

Friends of the Saint-Camille

September 17, 2021

Hello to each of you and welcome to our new members,

By way of introduction, I would like to begin with the annual report of our activities in 2020 as adopted at our Annual General Meeting last May. Courage... as you plow through this long text, reflecting your commitment alongside us!

Annual Report 2020 (*our activities*)

In spite of the pandemic that has affected us all, our support to Grégoire and his team has not diminished, on the contrary:

- ✓ A lot of reflection, discussion and hard work to consolidate our organization at the level of the Board of Directors. Production of documents approved on January 23rd concerning governance and policies concerning health and safety during stays at Saint-Camille, psychological and sexual harassment, a code of ethics, etc... A step that spells out our values, procedures and commitments to each other, for the members of the Board of Directors, for our African partner and for the people who leave with our support to the Saint-Camille.
- ✓ Preventive measures against Covid-19 have been put in place at the Saint-Camille at our initiative in consultation with Grégoire. Funds were sent for the local purchase of 33 infrared thermometers (\$5,000) to be used in eleven Saint-Camille centers in Benin and Togo, and the Roncalli Foundation financed the installation of 29 hand-washing stations (\$22,500) in the same centers, while the Saint-Camille took charge of the production of 1,000 masks by apprentice dressmakers, as well as of the purchase of the sanitizer gel required for the arrival of each person at each center. Only four health care workers were infected with the virus and they were able to return to work after a period of quarantine.
- ✓ As a result of the pandemic, the Saint-Camille's financial resources were significantly reduced : increased poverty of patients' families, no fundraising abroad by Grégoire, reduced financial capacities of European partners. Most affected was the purchase of medicines. In agreement with Grégoire, we led an international fundraising campaign to try to refill this account of the Saint-Camille. Our goal was to raise \$18,000. After three intense weeks in May, to our pleasant surprise, we had raised \$132,000. Many thanks to the French, Italian, Spanish and Canadian donors! Marie-Louise (France), Anna/Federica (Italy), Francès (Spain), under the direction of our president, provided excellent leadership. The opportunity cannot be missed: THANK YOU again to our own donors.
- ✓ At CAME (Centrale d'Achats des Médicaments – Medication Purchasing Authority) in Benin, acquiring needed neuroleptic drugs has become impossible. The managers have been sent to prison. The Saint-Camille therefore activated its plan B, which had already been anticipated in recent years: buying directly from Kwality in India. We became the intermediary between this Indian drug manufacturing company and the Saint-Camille. It

took a long time to finalize more than one transaction. This provided an opportunity to estimate the amount of money spent on medicines during the year. In consultation with the small European team already named and Grégoire, we arrived at a total of about \$900,000!

- ✓ A container of medical equipment from Collaboration Santé Internationale (value of \$130,000) and whose transport was financed by the Roncalli Foundation (\$11,000) was sent to the Hôpital Saint-Camille in Bouaké (Ivory Coast) – though not without problems. The container having remained in the port of Abidjan for too long (due to political and administrative problems), we had to pay \$13,620 for its storage and subsequent transportation to Bouaké (350 km north of Abidjan). The contents of the shipment allowed us to upgrade the outdated equipment of the Saint-Camille hospital there, which has been in place since 1998, and to add the equipment required for a dentistry department and a maternity ward.
- ✓ The Psychiatric Care Training Centre has been in operation since April at the Tokan-Cotonou center, financed in large part by the Quebec government (\$64,000), with a contribution from our donors (\$5,000). Caregivers as well as new nurses from the three countries have begun to come to the center to receive training from Pascaline, head nurse in Benin.
- ✓ The drug warehouse in Calavi has been in operation since March. As soon as it was completed, a large shipment of medicines from India arrived. This achievement was financed by the Marcelle and Jean Coutu Foundation (\$30,000) and by our donors (\$9,000). The medicines are now in a place designed for their conservation as well as their organization so that orders can be placed in a more timely way.
- ✓ The training announced last year of organizational reinforcement by Suzanne Douville could not be realized because of the impossibility of travelling abroad. Mission Inclusion agreed that the amount paid (\$19,000) would be used for the purchase of medication. However, Suzanne had already purchased her plane ticket for the first of three trips; it is in reserve for use when travel becomes possible.
- ✓ Thanks to the support of the Rotary Clubs and the Quebec government (MRIF), we have financed the training of five nursing students who started their second year in September. The annual cost for the training of one student is \$2,500.
- ✓ The Adjarra health center is under development. The medical analysis laboratory is in operation, a space has been set up for an operating room, a raised cement sidewalk has been installed to facilitate walking from one building to the next during the rainy season, and the solar electrification is now functional. We have paid for the cost of the laboratory equipment (\$21,700), the purchase of solar panels and batteries (\$27,100) as well as an X-ray machine and other equipment (\$45,400). These funds came from our donors.
- ✓ It is worth noting the significant amount we paid for the purchase of medicines this year, \$156,000, in addition to a shipment of 256 boxes of medicines (value of \$331,000) from Health Partners International of Canada, one of the organizations that are part of our network of partners.
- ✓ Significant involvement of our NGO with the collaboration of "Treatment Not Chains" in the nomination of Grégoire for the Guislain Award. The Guislain Award is an international recognition from the psychiatric network that is given annually to an

