

AUTUMN/WINTER NEWSLETTER 2024



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Congo School for Peace

Patron Louis de Bernières

Charity no: 1151173

Dear Friends,

We are trying out a new format for the newsletter and if we can fit all the news in, we'll use it from now on. There is plenty to celebrate in this edition and the sisters and teachers at the school are extremely grateful for all our contributions. Sponsorship continues to be our main source of donations (now £120 per year). In 2020, the government made it illegal for schools to demand parental contributions for primary schooling. However, no decent schools seem to be built and few of the teachers are paid as schools become increasingly overcrowded. This has led to strikes in most schools recently as they have lost their main source of income which was parents' financial contributions. Fortunately, our donations keep the School for Peace flourishing in a country where 7.6 million children aged 5 -17 are still out of school. *

Secondary school information

Good news about the sixth form leavers: out of 38 pupils in the four sections (General Education, Literary, Scientific, Business), 37 of them passed the state exam in the summer. The results from the rest of the secondary school are good, too, including those of our sponsored young people.

Primary school information

We have received the results of the sponsored children's summer exams and the results range from 38.6% to 86.8%. Only three children have left to move to another area with their families.

University students

We are proud of Pichuna and Joseph, however there are still five other sponsored students in Higher Education who are finishing their studies. We are grateful to all their sponsors as the cost of sponsoring them - academic fees plus registration and related costs - amounts to \$600 (£465) per year.

Joseph Muteba



EXCITING NEWS

Two students we have been sponsoring for many years have just graduated:

Joseph Muteba (above) and Pichuna Bénédicte (below).



Pichuna on her graduation day

Pichuna, who has been sponsored by someone in Beccles since the age of five, was studying Business and Management at the Higher Pedagogical Institute, and Joseph was studying Psychology at the University of Lubumbashi. We are waiting for news of their next steps in life.

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

We had a wide range of activities during the past year:

- Our first quiz and curry evening in March was well supported and kick-started a year of fundraising events.
- Lynne's concert of poetry and music on 24 March was a great success with 79 tickets sold.
- Joy's garden party which was held at the Waveney Centre this year was also very well supported.
- The Italian Dinner at Barsham Rectory in September was sold out a couple of weeks before the event.
- Friends have also been raising money both in France (a 50th wedding anniversary) and at home (an 80th birthday party) as well as making jam, knitting and running stalls. We are really grateful for all the hard work these events have involved.

MONEY SENT IN 2023-2024

This year we have sent enough money to pay for teachers' essential resources such as stationery and textbooks; more reading material for the school library has been purchased and they have repaired things which were broken. The long-awaited new photocopier has arrived which Sister Marie-Salomé, her colleagues and pupils called a beautiful gift with which they are delighted.

OTHER NEWS FROM SR VIRGINIE

The Mpox epidemic

There are already some isolated cases in various towns in the country but the illness is unknown by the majority of people.

The flooding in Kalémie, capital of Tanganyika Province

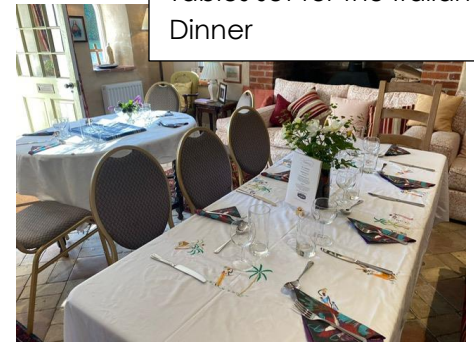
This is where the sisters' Mother House is situated. Sister Virginie wrote that there was unprecedented flooding in the town and we have seen video footage of this calamity. The waters of Lake Tanganyika have dropped a little but many houses and surrounding fields have been destroyed and the current is still strong. She also explained that it has been hotter than ever this year with little rain so that the corn (staple grain) is not growing. This could mean famine for many in the coming months.

2025

Next year the school will have been functioning for twenty years (the first block of six classrooms opened in 2005). We are planning to celebrate this in some way and we hope to have more information in the next newsletter.

Contacts: Alan Williams (Treasurer)/Mary Ellwood (Secretary).
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Tables set for the Italian Dinner



The new photocopier



UPCOMING EVENTS

STALL IN NEW MARKET, BECCLES

On **Friday 1st November**, we will be holding our LAST bric-a-brac stall. Come and grab a bargain between 9am and 1pm.

AGM

We will be holding this meeting in the Quaker rooms (downstairs) on **Wednesday 27th November** at 7.30pm. We will talk about the last year as well as our plans for the future. We have footage and photos to show you and refreshments will be served.

MAKERS' MARKET AT THE FISHER THEATRE IN BUNGAY.

On **Sunday 1st December**, the day of the Bungay Christmas Street Market, we will be holding a craft stall. Come and buy some Christmas presents between 10am and 3pm.

CHRISTMAS GATHERING

On **Wednesday 18th December** at 6pm, we will be celebrating the Christmas season with an evening of poetry, readings and music by kind permission of the Sparrow family. This will take place at Hipperson's Boatyard (NR34 OEB). Seasonal refreshments will be served.