



Carina Saarloos in Mali

Newsletter October 2006



"A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation. God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound in chains."

Psalms 68: 5 and 6

God's family!

A while ago I was listening here in Bamako to a recording of a sermon held in my CAMA home church in Middelharnis. The preacher was talking about being a congregation and the essence of a community. He referred to the two basic things every human being needs in his life; Love and Sense. To me, it pointed out very clearly that my work amongst the prisoners and prostitutes is no different and so we have to emphasize functioning as community. Prisoners are often turned away by their families and really drink in the love of the Lord. As representatives of a loving and caring Lord, it is our duty to provide a spiritual family and to help them to be spiritually nourished.

For this reason I see it as an urgency to open "Centre Philémon", the shelter for prisoners, still this year and to see it function as a loving community. The same goes for "Centre Rahab", the open house for women, and the training centre in Yirimadio. The Psalmist puts it so very beautiful in Psalms 68:6 "God setteth the solitary in families". That is what we long for, giving hope to those who gave up hope, but also giving them a house, literally, and be a spiritual family for them. It is up to them to say "yes" and up to us to surround these people with our thoughts and prayers. God bless you!

Centre Rahab!



In the passed four months, over eighty different women have stepped over the treshold of our open house. Not all of them are prostitutes, but

they are all women searching for love, hope and security in their lives. At the moment twelve of

them are working in our training centre. Some of them keep coming every week. When asking some of them why they keep coming back, they often reply that they experience peace, quiet and love in our little but very cosy room. At those moments I can only be grateful and encourage them with a story from the bible before also praying for their needs. Others keep coming to see a Jesus-movie in their own language or to view another Christian movie, for example about the life of Joseph or Moses. In Bamako, the need amongst the women is overwhelming, and every week the waiting list for our training centre is getting longer!

- *Pray for Aya, Angela, Nyagali, Ewien and myself as we try to take care of and guide these women the best we can.*
- *Pray that the women who are looking for the truth will come to our centre.*

Training centre Yirimadio

As of the beginning of August 2006 the partnership with the women's prison is a fact. Together we have opened the doors of a training centre in the district of Yirimadio. From Monday to Friday 20 women are coming to our centre. Twelve of them are prostitutes, 5 are ex-convicts and 3 are widows. Four days a week they work in our centre and Friday is reserved for the word of God. The women arrive at around 8.30 and work from 9.00 to about 12.30. After that they enjoy their meal together, they clean up and to the dishes.

Around 15.00 the women are ready to go home. Main activity is making soap. Up to now we have



made two different kinds of soap. The first sort is a ball and is used for doing dishes and washing clothes. The second sort is rectangular and has more of the scent that we imagine to go with soap. This last one is used for washing the human body. We also started some other activities, since making soap is not a morning filling programme.

They learned how to do crochet and this month they are busy making angels out of fabric that can be put up in the Christmas tree. My American colleagues are especially interested in this project.



This picture shows Veronique with a self made angel.

Veronique is enormously touched by God's love for her and has decided to stop being a prostitute. She does not sleep well while in her dreams she is constantly being harrassed by men. Last Friday referend Siaka Koeta was in our centre and together with him we prayed for the liberation of Veronique.

As there is no working on Fridays, women tend to see it as a holiday when they all gather in their sunday best. They have learned a lot of Christian songs in the Bambara language and heard different biblical stories like "the prodigal son", "the sinner that washes the feet of Jesus", and others.

- *Pray for wisdom and insight for Bassira who has the daily charge in the centre.*
- *Pray that the women will be touched by the love of the Lord Jesus.*
- *Pray for liberation of body and spirit of Veronique.*

Various

Centre Philémon

At the moment we are working on the last bits and pieces regarding logistical things before the doors of Philémon will open, beginning of December. At this point we have four ex-convicts who are going to be baptised as well. They are waiting eagerly for a place in the centre.

With that we also have a handfull of boys who are at this point still held in prison. We hope to be able to start with approximately ten young men, and within a year we want to expand to about fourty ex-convicts.

Leadership team

This year my colleagues chose me to be in the CAMA leadership team for Mali. Actually, it was not a task I very much aspired, but by being chosen so convincingly,

I can rely on the fact that the Lord wants to use me in this position. Our first week of meetings has already passed and concluding I can say that it was like diagnosing the health of our team and every one's job. All in all very educational.

Home assignment coming up

At this point it still seems to be very far off, but with all busy schedules of communities and individuals I want to let you all know as early as possible that I will be coming home to the Netherlands on home assignment next year. I will be there from the end of March up to the end of June 2007. During the months of April and May I will be available for presentations. My home committee will for sure inform you more specific in the coming newsletter (Dec. 2006)

- *Pray for referend Enock, referend André and myself regarding the last preparations for Philémon.*
- *Pray for me in this new task as executive in the CAMA team.*
- *Pray for my health. Since the beginning of October I am having a nasty bronchitis which takes a lot of energy.*
- *Thank for the rain season that is coming to an end now. Pray for the harvest of the fields.*

Dear supporters and friends in prayer, please do not forget to check my website once in a while! I thank you for your prayers and financial support for myself. Greetings from a sultry Mali where the rain season is coming to an end.

Dearest regards from your Carina

Carina Saarloos, Mission Protestante CMA,
B.P. 2233, Bamako in Mali
Tel: (00-223) 222-02-64 of 674 88 78 (GSM)
E-mail: csaarloos@cama.nl. Skype: carinasaarloos
website: www.carinainmali.nl

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