

**July 2008 Prayer Newsletter**  
**—CALL TO PRAYER—Andrea Herman**

*“Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. Then it was said among the nations, ‘The Lord has done great things for them.’” Psalm 126:2*

July has been a month of many emotions. I have been excited about progress in language learning. I have been encouraged by ongoing faith-related conversations between my language helper, Mrs. S and I. This month has also brought hard news. Mrs. S, while trying to learn how to ride a motorcycle (at the age of 52), had an accident and broke her collar bone in 2 places and also messed up her right shoulder. The reality of it was not nearly as bad as it seemed when her son came to my house and said his mom had been in a moto accident. I was afraid it would have been much more serious, but praise God for his protection of her. Her recovery will be long (maybe 3 months), but I pray that God will somehow use the long empty days of her recovery for His glory.

Because of her injury, aside from taking her to the hospital for an x-ray, she has remained at home 24/7. She is usually on her feet from morning til night with 2 jobs, 8 kids and a large extended family to look after. Now, I go to her house for my language lessons and we sit in the courtyard (with the chickens, ducks, sheep, donkeys), while several women cook and dozens of children run back and forth through the yard. It definitely gives me more ideas for cultural questions, watching all that transpires, but it does make it difficult to record parts of the lessons with all the background noise.

So far, I think the situation has been a blessing (from my perspective). We’ve been able to just sit and visit for longer, and I am able to show her how much I care about her, just by the fact that I go there to sit and visit with her virtually everyday—an important thing in the culture. I have also given her my French children’s Bible (the stories from which we record in Maninka, and I study with the recordings) to keep at her house so she has something to read during the day. Once, a friend of her husband’s stopped by during our lesson, and she was holding the children’s Bible. He asked her if that was a Bible, and she told him it was mine (which it is). He told her it’s a good book, so I’m hoping that makes her feel more comfortable reading it out in public. Many people are nervous to even pick up a Bible, even out of curiosity because they fear people gossiping that they want to become Christians. Pray for God to remove this fear.

I’m not sure why, but God has blessed me with much laughter this month, mostly with Mrs. S. The best part is that the laughter hasn’t all been just at me (that is a major step in the right direction). Yes, we have laughed at my strange grammatical creations as I am working at expressing more complicated thoughts, but I’m figuring out some of my mistakes, so I understand why she’s laughing at me, and then I laugh at me too. We have also laughed much about the difference between our cultures, particularly on the subjects of gender roles and marriage. Though I think laughter is a great medicine, I enjoy laughing with Mrs. S so much more because she is by nature a pretty serious woman, and not prone to openly expressing emotions, so I treasure every smile and giggle that comes out of her.

Just as I was writing this newsletter, I received good news and bad news. Mrs. S’s daughter, a dear friend of mine who has been away at University since January, just came home. However, she informed me that on Monday, Aug 4, her mom will have to go back to the hospital so they can re-break her collarbone, because they don’t believe it is healing properly. This is discouraging news. Every day Mrs. S has been telling me how much better she is feeling every day and how quickly the pain went away after the initial injury. I can’t imagine her starting over, with the pain and healing, almost 3 weeks after the accident. God intervened and the Dr. decided to allow the collar bone to heal as is—we praise Him for His mercy towards Mrs. S.

Also, my dear friend, MK, who also helps me often with language learning, and for whom I'm asked for your prayers for many months, gave birth to a baby boy, 9 lbs, 14oz, on Aug 2! Mother and baby both appear to be healthy, but the doctor wanted them to stay at the hospital for almost a day to make sure there weren't going to be any complications (she has lost several children). Believe it or not, MK wanted to leave 3 hours after giving birth! Please keep this mom and new baby in your prayers, for health and safety, physically and spiritually. There is one person that has expressed a desire to harm MK and possibly her baby as well, and this person lives in their courtyard. Please pray for God's protection for them at this vulnerable time.

**Please join me in thanking God for:**

- His protection of Mrs. S in her accident, that her injuries weren't more severe
- His mercy in changing the Dr's mind about re-breaking the collarbone
- much laughter with Mrs. S, especially since her accident
- MK's safe delivery of a baby boy, Ibrahim (Abraham)
- deepening relationships with Mrs. S and MK
- the possibility of MK staying with me in the village in Mali, as my language helper
- meeting a Peace Corps volunteer in the area
- a good month of language learning
- a generous grant from Lutheran Women's Missionary League

**Please join me in praying for:**

- Mrs. S to read through the whole children's bible, and hear the story of Jesus again
- Mrs. S's right arm, that she would regain full use of it
- God's protection for MK & her new son, that no one would try to harm them
- God's re-creation of MK's marriage, it is in need of renewal, love and forgiveness
- God's mercy on the people of Guinea; this is the "hungry season", and food and fuel prices are extremely high, with other prices rising also
- God to provide a man to continue the Jesus conversation with the Fulani men in the market & that they would seek the truth
- God's wisdom and direction in the preparations and move to Mali for 6 months (including the dynamics of living in very close proximity to MK, and 2 young kids—that our physical closeness would enable me to show her God's love constantly, and that she would come to faith in Him)
- God's strength and energy to demonstrate His love constantly to MK and others
- God's Holy Spirit to open MK's heart to believe the Truth and receive His love

Newsflash: In case any of you want to send me any larger files, (or have promised me pictures that you haven't yet sent), now is the time! August is the last month I will be able to receive large files via email for awhile.

As of September, I anticipate moving up to a village in Mali for about 6 months, and will have irregular email access during that time, via satellite modem. So please send plain text email messages with no large attachments and no forwards please during that time, since I get charged by the megabyte for the connection. Please help me be a good steward of the resources God has provided, and make a note of my new location and limited email access for the next 6 months. You will continue to receive newsletters during that time, but they may just be plain text documents. Thanks for understanding.

Andrea