

THE ALLIANCE CALL *to* PRAYER

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Lessons in Humility

BY DAVE BILL, SERVING IN REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: ... the new is here! (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Marivia, 18, is a baby. That is, he's a brand new Jesus follower. He's also our neighbor here in Ollombo, Congo, whom we've been privileged to witness God transform.

"Before I received Christ," he explains, "I used to steal money from my mother's purse so I could go to the movies. If she didn't give me the money, I'd fight with her. I also used to get into street fights easily."

Our national colleague, Celestin, has the gift of evangelism, and soon after he joined us here in Ollombo, he began talking to Marivia (pronounced "Mar-ee-ah") about the Lord.

"Celestin's presentation to me of God's Word helped me to realize that even if I die, my spirit will be with Christ," Marivia recalls. "After I accepted Christ, I was really ashamed of how I used to act."

Soon after his conversion, Marivia began taking discipleship classes from my wife, Teresa. "She helped me become firm in my faith and to resist the world and my old life," says the 18-year-old, noting that the "weapons of our warfare" (Ephesians 6:10–18) assist him to avoid temptation.

New Beginnings

After his conversion, Marivia also began taking literacy classes from Teresa.

(Talk about starting a new life—not only spiritually, but educationally as well!) "I never liked going to school," he admits. "Even though I somehow made it to sixth grade, I never could read or write."

It's possible to stay in school here even if you can't read or write, because a classroom sometimes holds more than 100 students—and just one teacher. This is the educational system in rural Congo, where a school room is a dirt shack!

Humility Equals Growth

Just the other day, Marivia announced that he was going to use most of the meager funds he has collected doing odd jobs for us and enroll in a private school where he can better learn to read and write. Imagine—an 18-year-old entering primary school!

While I was writing this article, Marivia arrived back from his first day at school, excited to talk about what he had learned.

"I'm excited about learning again!" he exclaims. "I now realize that it's not a very easy future without the ability to read and write."

We know it takes being humble like a child to enter the Kingdom of God, but I'm reminded by Marivia's journey that to progress in the Christian life, we need to remain humble. That's how God gives us grace to grow not only spiritually, but in every way!

A New Work

The opening of a new field in North Africa has been made possible through generous GCF giving. A leadership couple is there, establishing a preschool and community center as they prepare for the arrival of their team in August 2012. Currently, short-term teams are helping to refurbish the ministry building. This initiative comes at a strategic time when doors are open to make Jesus known in a country with little access to the gospel.

The Least of These

Alliance workers in Ulaanbataar, Mongolia, have organized children's educational centers in poor districts around the outskirts of the city. These centers are meeting felt needs of families in those areas where schools are overburdened and provide a business opportunity for believing educators who otherwise would have trouble finding work. This GCF initiative provides the location and impetus for small neighborhood churches to be planted.

marketplace ministries (mm)

Marketplace ministries deploys and supports lay professionals to enter countries that are closed to traditional

mission workers. Through professional endeavors, mm servants, some of whom receive partial GCF funding as well as raise their own support, are able to build relationships as they work and live in those communities. Because of the sensitive nature of these mm initiatives, only the vaguest descriptions are given below, but **specific prayer is greatly appreciated.**

- A family is running two sustainable work projects, focusing on producing large water filters as well as crafting and fitting prosthetics.
- Long-term doctors are working in clinics and hospitals in several countries.
- A family in Indonesia has started a school at the request of the village where they live. The school is staffed by nationals who are Christians and have been disciplined by this couple over the last few years.
- A family owns a café and recording studio where people of the traditional religion feel free to discuss who God is and compare the Bible with their religious teaching.

Thank you for praying for Alliance workers and for the people with whom they share the gospel.

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