

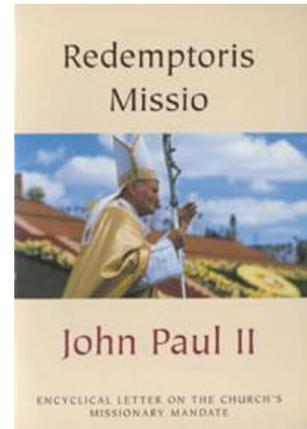
October, 2017

Dear Friends of the Togo Mission,

Blessings to all of you. I hope this report finds you well.

When Saint John Paul II was canonized in 2014, the Togolese bishops proclaimed him to be the principal patron saint of Togo. He had visited Togo in 1985 and is still remembered very fondly. As I re-read his encyclical letter on the missions today, it almost seems to me that this great saint was speaking directly to you. Here's what he has to say:

"Individual believers . . . pray for the missions and missionary vocations. They help missionaries and follow their work with interest. And when missionaries return, they welcome them with the same joy with which the first Christian communities heard from the apostles the marvelous things which God had wrought through their preaching (cf. Acts 14:27). (*Redemptoris Missio*, 77)



I have experienced this support for eleven years now, both while I am in Togo and during my annual visit to the U.S. I am so grateful for your messages of encouragement, your prayers and your donations.

Now for an update on the activities at the mission since I last wrote.

I'm happy to report that this year we were able to install thirty streetlights in Atchanvé. They are connected to the solar energy system of the mission, so to economize we light them for only three hours each evening.



This year we were also able to drill three more wells. I was particularly happy to be able to find enough water and install a pump in the village of Agbatehe. When we receive the resources to do development projects like this, we try to use them to promote the spread of the good news of Jesus Christ. Agbatehe is a village I was especially interested in, because out of a population of 150 or 200, there is not a single baptized person there.

Here is a photo of the villagers at Agbatehe waving their thanks for their new well:



Here is the chief of the village pumping the first bucket of clean water from the new well:



In Atchanvé, where the mission is located, we have also built a *collège*, which is for grades 7-10. We would love our students from our five other villages who graduate from our schools to be able to continue their Catholic education at our *collège* in Atchanvé. The problem is that they are too young to rent a room in Atchanvé and fend for themselves.

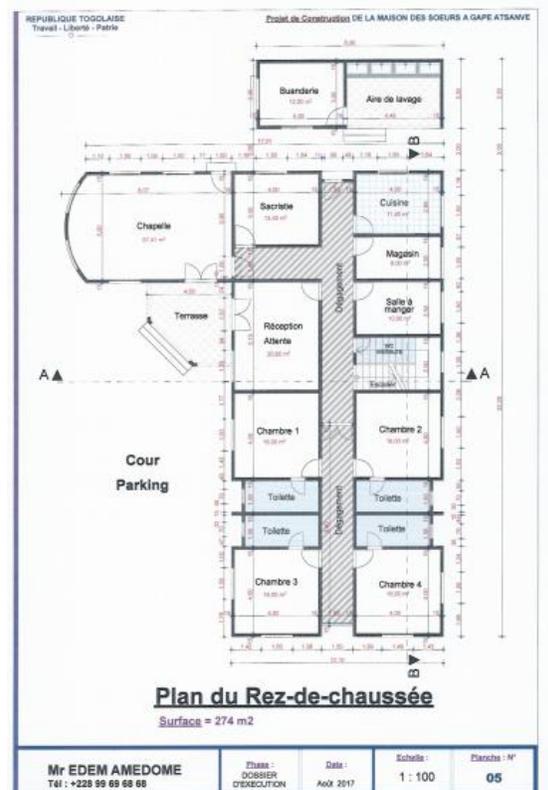
The solution that we propose is to offer them the opportunity to live in dormitories at Atchanvé, under adult supervision. The girls would be supervised by an additional Togolese religious sister that the Notre Dame de l’Eglise sisters have promised to send us. The boys would be supervised by married couples, assisted by seminarians who spend a pastoral year helping out in our parish between their philosophy and theology studies.

To accomplish this, we need to do three things: first, build a new convent for our Togolese sisters; second, remodel their old convent into a dormitory for boys; third, build a new dormitory for girls adjacent to the new convent. I should add that if we can find the resources, we propose to build the first classrooms of a new *lycée* (grades 11-13) before September of 2019, which would enable our students to advance even further.

We are convinced that this initiative to provide housing for students from our outlying villages will be a great opportunity for the children of families from one of the poorest areas in southern Togo to improve their lives.

The contractor who is building our church has prepared the plans for the two new buildings. Here is the proposed new convent. We would begin with just the first floor. If we are able to build a second story as in the picture, it would be large enough to house additional nuns in the future:

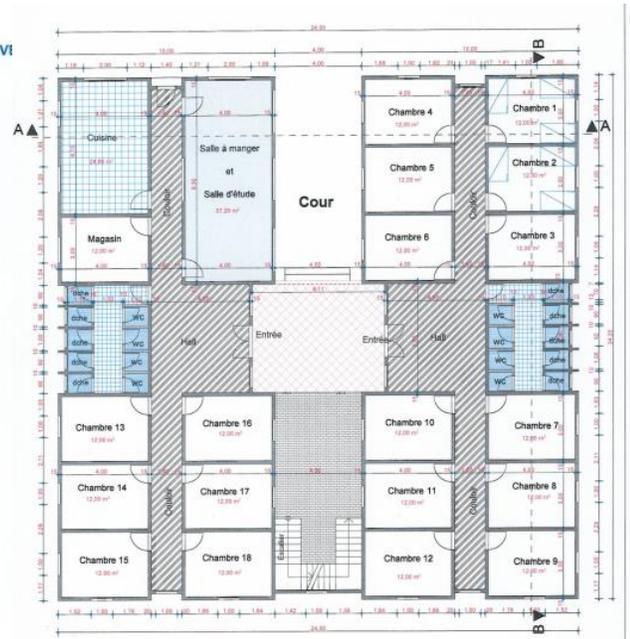
**Projet de Construction de
LA MAISON DES SOEURS A GAPE ATSANVE**



And here is the proposed girls' dormitory:

REPUBLIQUE TOGOLAISE
Travail - Liberté - Patrie

Projet de Construction DU FOYER DES JEUNES FILLES A GAPE ATSANVI



This photo shows just some of the students currently attending our *collège*. The following photo shows a second story being added to this school so that we can divide the classes and accommodate more students from our region.



As for the construction of our new parish church, the building itself is just about finished. There remains the installation of the bells which have arrived from Poland; the pews, which are being made one by one by some carpenters, using wood that was shipped from Ghana; and the painting and art work in the interior.



We have been working on the church for four years now, and are looking forward to celebrating Mass in it soon and inviting the Archbishop sometime in 2018 to come and bless it. The church is quite large, but we have built it for the long-term. Since it is situated next to our primary school and *collège*, a weekly school Mass will eventually fill it.

We really need donations at this time for these projects. Anything you can help us with will be greatly appreciated. Just click on the donate button to find out how.

Please keep us in your prayers, as all your Togolese friends at the mission keep you in theirs.

Sincerely in Christ,

Father William Ryan