

September 2018



ACAY



*A second chance
for youth at risk*

NEWSLETTER

Defying the chaos of this world !

If Filipino chaos was already something, discovering Congo made me realize that we were leaving for a mission in a context much more chaotic than the one we had known until now. The degree of violence and survival in Kinshasa is incomparably higher than that encountered in Manila.

Embarking on this adventure my "gang of sisters" as well as Marlou, Director of the School of Life in Manila and Karen, one of our first girls presently Coordinator of the Programs of ACAY, I was overjoyed to be able to convey the fruit, the nard of what we have refined over these twenty years of mission in the Philippines. Of recent years, I have had this certainty of heart that the time had come to transmit to others what we have learnt here

Last year, the AMADE MONDIALE Foundation, having visited our programs in Manila, wished to deepen and strengthen our partnership. They asked me if it would be possible to envisage the transmission of our ACAY methods in a context other than that of the Philippines: in Congo. Challenge accepted.

I left in September 2017 for a first trip to make contact with the girls of the VTA (living and working differently) home, the team of professionals in charge and to get a feel for the place. "Widen the space of your tent." Isaiah 54:2.

If the ACAY Association is now called to respond punctually to calls to share its methods, our consecrated hearts also need to be stretched in order to be able to receive more. Listening to the heart rending stories of each girl during the training activities, helping them put words on their trauma, gently leading them to discover a way of coping that is no longer harmful to them ... over the days all this dug within us a greater capacity of reception. The heart of the consecrated person, said Father Zundel, is "the nest of those who have nowhere left to go". So yes, it was a great joy to go and meet this country, the beautiful faces of the Congolese children. Who would have imagined for a moment that ACAY would come to France one day? would one day go to Africa? We definitely have many more surprises awaiting us....

ACAY MISSION IN CONGO!



WHEN ASIA, THE PACIFIC AND EUROPE JOIN AFRICA TO HELP THE YOUTH

After a brief visit in September 2017 and long months of preparation in 2018, a team of six members of ACAY went on August 8 to support the VTA center (Living and Working Differently) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) which welcomes girls accused of being "witches". The Foundation **AMADE MONDIALE** presided by Her Royal Highness the Princess Caroline of Hanover made this request of ACAY. This center hosts thirty teenage girls, most of whom have experienced unprecedented violence.

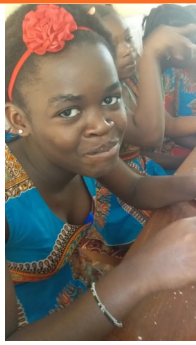
The phenomenon of "child witches" is well known in the African context. In the capital of DRC, Kinshasa, it affects over 50 000 children. Under the influence of religious pressure wherein the sects of the Revival Church have a monopoly, but also of pastors and priestesses, children are held responsible for all family ills (death, illness, professional disappointments etc ...). The beliefs are so deeply rooted that parents reject their own children overnight and without scruple exposes them to insecurity and street violence. After exorcism and violent treatment, the child begins an obstacle course ranging from experiencing distress to severe trauma: physical violence, sexual abuse, exploitation, constant danger and fear. With an expression of deep-seated anguish, almost all the girls pronounced the word: "abandonment"; "I was abandoned." If at the VTA center, education is a strong point: all young girls can read and write, the therapeutic and pedagogical dimension also need to be developed. It is in this specific context that the AMADE Mondiale Foundation asked ACAY to transmit its pedagogical dynamics developed in the Philippines within the School of Life.



1) FIRST PART OF THE MISSION

Before starting a rhythm of intense intellectual training, we wanted to allow the team first to meet for a day in silence to listen to themselves through meditation.

All were able to catch their breath a little from their tiring pace of life. The girls also experienced this silence at the end of the mission, but only after going deeply into themselves.



2) THE ACAY FORMATIONS

Our first week:

- **A work of new conceptualization** of the program with the identification of the new pedagogical dynamics of the center (rewriting of the organizational chart, redistribution and clarification of everyone's roles).

Our second week:

- **A work of transmission of the ACAY know-how:**

Mornings: Formation of VTA teams

- Training on the "Seeking Safety" modules about the knowledge of trauma and management of emotions: how to gradually understand what I lived to be able to respond more adequately.
- Genogram training: understanding the family relational dynamics inherited by past generations.
- Training on self-awareness for the youngest girls (8-13 years old).

