or those of you who cannot read Dutch !

Let me start with something personal. A few days ago I was reading the complete chapter of Proverbs 3. You need to know that every day for the past 2 weeks I am reciting the text of Proverbs 3: 5-6 out loud. This text is printed on a tile that is hanging on the wall of my office. While reading the whole chapter verse 24 struck me: **"When you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet."** This verse appealed to me because it has been a while now that I have trouble sleeping. There are nights that I have no trouble at all but other nights I can only think of the words of Paul in 2 Corinthians 6:5 : "in sleepless nights". Please pray with me for good nights of sleep. My desire is written in the words of Psalm 131:2 **"But I have stilled and quieted my soul; like a weaned child with its mother, like a weaned child is my soul within me."**

Another personal point of prayer is the performance of the Messiah of Handel. I am a soprano in a mixed choir of white and African people. On the **13<sup>th</sup> of December** we hope to perform the Messiah in English in Bamako. A lot of the members of the choir do not believe in Jesus but they do sing the script, which at some points is literally taken from the Bible. Pray that they will meditate on the lines they have to sing. Pray that the performance on the 13th of December will be fantastic and that hearts will be touched by the lyrics and the music!

## RAHAB CENTRE

As of the end of October we officially are a foundation. It has been a long process with many challenges and lessons in practicing patience for me, but we are very grateful to finally hold the papers in our hands. We are so blessed with our new building. This enables us to practice all Rahab activities from our new location. Since we can also accommodate women there, we can offer crisis shelter. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October I



found Kadjatou on the streets. She was pregnant and sick. We took her to a clinic where she was treated for two days. She returned to our centre on Saturday the 24<sup>th</sup> and that same night she gave birth to a little girl, Mawa. Unfortunately, Kadjatou and Mawa were taken away by family a few days later. They were concerned about Mawa and didn't trust Kadjatou with her. So they decided Mawa needed to stay with family. After this Kadjatou did visit the centre a couple of times, to show little Mawa and to ask for help when she needed to pay pharmacy recipes. At the end of November I was told that she was seen at the bus station working again as a prostitute. When I visited her on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November I found that she took up her

former job, little Mawa being there with her.  
**The picture shows Kadjatou together with Angela and Anatole Seke, the couple that lives in the centre.**

On the 12th of November Yaye gave birth to a beautiful boy named Musa, Moses in English. Yaye is the 17 year old pregnant ex-prostitute who lives with us. The first couple of days after the delivery she was exhausted, but you can tell that Yaye loves her little boy more and more every day. And it is not just Yaye who is fond of Musa; Angela and Anatole and their daughters Daniella and Carina are crazy about him too! It is great to see them all together and to watch them pray together. Yaye will stay with us just a bit longer (2 to 3 months), until she decides what the next step in her life will be.

**The picture on the right shows Yaye en Musa!!**

Since the 12<sup>th</sup> of October we have 13 year old Jelika living in our centre. It truly

was a miracle that we ran across her on her first night of working as a prostitute. We took her to the centre. Jelika is a very kind and helpful girl. She opens up more and more and starts asking all kinds of questions about our faith in Jesus. Her family lives in a village that is 3 hours away from Bamako. Jelika was sent here to find a job to help out her family financially. They have no idea of the adventure she ended up in. In February 2010 we want to reunite Jelika with her family.

**The picture on the left shows Jelika making a Christmas angel!**

I would like to ask you to pray for Bintu. Originally I know Bintu from the female prison. She is also a former Rahab woman. Bintu is very ill and is getting worse very quickly. She has AIDS in an advanced stage and suffers from other

medical complications as well, for example stomach aches. Last year Bintu became a Christian and was baptised, but only now our team discovered that a lot of times she hid the truth concerning her life. Even the stage of her illness could have been different if she would have gone to a clinic and asked for help. After all these years in Africa I still do not understand this difference in culture and I keep on struggling with it.

