

The Flowers

Church Planting in Charleville-Mézières, France

April 30, 2020

Dear Supporting Friends,

Everyone expects a little change, but who could have envisioned that COVID-19 would affect 2020 the way it has! The bulk of our world's population has been negatively impacted in one way or another. This virus has been particularly deadly within the European Union, forcing France and other countries to come to grips with their ill-preparedness for a pandemic and with the resulting death toll. By the time the lockdown lifts, we will have been on 56 days of strict confinement. We can only go out if we have identification and a signed government permission slip in our pocket showing the date and the time we left home. This has to be done for each activity: whether buying groceries or taking a walk around the block. One adult per family is to run necessary errands, while the other family members are only allowed to leave home for a daily walk. Non-compliance is a 135 euro fine for the first offense. This confinement is scheduled to continue until May 11, but what comes after that is uncertain as our department, the Ardennes, has been classified as a "red" department.

All churches and assemblies were closed down by the government on March 14. The prime minister has announced that he will begin addressing the "possibility" of churches opening in June. We have made use of the internet by posting messages and Bible studies for our church people on YouTube. We also have been using an application called "WhatsApp." Through video chat, I am able to have discipleship lessons with more and more of the adults in our church. It has been a blessing to minister to them and even see growth in spite of this confinement.

Richmond is Haitian but has lived in France most of his life. His sister, Marie, comes faithfully to our services and asked urgent prayer for him in early 2019. That day, Richmond had hopped into his car to head for school and had turned the key in the ignition like any other day. However, the dashboard and steering column literally exploded in his face. He was rushed to the hospital where doctors were able to save his life. Unfortunately, he was burned significantly on his face, arms and upper torso. Over the next nine months, he endured a lot of surgeries and setbacks on his road to recovery. The accident forced him to change his life's goal of working as an auto mechanic because his fingers and skin suffered too much damage. He moved to Charleville at the end of 2019 and began attending our church with his sister. He was hesitant to come at first because he has to wear a mask over his face to protect his sensitive skin. We tried to make him feel welcome, and it subsequently opened the door for me to have coffee with him several times to discuss the Bible. Not too long ago, he called me one afternoon to talk. His question was simple: "How can I know for sure I will go to Heaven?"

Now that's a question I wish every unsaved person would ask! Richmond's heart was tender that day as he called on God to save him. It amazes me to think that Richmond's awful accident started him down a path to finding Christ!

It was shocking to see the speed at which life and ministry changed overnight! But there are no surprises with God, so let's keep trusting Him to work in us and through us.

In Christ,



Danny & Janice Flowers
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