

CHAP-AID Newsletter No 4 May 2010 (Spring)

Spring – the green, gold and mauve of this time of year overwhelms us with its beauty and its sense of new beginnings.

We have all been so looking forward to this time of year after what has been the harshest winter for 30 years! Electricity breaks, strong gales, lashing rain and falling snow with all that that entailed had left us feeling cold and numb!

And we have had to endure an economic winter as well with the rising cost of living and, for many, the falling pound. With the restrictions on our cash flow we have had concerns about keeping warm and conserving fuel for travelling.

And THEN, to top it all, volcanic ash descended upon our travel arrangements!! Attendance at weddings, funerals, family reunions, appointments all frustrated; business trips cancelled; all adding to our concerns and confusions.

Yet, also, perhaps the enforced respite from travel and the clear blue skies without vapour trails.....did that give us time to think and wonder about the implications of air travel on our lives? Did we begin to wonder why food grown in starving countries was being exported to other countries, while there was not enough to feed their own people? And how western companies were left with piles of rotting food? What strange situations we have created. What was reinforced was the fact that we are all dependent on one another. A fact that you, as members of CHAP-AID, realise time and time again as you generously contribute to those in need around the world.

We in CHAP-AID in Aquitaine know we cannot change the world, but we can change the way we think about the world. Our charitable giving actually affects the way we think, the way we are and the way we act. Our caring can have far reaching effects on societies around the world and therefore also on the environment of our planet. This charitable arm of the Chaplaincy has the potential to have far reaching effects!

General Fund

We were able to help more than a dozen charities last year and we hope to do the same in 2010. Below you find the list of charities being supported by our sectors this year, together with the Chaplaincy-wide charity, **Emmaus**.

'Unspecified' monies continue to be collected for the general fund of CHAP-AID. This means we are able to respond immediately to dire emergencies, as we saw earlier this year with Haiti, without first having to come to you, our contributors, for funds. We need to remember the need for funds on standby for emergencies, if we do wish to respond in this way. Sadly, there is all too often some catastrophic need for this fund.

Chaplaincy-wide Charity for Aquitaine for 2010

In December 2009 we completed our three-year contract with "Churches in Partnership with World Vision – the Stepanavan project."

As agreed at our AGM in April, for 2010 our main charity for the whole Chaplaincy will be Emmaus. We also agreed at the last AGM to support the Bishop's Advent and Lent Appeals.

Local Sector Charities for 2010

The following list of charities adopted by local sectors has been approved.

Bordeaux: Foyer Fraternel Gouffrand (local Protestant charity which aims to meet the needs of local people suffering from poverty and homelessness)

Dronne Valley: Fields of Life

Lot et Garonne: Shelterbox France

Limeuil: Shelterbox France and New Life in Christ Ministries International (help for street children in India)

Sorges/Chancelade: Paralysés de France

Ste Nathalie: Hou Moed (street children in South Africa)

We have been delighted to learn that in some sectors there is a considerable 'hands-on' involvement by members with their chosen charity, in addition to the financial support, they are providing. Well done! Perhaps other sectors might like to follow suit?

Application Forms for Charities

Our thanks to all those sectors that have used our new Application Form when requesting permission to support new charities. If you find the need to support an additional charity during the year, please would you use this form, which can be downloaded from the CHAP-AID website page (www.chapaq.org/chapaid.html). Without the information we request we are unable to approve new charities.

Paying-in Funds

There is also a new paying-in slip to be completed by local treasurers when paying in monies to our Chap-Aid bank account, after prior consultation with CHAP-AID treasurer, Brian Hogarth. A copy of this form can also be found on the website for downloading.

Please remember the CHAP-AID Council wishes to remain largely a clearing-house for your giving; to take care of the minutiae of handling a large number of small gifts accurately; and to aid the churches in any way that they can.

Finally, we remember our scriptural injunction:

What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, 'Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. (James 2:14-17)

If you have any questions about CHAP-AID, do go to your local representative, (contact email addresses are on the CHAP-AID website page), and they will be able to help you.

Meanwhile may our united efforts result in good fun and fellowship whilst fulfilling to the best of our ability, the opportunity to witness to the love of Christ and to help our brothers and sisters in need. May God bless our endeavours!

Le Conseil d'Administration

CHAP-AID

Charity Association of the Chaplaincy of Aquitaine

May 2010