

# A KNOCK ON MY DOOR... YOU COME TO RAISE ME UP...

As a member of association « Hope » which welcomes the most destitute from all countries, I was able to be in touch with people who had fled from their country because of war. One of them had seen her father beheaded before her own eyes.

A first Sudanese family was welcomed: the parents and their 6 children between the ages of 2 and 18 years! The local council found them a flat in an empty building. But how furnish it ? It is easier together! The associations « Hope », « Resto du cœur » together with our former convent, unearthed the furniture... we also needed friendly transporters... These were found and in this way solidarity worked ; reasons for thanksgiving !

Thanks to carpooling, the Father was able to work at apple picking; the two older boys had an internship in a technical college.

Now, the way was open for three other Sudanese families:

- A 59 year old widow, mother of eleven children including a deceased daughter ; four children who stayed in Chad while waiting to come to France and four others aged 17 to 29 years who live with her.

- Her two married sons lived in another house with their six children.

Good organization was needed to accompany them all and help them to integrate. The answer was to join them in their family setting: their doors were wide open and there were smiles and tea!

Two volunteers for each family undertook to visit them once a week not excluding any urgent SOS, especially when a baby was born!

Then « Land of Asylum » in Perigueux organised some French lessons : 16 hours each week: a support which complements what we were offering.





But how could we enable mothers with eight children, under 2 years old, to participate? We searched and found eight new people willing to take turns at caring for the children in a room in the Town Hall !

These encounters are really magnificent gifts : these people offer us their delicacy, their kindness, their sense of conviviality (meals eaten together, prepared according to their culture) and we give them a little of that joy which may enable them to face the difficulties they've lived through and also those they may still experience !

I thank God who sent them to our area. He has in this way raised an outpouring of generosity and sharing, a great richness for our humanity !

Sœur Monique (THIVIERS-France)



*« .... Hey ! What do you love then, extraordinary stranger ? — I like clouds...the clouds which pass... over there...marvelous clouds ! »*

*The Stranger — Charles Baudelaire*