Afternoons: Putting into practice the trainings received in the morning by teaming the VTA staff with the ACAY staff to process the youth of the center..

3) AWARDING OF CERTIFICATES !

On the last day, singing and dancing filled the training room to celebrate the awarding of the certificates. The multiple signs of affection and gratitude were overwhelming and foreshadowed a new training to be scheduled in 2019 to complete this journey.



A mission all-the-while listening to deep pain. The teaching about trauma has been given and the intelligence of these youth has been nurtured to enable them to draw from within themselves resources other than survival and anger giving back life to enable them to work ... differently!

SCHOOL OF LIFE !

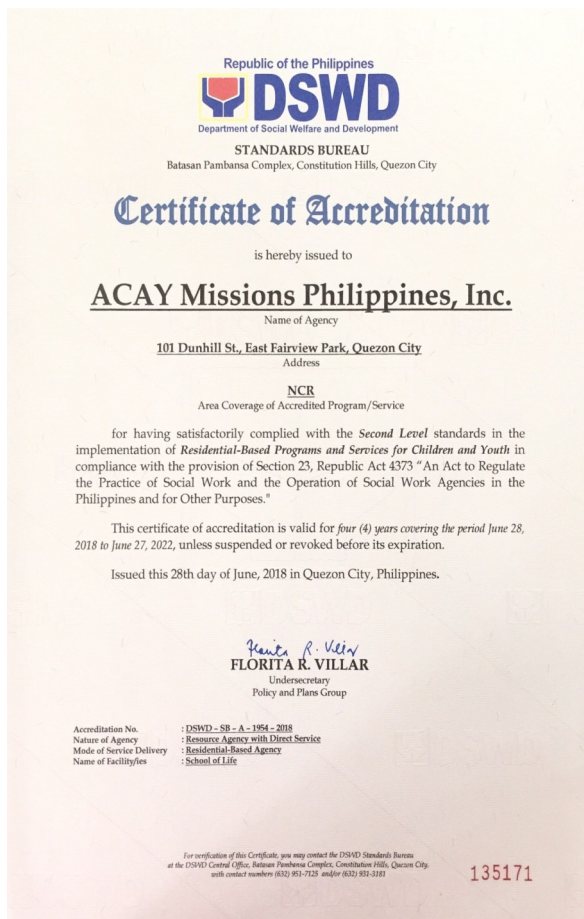
SEVEN NEW SMILING FACES COME TO JOIN US

After the inevitable "CrossRoad 4 Youth" training, these seven new girls were able to freely decide to join the School of Life. They constitute the 18th batch of girls welcomed since the year 2000.

As every year, the first months of insertion are a delicate transition stage. The older girls must accept to include the new ones in their daily lives and begin to project themselves in the prospect of taking the leap to autonomy and to stand on their own. If insertion is a delicate step, reintegration is just as important! The years pass and yet it is always with a lot of emotion that we follow the first steps of our young people take in society with all that it requires of courage, perseverance and professionalism.

Recently, three older girls benefited from L'Oréal's professional training in hairdressing and now work in well-established salons. The new partnerships with certain companies also make it possible for some girls to find work either permanent or part-time enabling them to continue their studies. This work of networking with businesses is fundamental to supporting the readiness of the youth, and makes the prospect of total autonomy less frightening.

Former beneficiaries have created a network to support the new girls who are becoming independent. Some adhere to it, others prefer to mark the separation more clearly. Knowledge is transmitted: from big companies to our beneficiaries, from old girls to new recruits, from the young adults to their families, all of them are moving on and transforming the lives of others.



ACCREDITATION GRANTED FOR SCHOOL OF LIFE

Accreditation is the highest recognition by the Department of Social Welfare of the quality of a program in the Philippines.

The School of Life was accredited last July. The inspector came to check that we were in good standing in our official documents.

Discovering for the first time the reality of our mission ACAY, she was so touched that she decided to approve without any additional visit the accreditation at level 2 of the School of Life (on a scale from 1 to 3) . The efforts of our teams have been well rewarded.