**The picture on the right shows Aya, Bintu and Angela.**



The women in the training program are very busy making all sorts of things for Christmas. Big and small table cloths are dyed using batik techniques and they are also sewing Christmas angels. By trying to sell these articles to the white people we hope to bring some grist to the mill. Every month a lot of money is spent on crisis shelter and childbirths and so on. The past few weeks the theme of our weekly bible studies on Friday was prayer.

We also talked about that the women themselves should pray together.

So bit by bit the women carefully dare to pray out loud. It is really fascinating to see them change! **The picture on the right shows Sara and Aminata praying together.**



- **Pray that the donations made to the Carina project fund will be sufficient to pay the rent and other costs. Please take a moment to see if you can make an extra donation to my project fund?**
- **Pray that the Lord takes pity on Kadjatou and little Mawa**
- **Pray for awareness and energy for the Seke family and Yaye with little Musa, Jelika and Sara, the girls that live with them in the centre.**
- **Pray for peace and quiet for Bintu, being as sick as she is. Pray that she straightened out all aspects of her life with her Lord and Saviour.**
- **Thank for the beautiful things that take place in the centre. The Lord is changing hearts!**
- **Pray for this special month and for the Monday evenings in particular. On this night we go out into the streets and regularly meet new prostitutes.**
- **Pray with us profoundly from the 17th up to the 23rd of December. Every day we will have Christmas celebrations in several prisons and amongst women of the streets (on page 4 you will find our daily schedule for this period)**

## PRISON WORK AND PHILEMON CENTRE

The team that is responsible for the visiting of prisons is regularly startled by the malnutrition amongst the prisoners. We decided to go and have a word with "Islamic Relief". This organisation is somewhat similar to World Vision, an organisation that supports humanitarian projects, only this organisation is Arabic and 100 % Muslim. Maybe they were able to support our December Christmas celebrations? Unfortunately they could not help us out with that, but for their big Tabaski festival they were prepared to donate five cows. This would be to support our work amongst the prisoners. On the 27<sup>th</sup> of November our cows were ready for pick up. We delivered four of them at the prisons where they were slaughtered before our very noses! Cow number five was butchered in the same stride and waits for Christmas to come in a freezer somewhere in Bamako. We will have meet in the Christmas meals in the prisons! Praise the Lord.



**A few pictures showing the cows we received!!**

Things are really going great in centre Philemon, the shelter for male ex convicts. At this moment pastor Samuel Coulibaly is in charge in the centre. The pastor an older widower who really loves the boys that live there, something you can feel in the entire atmosphere at the centre. At this point the boys are busy making all kinds of things for Christmas. They hunger for genuineness and love to study the bible and pray with each other. Jean-Claude, Boubacar and Amadou live in the centre. They are doing their utmost in the fret working project.



**The first picture shows pastor Coulibaly, the second one shows Boubacar and Jean Claude, proudly presenting some of their handmade articles.**

- ***Thank the Lord with me for the cows we received for the prisoners.***
- ***Thank for referent Coulibaly and pray that the boys in the centre will gain a lively believe in Jesus.***



Dear friends, at the end of the year 2009 I would like to thank you all so much for your prayers and moral and financial support. It is also thanks to you that mission is still possible! Can I count on your support again in 2010?

**I would like to wish you all a blessed Christmas and I pray that you will all have Gods peace and quiet in 2010  
Be blessed!**

**Carina Saarloos**  
**Mission Protestante CMA**  
**B.P. 2233 Bamako – Mali**  
**Tel: (00223) 20-22-02-64**  
**mobiel (00223)- 66-74-88-78**  
**E-mail: [csaarloos@cama.nl](mailto:csaarloos@cama.nl)**  
**web site :[www.carinainmali.nl](http://www.carinainmali.nl)**  
**<http://carinainmali.blogspot.com/>**

**Gifts for this work among the disenfranchised people are very welcome at: C&MA P.O. box 35000 Colorado Springs CO 80935 for C&MA Mali Saarloos work special account nr. 310240**

***This is my program for the Christmas celebrations of 2009. This makes it easier for you to think of us and pray for us specifically! Print it out and hang it on your fridge for example !***

**Thursday December 17th 10.h00 – 11.30 prison: Bolle - femmes**

Female prison. At the moment there are about 130 women. Most of them are under age. Christmas celebration with songs and the Christmas story, telling them about the birth of the Lord Jesus. I will tell them the Christmas story myself in the Bambara language! Afterwards we will hand out gifts and candy to the children and soap and cake for everybody.



