

How is your money spent?



Autumn 2016

This newsletter contains accounts of Les Amis projects written by volunteers who work so tirelessly for us in Burkina Faso.¹ 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.

THE YOANN FOUNDATION IN OUAGADOUGOU

Written by Brother Rozario (*right*) a Franciscan Capuchin friar of the parish of St Pio in Ouagadougou

I take this precious opportunity to thank each and every supporter of Les Amis for their generosity towards us. I would like to cite some of the events which took place in the past year.

Christmas Celebrations: This year we had a Christmas celebration on 19th December 2015 ([see pictures below](#)). Brother Sahayam gave the Christmas message, then all the children received their Christmas gifts and all the elderly women each received a dress. At the end, all of us shared a very good dinner.



We are very sad to inform you that this year two children left us to see the heavenly Father: Dorine ([below left](#)) and Bianca ([below right](#)).



This year we are happy to receive a new child namely, Heloise, ([below](#)) who is 13 years old. She lives with her mother (the father doesn't live with family). During the seventh month of pregnancy, the doctor told her mother that the child had died in the womb, so they tried to remove the child but they couldn't. In the ninth month of pregnancy they removed the child by caesarean section, only to find that the child was alive but not able to move. She was not able to move because of the medicine which they had given to the mother during the attempt, at seven months, to remove the unborn baby. God has given new life to her, now with the beautiful smile, she thanks the Yoann Foundation for its generous help.



The Yoann Foundation now gives a meal to all the children and the elderly women when they come together for the distribution of money and food aid. Thank you, Les Amis, for your generous help. This year you have helped 20 disabled children and 20 elderly women. All these disabled children and elderly women are very grateful, thank you and God bless you.

FR PAUL NAZOTIN

Written by Fr Paul Nazotin (*right*)

As always, the money which Les Amis gives to me to be distributed goes to a wide variety of people who need varying degrees of help. For the most part the money is spent in helping children go to school, access health care and food. I give below an example of an orphaned girl who needs help to see her through her education ...



Les Amis has paid school costs for Noémie every year for almost five years. She lost her mother when she was very young. In May of this year she also lost her father. She is going into her final year of school and should pass her Baccalaureate next year. As soon as the holidays begin she sells onions by the roadside, running after every bus which stops, to try to sell her merchandise. She does this from 8am until 9pm every day. In three months she earns a bit less than 150 Euros which she uses to pay for her schooling, to buy clothes, to eat at school and to maintain her bicycle. The help she gets from Les Amis means that she can make ends meet. She and her sister (who is at university, and who undertakes the same work of selling onions in the holidays) say thank you to Les Amis. I have huge admiration for these two sisters who are working hard.

¹ All the accounts have been translated from the original French

FR LAMBERT SAWADOGO

Written by Fr Lambert Sawadogo (*right*)

For yet another year Les Amis has been able to support many people and contribute to making many lives easier and happier.

In **Bousa** Les Amis helped many families by paying for their children's school fees. Paying for school fees is a huge burden for many families. School is not free for children in this country. 72 children between primary and secondary school age were helped in this way this year.



The second group to benefit from the support given by Les Amis support is a **group of women** who work really hard in the growing of a variety of crops. The help you give is by the granting of micro-credit to get started with the growing of cereals, vegetables, pulses, etc. Every year their capital increases which allows the group (exclusively for women) to welcome new members. When women earn, the whole family benefits.

Last year, with the support of Les Amis, the Parish of Bousa built a **block of four shops**. The shops are now fully rented out and are bringing in regular income for the parish which will help the parish to support those who need help.

Abelle is living in Fada with her children Alard and Karine. Last year you installed solar panels to allow her to have lights in her house and to run a fridge; this year Abelle needed to repair the wall around her house. With all the work you have carried out, Abelle at last feels safe and secure. Les Amis has changed Abelle's family life. They no longer feel so alone and abandoned.

Thank you for your part of creating better life conditions for hundreds of people. Thank you for your solidarity which helps children, women, men, to feel loved and keep HOPE in their life. May God bless each one of you. PLEASE NEVER GIVE UP ON YOUR CHARITY!

