

Friends of Ahotokurom

Newsletter Edition 35, October 2017

Registered Charity-DMJ 1163470

Ahotokurom, also referred to as Padre Pio Rehabilitation Centre, was set up 1983 near Cape Coast in Ghana as a centre of Christian hospitality for the disabled and disadvantaged. Friends of Ahotokurom support their work to provide health care, social care and education, encouraging personal growth and independence.

Give me wings to fly

A charity like Ahotokurom exists to provide wings, to enable people to 'take flight' & live as independently as they can.

The social care projects in Ahotokurom are shifting focus where possible, from dependence on residential care to interdependence and finally to supported independence. The principle of 'subsidiarity' is key - supporting people to make their own decisions.

The Ahotokurom team believe it is very important to enable children to be cared for in families wherever possible. They build strong relationships with the-families, giving them confidence in dealing with special needs and support with practical issues such as additional food or clothing, respite care etc. Frequent home visits enable families to feel supported and take responsibility for their children. All this is important for the child's sense of 'belonging' and gives them a much more positive future than if they grow up in residential care.

An example of this outreach work is with a local family who just had triplets! Their mother approached the centre for help - she already had 7 children and with 3 further babies just felt she could not cope. Not being in good health herself, she came to ask if the 3 babies could go into care. Immediately the outreach team

intervened in a way to improve the families living conditions. They have supported with practical assistance, clothing, some additional food for the family and more importantly for the mother's own nutrition as this will ultimately provide the basis to support the children herself. The family will be visited and supported until they are no longer required and this means the children can grow up in their own home and family. Your support enables this great work to happen.



Teach a Man to Fish

One of the goals in the strategic plan for Ahotokurom is sustainability. They don't want to be reliant on aid, but to help people to help themselves. In the last 2 years they have had lots of success with farming. This not only saves resources, but also generates income. They farm in an eco-friendly way, no chemicals are used, they produce organic food to reduce outgoings and provide healthy nourishing food for all supported by the centre.

Cash crops serve as direct substitution for external purchases. This has already begun to reduce the weekly outlay on food and ensures good quality at the same time. The long term goal is to become a reliable supplier and generate regular income for the centre.



If we only had a mower

Joe and other team members continue to make the compound look pleasant. Unfortunately, the only mower, which helped to keep the lawn nice, is broken. So Joe is back to manual work with the cutlass!

He also oversees the work of the farm. There are plans to expand the piggery with minor repairs to the existing facility. The strategy is to use what they have to get what they want!



The team has expanded the plantain farm from 300 suckers to 500 and are aiming for 600 this year. The good news is that on average 6 huge bunches of plantain can be harvested every two weeks!

Why not help Ahotokurom to become even more self-sufficient by making a **donation for livestock this Christmas?** Wouldn't it be great to know you've made a real difference while you enjoy your Christmas turkey? **Watch out for**

our e-card Christmas giving project and buy a chicken, a goat or even a pig to help people help themselves!

Joseph did it all

Can you imagine what it means having only two usable fingers? How would you get along? Well we are very proud of Joseph who has done just that!

Joseph was fit and well until he sustained buruli ulcers as a child. This parasitic disease caused him to lose one leg and one arm, plus loss of several crucial muscles in his other arm. Effectively he was left with only 2 working fingers. As a result, Joseph was cared for by Ahotokurom as a child.

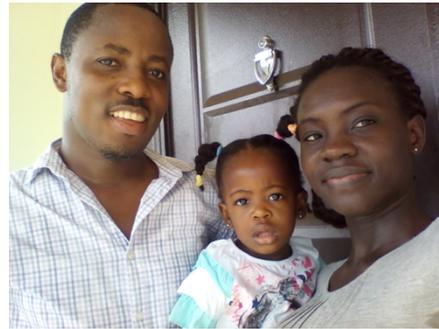


Despite all he endured he never gave up! Using his intelligence and determination, and with financial support from benefactors including Friends of Ahotokurom he worked his way through education. After having received a donated prosthesis to support his mobility, he moved on to study at Cape Coast University, completed his national service as administrator in the computer centre of Apam Catholic Hospital and then moved on to do a Master's degree to become a lecturer.

Despite facing such difficulties with his physical health, he is now a principal

research assistant in the Department of Population and Health at Cape Coast University. And as if that is not enough, in 2016 he moved into his own house, got married to his beautiful wife and now has a baby daughter.

Well done Joseph, we are proud of you!



A Life Changing Experience

My name is Patrick O'Sullivan and I am an 18-year-old student from Holy Cross parish in Catford. In July, I spent three weeks volunteering at Ahotokurom. The majority of my time was spent developing and improving the computing skills of the children from the St. Elizabeth special needs school. I had a wonderful time experiencing the expressive and vibrant culture that Ghana has to offer, and I was very fortunate to enjoy an incredibly warm hospitality. The people I met around the centre and the young people I worked with demonstrated a remarkable degree of openness and determination to make me feel comfortable and appreciated.



I really valued my time at the centre, and the trip helped me to acknowledge the skills and gifts that I already possess. I would like to say thank you to the community of Ahotokurom for a truly life changing experience.

The priest with queues of young people in front of his house



Father Philip will be celebrating his 10th Anniversary as a priest in December 2017. His story is an example to all. Disabled from the chest down in a car accident, whilst he was at seminary; he never gave up hope that one day he would be ordained Priest! He is so popular; teenagers queue up in front of his house to talk to him. Whenever he celebrates mass in his wheelchair his love for Christ shines through. How many lives has he changed! We thank him and celebrate with him.

20 years' success

In 2018 Friends of Ahotokurom celebrate their 20th year of support for the project in Ghana. This will be a great occasion to come together and celebrate all that YOU have achieved. Please keep September 29th 2018 free – watch this space for more details!

The people of Ahotokurom thank you for your support.

**To make a donation please send a cheque (payable to DMJ Friends of Ahotokurom) to:
The Treasurer, Holy Cross Parish, 208 Sangley Road, Catford, London SE6 2JS**

**visit
www.ahoto.org**