

Dear Praying Friends,

April 2006

Much has happened since I last wrote to let you know I had been offered the opportunity to serve in Guinea. The thing that has most affected my ability to make that decision was a medical concern. I discovered a growth on one of my ribs that appeared to be growing. Two different doctors told me it probably wasn't anything and not to worry about it unless it changed, which it did. I decided to have a CT scan because I wanted to know what was going on and find out if it was something that might affect my availability to work in Guinea. Several days after the scan the nurse called to tell me that "it isn't bad". Though I'm not yet sure what it is, knowing what it is not was enough information for me to move forward in the call process.

So, I have signed my call papers and they are in the mail! It's crazy to think of all the changes this is going to bring into my life VERY soon. Missionary training begins the second week of June, and May is just around the corner. Suddenly this thing that I have been hoping and praying for for *years* is finally happening! And it is happening fast...

Another issue that has been a bit distracting is the medical issues in my family. My Grandpa had back surgery late last summer (but is still on restrictions), my Grandma, his wife, is having surgery (on the same vertebrae as Grandpa) on May 1 and my mom is also suffering from extreme back pain right now. Please keep them all in your prayers for healing and peace in the midst of their pain.

An update on my local Maninka friends: "Mariam" has been eager to learn how to make lasagna for some time. I called her to see if Sunday was a good time to teach her, but she was delayed at a meeting until 7:30. Since they live 45 minutes away and I still had to buy the groceries, we got a pretty late start. We were finally able to sit down for supper at 11:00pm after a few more delays. I left after midnight, exhausted, but thankful. I prayed the whole way over there (and the whole way home) that God would somehow reveal His great love for them through my willingness to give a cooking lesson when we should have all been getting ready for bed. Their gratitude at the end of evening makes me believe that He did. Some days God gives me the opportunities to have intense faith conversations with my friends. On other days, He just gives me the opportunity to love them as much as I can. I pray He uses both for His glory.

Please join me in thanking God for:

- good test results from the CT scan
- His great blessing on my relationship with my Maninka friends here
- my precious family
- giving me the privilege to serve Him among the Maninka people

Please join me in praying for:

- relief for my family members with back problems & successful surgery for my Grandma
- my church (Family of Christ) to partner with me in this ministry through prayer
- God's provision in raising up an army of pray-ers across the U.S. to pray for the Maninka
- God to provide a partner to share in the ministry for the Maninka women

Thank you all so much for your faithful prayers and frequent encouragement. I know you pray for me, but I ask that you would also pray for the Maninka people of Guinea, that the Holy Spirit would open their hearts to believe His Word. I cannot overemphasize the value and importance of your prayers to prepare the "heart soil" of the Maninka women with whom I will be working. To give you a word

picture, I basically feel that I have been called to scatter the seed of God's Word on a cement parking lot that stretches as far as the eye can see.

Satan has been enjoying a very stable stronghold in Guinea for centuries; through animism and traditional beliefs involving sacrifices and occult activities to the fear and false hope of Islam. These strongholds among Maninka women have been virtually unchallenged for centuries. There is much preparation needed before the "soil" will be ready for the life-giving seed of God's Word. That is why I need the help of every individual who receives this prayer letter.

Please invite your families, friends, Sunday School classes, small groups, youth groups and congregations to join in praying for the Maninka people. I have developed some resources along the way to help engage people in prayer for the Maninka. I have prayer calendars, power points, a four week Bible study with handouts, pictures and some brief video clips too. If you are willing to invite others to join you in praying for the Maninka, I would be happy to offer any and all resources that you think may be helpful. I want people to feel a personal connection with the Maninka--hopefully the pictures and videos can create a personal connection and a visual reminder to pray. Please let me know if you would like me to email any of these resources, or if you want them all, I could probably just send you a CD with all the information. If you can think of other resources that might be helpful, but that you didn't see listed, please ask and I can probably put something together for you.

Thank you for your prayers and for praying about the opportunity to share this prayer opportunity with others. Your partnership in this ministry is a blessing to me and I believe God is glorified through your participation.

Your sister in Christ,

Andrea