individual for their fight against prejudice and stigma surrounding mental illness. Grégoire was the recipient of this award, which carries the amount of \$50,000 USD. Another international recognition in progress for Gregoire, in which we are very active, is the Aurora Prize of the Armenian foundation of the same name. His application was launched by JOBEL, an Italian organization that we know well. We were entrusted with the rest of the process. This annual award recognizes the considerable humanitarian work of a person in our world. Grégoire is currently among the finalists.

- ✓ The renovation of our website has been initiated and should be finalized in the spring of 2021. An activity led by Catherine, our media manager. Our webmaster, Maxim Larivière, is at the center of this renovation and is generously helping us with the cost of such a work. The need for a technological update was more and more felt and we will have more autonomy and flexibility to modify and insert information. All content has been completely revised under Catherine's direction.
- ✓ In collaboration with Jocelyn Bonner of Treatment Not Chains, we are now benefiting from an opening to the world through the Global Giving Fund. This American organization makes it possible for us to present projects to be financed by their international platform on the web, especially in the English speaking world. Jocelyn is responsible for our presence on this site, in consultation with our vice-president, Sylvain. We are currently presenting our first project on their site and it seems promising.
- ✓ Five communiqués were sent to our members, our partners and our international network. These mention our actions as well as those of our African partner. They report on the impact of the donations received and the alliances with our network of partners for the benefit of the patients treated at Saint Camille.
- ✓ Your Board of Directors met five times (mostly virtually). Between these formal meetings, numerous telephone calls and emails have allowed us to exchange information and make decisions to move forward with files and projects as well as to update relevant information. Thank you to the members of the Board of Directors for their faithful and constant volunteer commitment. We form a fine team recognized by our partners, including the Quebec government and AQOCI.
- ✓ All these actions would be impossible without you, the members. Thank you for being there with us on the African red earth..., in your own way..., by giving your support through encouraging communication and personal donations. Thank you also to our faithful partners and collaborators. Members and partners, receive the thanks of Grégoire and his team, but especially those of the people who are regaining their health and human dignity thanks to your involvement.

Jean-Paul Cyr, pres.

Some other information that I am sharing with you:

- Invitation to visit our renovated website. A job well done by our webmaster (Maxim) in consultation with Catherine, member of our Board of Directors, (in charge of the media). Maxim

offered us all this work free of charge as a volunteer gesture in support of the work that is being done at the Saint-Camille. A BIG THANK YOU, Maxim!

- The Dominican family network (religious and lay) mobilized to finance the construction of a specialized medical clinic at the Tokan Center (Cotonou, Benin) at the request of Grégoire. We joined them in requesting funds from the Roncalli Foundation (purchase of medical equipment) and from the Canadian Embassy in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso). A project that is progressing well as you can see from the photo.

- Our projects of adding a maternity ward (Bouaké, Ivory Coast), plantation of cashew trees and vegetable garden (Sokodé, Togo), training of five nurses (Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso), hand washing stations (Covid-19) are still in progress.



Construction of the Medical Clinic



Maternity Ward

If you have reached this point in this long read... BRAVO! It can only mean that you are interested in our actions, thanks to you and our sponsors, whom we take the time to salute in particular. It is because of them and you that we are able to contribute to the development of services and care for these patients treated by Gregoire and his team of caregivers. Receive a THANK YOU from the very bottom of our hearts!

Greetings from all of us,

Marie-José, Catherine, Martine, Éric, Jean-Marc, Sylvain, Richard, Jean-Paul as well as Suzanne and André who frequently attend our meetings.

All cheques should be made out to "Les Amis de la St-Camille" and sent to "256 Larochelle, Repentigny, J6A 1K9". Donations by Paypal and monthly automatic withdrawal are also possible (see our website at "make a donation" or call 514-774-3421 for the form). Contact us for an Interac transfer. Testamentary bequests are welcome. A tax receipt is issued for contributions of \$10.00 or more.

Our website: www.amis-st-camille.org