



Association suisse des Amis
de Soeur Emmanuelle

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LETTERS TO FRIENDS OF SISTER EMMANUELLE

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Dear Friends,

In addition to Kamal's report on the evolution of our programs, you can read in this letter the one of Danielle and Leon Meynet, both of Haiti Cosmos; they went to Haiti in November 2005, and returned strongly encouraged by the motivation of the people involved in our programs on the Central Plateau of Hinche.

Moreover, like every year, the coming of spring coincides with that of Kamal in Geneva, and with several events to which we would like to invite you, notably an exceptional participation of Sister Emmanuelle to the "Salon du Livre" in Geneva...

NEWS FROMS SUDAN :

Here are the latest news we received from Kamal:

Food Project for small children

In 2005, we have opened three new centres, and 7772 children have "officially" benefited from this program in our 18 centres. This figure, which represents the regularly registered children, must be put up by nearly 25% to take account of all the children who come everyday to our centres without being duly registered. Of course these children -some of whom are more than five years old, the age limit we fixed at the beginning-, are not rejected. It is thus actually nearly 10 000 children who received a daily meal in 2005, as against around 5000 in 2004 (officially 3450).

And this, thanks to you, our donors! We would like to thank especially the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs who financed 5 centres (more than 2000 kids), Caritas Graz (1000 children), Missio Austria (550 kids), and an anonymous donor (1000 children).

With CHF 70.- (44 euros), you can sponsor the daily meal of a small child (5 or 6 days a week) for one year. The cost of a meal is less than 27 centimes (17 €cents).

Actually, taking into account what we have just explained, the real costs are less.

In 2005, the program needed a staff of a hundred people, including nearly 85% women.

In 2004, they were only around 50 employees, but the number of nourished children was also twice less. The centres being very distant from one another, it is necessary to have a staff on site in each centre to prepare the meals. The distribution is made by voluntary mothers, whose children are registered in the program.

Each person in charge supervises three or four centres, according to their geographical proximity. Their vehicles are undergoing daily trials, and the breakdowns are frequent; occurring sometimes in the middle of the desert, they cause a great loss of time.

For 2006, some of our donors have already confirmed their grants: Caritas Austria (1000 children), the Geneva Municipality (1000 children), Missio Austria (540 children), and we asked to the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs to finance the daily meals of 3000 children (they are still studying our request). If we take these donations as granted and thanks to our reserves, we would be able to finance in any case the program for 9000 children in 2006.

As you can see, this program has quickly expanded since its creation four years ago. The exception is the centre of Shagara where the number of children fell to 60 in 2005. Kamal explained us that the surrounding population was better off, closer to the capital, and that the children needed less this daily meal than other ones. That is great!

But how come we do not expect a reduction of the budget for next year, in spite of the peace agreement signed in January 2005 between the government of Khartoum and the southern rebels of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA)?

The reason is that to date, this peace agreement had only very few effects on the everyday life of these populations; and its implementation as well as the hopes of national reconciliation are more than dubious.

One estimates at 80 000 the number of displaced people who have returned to the South this last one year and a half. But the majority of the displaced people have neither the means of travelling back, nor the hope to find anything but a devastated area where famine prevails: no possible agricultural activities (the grounds are bristling with anti-personal mines), no buses, no banks, no ghost even of civil administration... The head of the United Nations Operations in South Sudan declared: *"We are not talking about rebuilding, we are talking about total construction. The United Nations has never undertaken anything similar"*.

In addition, exactions are still occurring in Darfur, and the driven out populations come and swell the ranks of the displaced people in Khartoum.

Medical Program

First we would like express our gratitude to the State of Geneva: thanks to its generous donation, we were able to continue this program, which is of vital importance for the derelict displaced population of the camps, who do not have the means to be treated.

Our medical teams consist of 2 doctors, 4 medical assistants and 4 nurses.

In 2005, they have given nearly 50' 000 consultations, cured more than 34' 000 people and treated 25 types of diseases.

Each centre has its own laboratory.

