

Dear Friends,

Taking advantage of the Easter Holidays, the emphasis this last month has been on training for youth and children's workers.

SUNDAY SCHOOL TRAINING

Two training courses were held simultaneously from Thursday 1st to Monday 5th April. The first level course was open to all Sunday school teachers and children's workers whereas the second level course was for those who had previously followed the first level course. Both courses ran from 8am to 6pm Thursday to Saturday with the final session on Monday finishing at midday. Sunday was a day off when the participants could try out some of what they had learnt in their various Sunday schools. The response to the course was fantastic, better than ever before, meaning that the first level course needed to be split in two. We were using classrooms of a church school and even with two classrooms for the first level, it was a squeeze. Participants came from a variety of church backgrounds:



Anglican, Lutheran, Baptist, Methodist, Independent, Pentecostal etc.

We had chosen these dates as students would be on holiday and also some workers had time off over the Easter period. We then repeated the first level course every weekend during the month for the benefit of those who could not be free during the week. Following such a large response to the first sessions, I was unsure if there would be enough participants the second time round but 45 participants faithfully turned up every Saturday and Sunday making it very worthwhile.

YOUTH TRAINING

With the first Sunday School training sessions finishing on the Monday, two colleagues and I had a breather the Tuesday before starting a three day youth leaders course on the Wednesday. This course came about as a group of representatives from churches in the area where I live came asking for help with their youth groups. Many of their Sunday School teachers had benefited from the Sunday School training in previous years and were planning to attend this year's training but they felt that training for youth workers was a neglected area. We therefore arranged this training and I left the publicity and venue arrangements completely in their hands. It was quite a novelty for my colleagues and I to simply turn up half an hour before to find everything set out. Once again there was a good turnout with over 100 youth leaders participating. I was so grateful to Patric and Eddy, my two colleagues who shared the teaching with me as, like the Sunday School course, the training was intensive from 8am to 6pm.

VISITORS

The following week was very special as Duncan and Christiane Munn who are responsible for the Kisongye Bible Translation arrived in Lubumbashi on Thursday 15th April. Their arrival is a testimony to God's perfect timing as they left the UK via Heathrow airport on the Wednesday, the day BEFORE all flights were cancelled due to volcanic ash!

Duncan and Christiane had left Lubumbashi in 2005 when Duncan seriously ill, needed heart surgery in Johannesburg, South Africa, before being able to return to the UK. Since then, Christiane has made visits back to Congo to work with the translation team but this is the first time that Duncan has been able to make the trip. They will be here for almost six weeks as the translation is now at a crucial last stage. Next month they will be joined by someone from the Bible society to get the text ready to be sent to Nairobi for test printing before the text is returned for a final proof read before printing.



I close this letter with some items for prayer and praise. Thank you for all your prayers and support.

God bless you, Debbie Howard

Points for Prayer and Praise:

- Praise God for the fantastic responses to the Sunday school and youth leader's courses. Pray for those that followed the training as they put into practice what they have learnt.
- Praise God that Duncan and Christiane have been able to come back to Congo. Pray for them and team at this crucial stage of the translation work.