**Thursday December 17th 12.h00 – 13.30 prison: Bolle - mineur**

Prison for under aged boys, varying in age from 14 to 18 years old. At this moment there are about 110 boys. Christmas celebration with songs, the Christmas story about the birth of the Lord Jesus by referent Isiaka. After that we will hand out Christian literature, soap and cake to everybody.

**Thursday December 17th 19.h30 – 21.h30 Christmas carols on te streets**

With a group of missionaries and my guitar we want to go out into our quarter to sing Christmas carols in English, French and Bambara. We want to tell everybody that our Lord Jesus came to earth and that He is our only Saviour and not Mohammed, as a lot of our neighbours believe.

**Friday December 18th 9.h00 – 12.h00 Rahab Centre**

Christmas with the ten women of the training centre and the other women who live here. I will also invite the women that have followed the training but are no longer in the centre. In total, we will be with thirty women that morning. Today, as always on Friday, we will listen to God's word. I will explain the Christmas story in the Bambara language and, just like last year, I want to make a special invitation to the women to leave prostitution and follow Jesus. Pray for this special Christmas celebration! There will be presents for everybody and at the end of the morning we will share a special meal-of-love!

**Sunday December 20th 15h00 – 18h.00 Philemon Centre**

The shelter for ex-convicts. This year we decided we want to go out into Dara, the village in which the centre is set. We want to tell the villagers about Jesus. We will have a Christmas celebration in open air, supported by sound equipment and a choir for the occasion. The local radio station will be attending as well. After this celebration we will go to the centre to have a meal with the boys and some guests. We also want to give each of the boys a new set of clothes, and couple of cd's and cassettes with Christian music.

**Monday December 21st 19.h00 - 21.00 Streets of Bamako**

Tonight the Rahab team will hit the streets and hand out Christmas presents to the prostitutes. I will bring my guitar so we can sing some Christmas carols. We will pray for the women we encounter.

**Tuesday December 22nd 10.h00 Kati prison**

A prison in which 220 men are packed in only four prison cells. Christmas celebration with songs and the Christmas story, telling them about the birth of the Lord Jesus. After that we will hand out Christian literature, soap and cake to everybody. Around noon we will share a meal of delicious rice and peanut sauce. The dish will be made on the spot by the women of the Rahab Centre.

**Wednesday December 23rd 10.h00 Prison in Koulikoro**

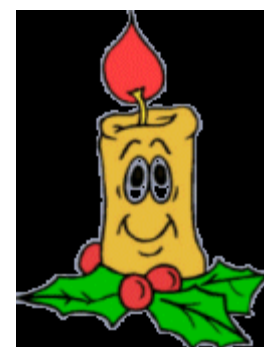
(One half of our team will go here. I will be joining this group.) A prison holding 120 men. Christmas celebration with songs and the Christmas story, telling them about the birth of the Lord Jesus. After that we will hand out Christian literature, soap and cake to everybody. Around noon we will share a meal of delicious rice with a lot of meat and vegetables. The dish will be made by the women of the Rahab Centre.

**Wednesday December 23rd 10.h00 Big central prison in Bamako**

(The other half of our team will go here.) A prison with 1800 men. Almost a village on its own in the centre of Bamako. Christmas celebration with the Christians in this big prison. Christmas story about the birth of the Lord Jesus. After that we will hand out Christian literature and cake for the Christians, afterwards soap for everybody.

**Thursday December 24th 18h00 Christmas meal at Carina's with the families of my employees**

I decided to celebrate Christmas this year with Sita, my housekeeper and her family, and Alasane, my nightguard and his wife. All of them are Muslims but are very open towards the Christian religion. We will share a meal together and afterwards I want to show them part of the Jesus movie in Bambara.



***Isaiah 9:6 "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace!"***

***Dearest regards of your Carina!***