In 2005, the cost of a treatment was CHF 4,64. -, drugs included.

• The two mobile clinics

They provide care to the pupils of the 78 primary and secondary schools of the archdiocese of Khartoum, five days per week.

The action of these mobile clinics follows two main lines:

The preventive care

During the consultations, pieces of information and advices regarding infectious diseases are given to the students.

The curative care

That ranges from hygiene advices to medical care, given by a doctor assisted by a nurse; they collaborate with a laboratory assistant, which makes it possible to confirm some diagnoses before initiating treatments.

The two doctors assigned to the mobile clinics look after a hundred patients per day and per school. The clinics go from school to school, and thus make several tours during the year, until the summer holidays.

In 2005, the total number of patients treated thanks to these mobile clinics was 8703 (as against 6423 in 2004). 71% of the patients are men (as against 51% in 2004).

• The three out-patients Friday clinics

Haj Youssif

Since 2004, this centre opens every Friday in the Block n°9 neighbourhood and is treating around 150 people per day.

Wad El Bashir

This clinic is operating in one of the displaced camps in the region of Omdurman, near Khartoum. In addition to a laboratory, a pharmaceutical unit and a consultations centre (3729 in 2005 against 945 in 2004), the centre has an antenatal care unit opening every Thursday. Directed by a sister, this unit ensures about fifteen childbirths per week.

Gabarona

This clinic was opened at the same time as the preceding one, in the same area, but in another camp of displaced people. It has the same infrastructures and offers the same services. 2186 people have been treated there in 2005 (889 in 2004).

These two clinics bring a vital assistance to the displaced populations in this region. They benefit from good treatments at a much lower price than anywhere else, and thus can keep the little money they have for food and transport charges.

• The three permanent clinics

In our two farms: Haj Youssif and Gebel Aulia

In each of our farms lives a medical assistant, and the teenagers (200 in Haj Youssif and 218 in Gebel Aulia) have access to the clinic at any times. Of course, for serious cases, they are taken to the closest hospital or medical centre.

In 2005, the number of patients who have been treated was 2212 in Haj Youssif (as against 1456 in 2004) and 923 in Gebel Aulia (against 1156).

The "Good Shepherd" permanent dispensary

This dispensary is located close to a school. It is open every day except on Fridays, Sundays and holidays. This centre gives care to the schoolboys, but also to the displaced populations of the surroundings. It is managed by a medical assistant, paid for his services.

In 2005, it has given 5600 consultations.

To improve its operating conditions and to answer properly the strong demand of the surrounding populations, this centre would need to increase its staff.

We already started to intervene punctually in Massalma, where we plan to open a fourth dispensary.

Homes and farms

629 ex-street children are presently benefiting from this program.

We have in particular 4 homes for girls. 68 girls are in primary school, 11 in secondary school. Among our former batches, 4 girls are today at the University (in the faculties of Computer, Arts, Human Resources and Business administration), and 6 others have already completed their studies (Medicine, Applied Sciences, Hotel and Tourism, Administration, Arts).

The total annual cost is CHF. – 2000 per girl.

Kamal Tadros
National Secretary, SVDP Sudan

NEWS FROM HAITI

In November 2005, Danielle and Leon Meynet, members of Haiti Cosmos and of the city council of Chêne-Bougeries, went to Haiti. Danielle Meynet tells us about their stay:

Haiti, always the same and always different! We have come again to Hinche, on the Central Plateau. Exhausting trip, broken up roads, anguish; we are the day before the elections which have been so many times postponed. For us, heat and fear, but always the same delight in meeting friendly faces.

The blue helmets have taken over the city. They stop us. We give our personal particulars. We specify that we work for Haiti-Cosmos. They let us go. At this precise moment, I realize that our association is recognized on the Central Plateau. Finally I am at Hinche, at home, relieved.