PROTECTING AND EDUCATING GIRLS IN THE KOUPELA DIOCESE

Written by Fr Athanase Bere, Diocesan Bursar ([above right](#)) and Sister Francoise Ilboudo ([below right](#))



The Refuge for Runaway Girls in Baskouré



In the course of this year 2015-2016 there were 29 girls at the refuge. Amongst them 23 had run away from a forced marriage. After being threatened by their families, three went back to their parents and were married off. There are eleven school age girls, seven of which are secondary and four are primary. Further to our usual activities, such as weaving, growing things, making soap, they now have new equipment for making soap. On 5th June 2016 one of our girls – Léa – was Baptised. This was a huge joy for all the girls, and very particularly for Léa. The day was beautiful thanks to your support. She thanks you.



Your assistance has helped us to pay our electricity bills, to repair our equipment and doors, to access medical help and to buy food stuffs such as rice, maize, oil, green beans and condiments. The girls send you their sincere thanks. At the moment it is the rainy season. The season began well and has continued to be good.

The stories of some of the girls at the refuge



My name is Jacqueline and I am 15 years old. I was orphaned of both parents. Being their only child, I was adopted by my uncle who treated me badly, saying that I must be an evil child (in some circles, it is considered that a child must be evil to have lost both parents so young). Before that, I had considered my uncle to be like a father to be, only to then be told that he thought I was the cause of the death of my parents, and all the village agreed. He refused to send me to school along with his own children, and all the housework fell to me. I wasn't given enough to eat or enough clothes to wear. I suffered a lot. One day I was surprised to learn from neighbours that I had been given in marriage to a 72-year-old man. They had intended to surprise me by taking me directly to his house. Thankfully, I had already heard about the refuge in Baskouré situated about 52 kilometres from our house. That night, whilst everyone was asleep, I got up and ran away. I ran through the bush without any shoes. I spent two nights on my own in the bush. I met some children who were looking after

their herds and they gave me peanuts which kept me going. As soon as I arrived in Baskouré I was taken to the refuge by a woman; everyone who saw me was scared and thought I was mad because of the state I was in, covered in dust. Today I am very happy because I have been welcomed to the refuge. I feel relaxed and am happy to now be getting an education. I am learning a lot to help me with my future, all thanks to the help you give. Thank you for all that you do for us.



My name is Maddie and I am 17 years old. I was lucky enough to attend school until my father died when I was eight years old. Two years after the death of my father, my mother also died after a short illness. That was when my misery began. My grandfather gave me away into a forced marriage to a 70-year-old man. According to the custom I had to obey, otherwise I would be banished from the family. They no longer allowed me to go to school, but to work for the family. One evening I was surprised by five young people of the village who had been told by my grandfather to take me to the house of my husband-to-be. I tried everything to escape. I fought and I cried for someone to come to my help, but in vain. I was taken to the old man's house. That same night, pretending that I needed to go outside to relieve myself, I took the chance to run away and into the bush where I spent the night. It was about 50 kilometres from Baskouré. I followed the traffic all morning in order to seek asylum at the refuge. What a joy it was that day to arrive!!! Having arrived I was warmly welcomed. I am now attending school thanks to your support and help. Thank you.

Sainte Monique Home in Gounghin, in the Diocese of Koupéla

Written by Fr Pascal Silga ([right](#))

Thank you to all the benefactors of Les Amis. Last year you very kindly gave us £3,000 to help those orphaned ex-secondary schoolgirls of St Monique's to access further education. The girls have benefited from this help, even though they no longer live at St Monique's. On behalf of all the girls in difficulty I reiterate my thanks to Les Amis. Thanks to your financial support the girls have seen their dreams of daring to get to university become a reality. Here are the testimonies of some of the beneficiaries:



Charlene ([left](#)) has no father, and her mother is without work and therefore has real money troubles. The obtaining of her Baccalaureate in 2015, instead of being a joy, became a nightmare. Not having any hope of following her studies to university, Charlene fell in with a crowd of drop-outs. Your unexpected help has been, for Charlene, providential, and her mother is delighted that her daughter now has access to higher education. Charlene successfully completed her first year (2015-2016) at the University of Ouagadougou studying Economics and Business Management.

Osanne has very poor parents. Her father suffers from chronic asthma. Not only can he not work, but he has to take regular and expensive medication. This physical handicap and his financial difficulties forced Osanne to abandon any hopes of studies after her Baccalaureate, which she gained in 2015. Thanks to Les Amis, Osanne was able to register at the University of Ouagadougou to study History and Archaeology. Her first year is over and Osanne is happy to be able to continue her studies into the second year. Osanne wants to share her joy with Les Amis so that others may be happy with her.

