

IMPRESSIONS

FOR YOUTH

Vol. 4.1

From Fear
to Trust:
A Story

A publication of Synergie Francophone



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In French, *Impression* means
"printing" as in printing books.


Synergie
FRANCOPHONE

Synergie Francophone provides Bibles, Christian books, and Sunday school materials in French for children and their teachers around the world who cannot afford them.

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FROM FEAR TO TRUST: HOW JESUS CHANGED MY LIFE

By: Christelle Panumpabi



Christelle (second from left) with France Impressions Team members serving at the IMÉAF print shop last summer. Credit: Christelle Panumpabi

didn't see my own personal need for Him. Then, my sophomore year of high school, I started struggling with this double life that I was living. I didn't know who I was. Then one day, I felt completely overwhelmed after some difficult circumstances at school and in my personal life which led me to hit rock bottom. I went to my mom and said, "I'm really struggling right now. You see me as a girl who's singing at church and serving, but I'm really struggling at school."

Then she started to recite the Gospel to me. For the first time in my life, it finally hit me that I needed Jesus to leave his throne for me. Before it was, God so loved *the world*. I knew that Scripture, but in that moment it became God so loved *even me*. Jesus came even for me before I even knew I would need Him to. That very night I went to my room and grabbed my Bible, and for the first time I was so hungry to know who this Jesus is, who came for me and who loved me so intensely. I then dove into the Word of God.

I started bringing my Bible to school every single day, reading it in the lunchroom. Mind you, this is high school. All the people are super judgmental and cliquey. But at that time, their judgment could not faze my hunger to know my Maker. That's when my journey with the Lord really bloomed, and I started to develop my own relationship with God.

Our Christian journey is definitely a marathon. It's like *Pilgrim's Progress*, a book which I love and reread every single year. The Lord has led me so far. I glorify the Lord that He knew me, He chose me, and I am his. He continues to fill me by his grace with the desire to serve Him and to live for Him.



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I was born in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, one of six children. During my time there, I was exposed to a lot of extreme things from a young age. People would come to my house to kill my dad because they were against his company. There was no police system. I saw many times how God would protect my dad. Because of that, I always felt that there must be someone up there in heaven. But it was just something I believed when I was young.

When I was about six years old, my family moved to the United States through the green card lottery. We didn't have all the money to be able to come here. Then at the very last minute, the Lord provided — to the very last penny. A few years later, my parents opened up a church, and I served a lot there.

But when I was 16 years old, I started having a lot of inner turmoil because I realized that I was living one life in front of my parents and another life at school. During that time, I believed that Jesus came and died on the cross for our sins, but I



DIARY OF A TRAVELING EVANGELIST

Based on Pastor Modeste François Mutshiawudi Mbombo's account of his travels distributing Bibles to the Pygmy people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

In Inongo

Today I took a flight from Kinshasa, where I live in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). I was heading to Inongo, the capital of the Mai-Ndombe province. Mai-Ndombe ("black water" in a local language called Lingala) is a province of rivers, lakes, and thick forests. After the plane touched down in the July heat, I tried to find a boat to my next stop, Kiri. The Congo has many deep, dark waterways, so you can travel almost anywhere by boat. But I couldn't find any. I had to wait almost a week because the only boat that could reach Kiri was only available on Fridays.



The next day, I joined a Sunday morning church service. During my stay in Inongo, I shared God's Word with local Pygmies, a vulnerable people group known by their height (less than five feet tall). My heart is to share the Gospel with unreached Pygmies, helping them create healthy communities and equipping Pygmy pastors and believers with biblical books and Bibles.

Unfortunately, Bibles are either missing in local churches or so worn out that pages are lost. This is why I volunteer to save souls at these rural churches. I discovered that many Pygmies suffer discrimination in Inongo, so they gather to worship 45 or 65 kilometers away, either by road or by lake.

These brothers and sisters in

Christ have both spiritual and material needs, such as medical care and clothes for women and naked children. Sometimes they don't have Bibles. My prayer is that we can bring them some copies, by God's grace. The world is thirsty for the Word of God.



In Kiri

On Friday morning, I boarded the boat on Mai-Ndombe Lake. Built of hardwood, these 35-foot open boats transport so many people and so many goods they sit low in the water — and sometimes sink! On Saturday morning, after nearly 24 hours on board the crowded boat, we arrived in Kiri at last. There, the Pygmy pastors and people from other communities welcomed me. I gave them Bibles in Lingala and talked with them. They had been waiting for me for over a week. Then, I rented a motorcycle to drive 62 kilometers east to Pendjwa. My goal was to encourage certain Pygmy believers who had missed the chance of meeting me on my first trip.



In Pendjwa

Arriving at Pendjwa, I unexpectedly met some important people in the community and the chief of the Pendjwa government. Their Pygmy representative led me to Pendjwa's General Reference Hospital where the doctors welcomed me. The head doctor gave me a tour of the hospital. It is not equipped, and some sick people were stuck there, including men, women, children, and babies. There were babies kept in rooms until their penniless families could settle the hospital bill. I cried because I had no money with me to pay for even one single baby's hospital bill.



On Sunday, I distributed 50 Bibles to the Pygmy pastors from the local churches who had gathered for the service. All the pastors were satisfied because I encouraged them in the love of God and neighbor. I pass along the warm greetings of our Pygmy brothers and sisters, beneficiaries of your precious gifts, as well as the testimonies of those who accepted Christ as their Savior and Lord. May God bless all who contribute to the purchase of Bibles for the churches in the equatorial forest and rural areas. As soon as I returned to Kinshasa, I became sick and am convalescing with medication, but I'm forcing myself to send you this little report. Support us in your daily prayers. May God protect you in the precious blood of Jesus Christ.



Meet Pastor Modeste (PM):

- **PM** and his wife Lucie have 15 children, nine of whom are adopted orphans.
- **PM** is fluent in three languages and understands three more.
- **PM** has served as a pastor in his local church for over 33 years.
- **PM** makes one or two missionary trips each year to bring Bibles, the Gospel, and other needed resources to the Pygmy people.
- **PM** dreams of opening a Bible school to train pastors in Kiri and Pendjwa and two health centers to serve Pygmy communities.

Photo Credit: Modeste François Mutshiawudi Mbombo

Replace each symbol with the matching letter to decode this message.



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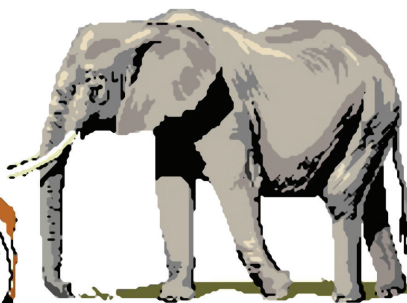
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104:24 (NIV)



CODE

A = ☎	N = ■
B = ✨	O = ✧
C = ☆	P = +
D = ✕	Q = ✂
E = ✕	R = ☞
F = □	S = ▲
G = ✕	T = ✨
H = ★	U = ✧
I = +	V = ✕
J = ▼	W = ▽
K = ✧	X = ✕
L = ●	Y = ◇
M = ✓	Z = ✨



- Pray! Pastor Modeste asks us to pray for the Pygmies who are dying without Christ because they do not know the Gospel and do not have access to proper medical care. He also asks us to pray for his family and ministry.
- Give a Bible! For \$11, you can purchase a Bible to send to the Pygmy people. Go to www.synergiefrancophone.org/give and ask an adult to help you give to the "Bible Distribution" project on the form.



HOW CAN YOU HELP THE PYGMY PEOPLE?