We meet up with Jean Claude François again. He has arranged many business appointments. We are glad to set immediately to work, and my husband and I know that we shall use properly the fortnight we are going to spend here. There is so much to do! The first people we meet are the former Bati-Brique students. They tell us they cannot work enough because they lack premises and tools, and they have many difficulties in trading their know-how. We listen carefully to their concern. They talk about further training because they are conscious they can still improve their skills. Our work in the association has been fruitful. The following day, in response to their demand, we decide to have a marketing course added to the program of Polytec. They are delighted.

A few days later, we meet the director, the teachers and the secretary of Polytec. They strive to be convincing. They are less paid than in the other schools. Of course they know that our association is meant to last on the Central Plateau, and that we cannot afford higher wages. We explain to them that part of their work could be voluntary. They listen without arguing vainly. At the end of our meeting, we decide to set up a computer room in the school: the students would be more efficient and the school could rent computers to the population. The money made would be redistributed to the teachers. They agree. They also want to train themselves more, to communicate on the Net with teachers from abroad, and to set up a network of skilled people. This enthusiasm stirs our courage up. Haiti-Cosmos has gone up on higher gear!

We meet also the medical assistants. I recognize familiar faces. Here they are, steadfast at their post, eager to learn. They also talk about complementary training given by a doctor. We find the doctor. Courses are set up. There is so much enthusiasm in all these requests, such commitment! But the great news, already known by the medical assistants, is the Phototherapy laboratory in Ceremony for the packaging of drugs. We go to the Garden of medicinal plants. You should see the people of the area digging over the field, making bunch of plants, counting the wood stakes, drawing drains so that water flows into the fertile ground. They work under a blazing sun, their stomach empty, and for a penny! They believe in the project, and are proud to be there. They thank us. We are moved.

In Ceremony, a primary school with a dining hall has been created. An association of parents has been set up to organize properly the running of the school. I took some children in my arms. I saw their eyes shining, I shook their parents' hands, and promised to come back. Now I know that people of the Central Plateau have taken their destiny in hand.

And of course there has been the joyful and fraternal Polytec party, with a lot of warm accounts for the tenth anniversary. We have eaten and danced with 200 former and present students.

On our last day, like a farewell gift, three dispensaries have started to be built in the region of Maïssade.

Back in Geneva, I already think of returning there. I know that the people of the Central Plateau are on the move to a better life and that nothing nor anybody can stop them now.

NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND

We are glad to announce that

Sister Emmanuelle is going to be with us, "direct live"

**At the Salon du Livre from Geneva, at the FNAC stand
on Sunday the 30th of April at 15.30 p.m. OR 16.30 p.m.
(the exact time is still to be confirmed)**

to talk to us, in link-up from Caillan (France), about her spiritual testament and the book "La folie d'amour – Entretiens avec Sœur Emmanuelle" (published in October 2005 by Flammarion), which will be sold at the stand and dedicated by its author, Sofia Stril-Rever.

Your president will also take part in this event for a debate on "SHARING", and to present the action of ASASE in Sudan since 20 years.

On that occasion, you will have also the opportunity to get "Children o the Nile", an enthralling DVD on our action in Sudan, produced in 2005 by a professional team: 6 films (20' each) report the history of the association and give a beautiful account of the achievements of our five main programs in Sudan. For those who cannot come to our various meetings this spring, this DVD (presented on our site) is available for CHF 35. - (inclusive of postage) on a simple request at the office of our Association. The profit made on the sale of the DVDs will be totally allocated to our programs in Sudan: by buying a DVD, you will be able for example to sponsor the daily meal of a child of the displaced camps during 4 months!

STATUTORY GENERAL MEETING

We invite all the members of the Swiss Association of the friends of Sister Emmanuelle to attend its statutory general meeting, which will take place on

Tuesday the 30th of may 2006 at 20 p.m.

**At the room of the crypt of Saint Paul Church
6, avenue de Saint Paul
Geneva**

On this occasion, one of the films from the DVD « Children of the Nile» will be projected.

Let us, members of the Committee and myself, tell you again our gratitude for your precious support, and wish you all a very beautiful Easter, radiant of graces and light,

**Michel Bittar
President**