Clemence ([right](#)) has no father and her mother has no money. Obtaining her Baccalaureate left her with lots of questions such as, how would it be possible to get to university? Her academic experience was decisive in her choice to carry on with her training with the Sisters of Consolation in Togo. After a year of great success at the university between 2015 and 2016, and thanks to the help of Les Amis and the Sisters, Clemence is happy to be more and more integrated in the life of the Sisters, hoping to imitate them in their way of life. Clemence says that she would like to model her life on those who support Les Amis; that is to say to give up her life in order to help the poor. Thank you to Les Amis for all the financial help which you have given, and for the values of humanity and spirituality which you have communicated to everyone.



The Nursery and Primary Schools in Gounghin (Koupela Diocese)

Written by Fr Athanase Bere

The school year has gone very well for both our nursery and primary school in Gounghin thanks to your help.

In the primary school there are 117 pupils across three classes (55 girls and 62 boys). Your financing 20 of the pupils has helped us a lot. The number of children attending is increasing and we are hoping to construct three more classrooms plus a well.

Your financial support of the nursery school ([below](#)) has helped us to ensure the education of many children as well as feeding them and helping them towards the cost of the uniform. Next year we are hoping to build a toilet (there is none at the moment), and also construct a perimeter wall in order to keep the children safe. Your donations towards this would be a great help to us.



All of us – me (the Diocesan Bursar), the teachers, pupils and parents – pray for you that God will give you the strength and the means to continue to help our children. May you continue to support us, particularly as we need to build new classrooms.

ST JOSEPH'S TRAINING CENTRE FOR GIRLS IN FADA

Written by Sister Antoinette Ouédraogo ([right](#))

We are happy to tell you how your help and support has helped the eight girls of St Joseph's Training Centre in Fada whom you are funding. You have covered the annual costs of this year's training as couturiers. They have worked well and have progressed to the next stage of their training. One of them, Thomasine, has now finished her training and must embark upon a work placement. With your help we have been able to afford to feed them three times a day. You have also repaired the wall around the training centre where they are accommodated, and this keeps them safe. They have also benefited from the purchase of mosquito nets. In short, they are now very happy with their living accommodation, with their training and with their lives in general.



Celeste and Felicia have now completely finished both their training and their work placements, and are now working in their own workshop. All the girls have access to medical treatment should they need it. We have also had the joy of the Baptism of Fantine and Celeste ([left](#)). Because of your help, we were able to ensure that they had something nice to wear and a meal to share with their friends. Words will never be enough to thank you for all that you do.

HAVING A HAND IN EDUCATION

Written by Father Jean-Baptiste Yarga, Diocesan Director of Education



College Saint Michel of Manni

In February 2015 Gillie arrived at Manni, a big village in the north of our diocese. The objective of her visit was to establish a friendship between the two primary schools, Saint Edmund's in Godalming and Saint Michel's in Burkina Faso. During a meeting with the association of parents and management committee of school Saint Michel we expressed the best wish of the inhabitants of Manni: "We need your support in order to have a Catholic secondary school for our children so that our children of Saint Michel's Primary School would be able to continue their studies in this area". Gillie was very surprised, astonished. But she did not reject this demand. That day she said: "I will do my best!" Gillie has done her best. Yes! A new building is built, ready to receive the first students next October for the school year 2016-2017. Thank you God. It is marvellous. Thank you to the dear benefactors. Please let us sing this song: 'Bind us together Lord, bind us together Lord with cords that cannot be broken, bind us together Lord, bind us together in love.'

Saint Agnes Home becomes Saint Agnes School of Fada

The Saint Agnes refuge/home in Fada was opened to young girls. This refuge allowed them to have a place for their studies. But the buildings of the refuge were old and needed restoration. On top of that, our bishop was planning to open a college for young girls. The main reason is because girls are very vulnerable. Girls are often less supported than boys with regard studies. In this refuge girls are safe, looked after and surrounded by religious Sisters. Through Gillie and her benefactors, the buildings of the refuge were restored; the refuge became a college. We are very happy and so are the girls. These young girls come from villages and regions of the area. May almighty God bless you, protect you and reward you abundantly.



Les Amis – Burkina Faso, 11 Mare Lane, Hascombe, GU8 4JH
01483 208432 / www.les-amis-bf.org.uk

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