ACAY MARSEILLE

« MY LIFE AT THE PEM » An ACAY film for the parents of minor in detention

With the parenting support program, ACAY has become more aware of parents' concern about the lack of knowledge of the living conditions of their children in detention.

In August 2018, some minors incarcerated at the Penitentiary Establishment for Minors (PEM) of the Valentine were able to participate in the making of a twenty minute film presenting "their life at the PEM", directed by the ACAY team in Marseille.

Having expressed their desire to be able to show their detention conditions to their families, ACAY accompanied the minors in this project.

This film was an opportunity to reflect with them on the role of detention, but also to give them responsibilities, to integrate them into a demanding project, to allow these young people, with pasts punctuated with failure, to create something and bring a project to completion.

This short film shows everything they want to share with their loved ones about the PEM. Through the presentation of a typical day and the interviews of various staff of the PEM (management,

educator, supervisor, teacher), the spectator follows the life of a youth in detention and understands the educational project of the institution.

The aim was also to train these minors in the audiovisual techniques used for the making of this film. The young people participated fully in the scriptwriting workshops and filming. On the role of detention, reflections emerged such as: "If I had not come back, I would never have changed my life", "It made me think: what am I doing here?".

To realize this project, Amaya D'Elissagaray, a reporter since 2000 to TVPI, local television of the Basque Country and a friend of ACAY, accepted to help us by putting her competences at the service of the young people accompanied by ACAY in detention in Marseille. With the agreement of the authorities, this film will soon be broadcast in the visiting room to parents and visitors, and hopefully will be a comfort to families.

We thank the Management of PEM Marseille for their support in the realization of this project.



If you no longer wish to receive our Newsletter, please inform us at the email address info@acaymission.com or send us a letter at 101 Dunhill Street East Fairview, Quezon City.

Please like our Facebook Page and follow our Youtube channel (ACAY Philippines—France) for more regular news and inspiring contents!

2018 ACAY CONFERENCES

FROM CHAOS TO LIFE: ACAY, A COMPASSION THAT LIFTS UP !

Faced with the inertia of the youth and the spiral of delinquency, discover or rediscover the innovative responses of the ACAY association during CONFERENCES -testimonies in Paris, Versailles and Strasbourg.

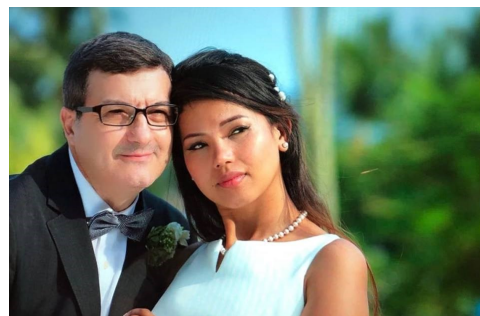
Sister Sophie of Jesus, the founder of ACAY Philippines, Laurent Thorigné, the director of programs in Marseille and Niño, Filipino youth, formerly in detention graduated from ACAY and reintegrated into society who gave their testimonies.

Our sincerest gratitude to everyone who supported and participated our conferences.



Nino, Graduate of Second Chance Program

All our best wishes to Shenalyn (former beneficiary of the School of Life) and Alessandro who celebrated their union.



MAKE A DONATION

PLEASE MAIL THIS COUPON AT: 101 DUNHILL STREET EAST FAIRVIEW, QUEZON CITY

LAST AND FIRST NAME : EMAIL:

ADDRESS :

POSTAL CODE : CITY :

SPONSORSHIP PROCESS WILL BE SENT TO YOU UPON RECEIPT OF THIS COUPON.

I COMMIT TO GIVING :

- ☐ 500 php per month
- ☐ 1,000 php per month
- ☐ One time gift of _____

I WOULD LIKE TO :

- ☐ To sponsor a girl from School of Life
- ☐ To sponsor a program
- ☐ To sponsor a weekend formation of the youth
- ☐ To give professional opportunities to ACAY beneficiaries
- ☐ To organize a fundraising event for ACAY
- ☐ To become a volunteer



FOR MORE INFORMATION, YOU MAY CONTACT US



www.acaymission.com



[acayphilippinesfrance](https://www.facebook.com/acayphilippinesfrance)



info@acaymission.com



101 Dunhill St. East Fairview Quezon City 1118



(02) 799-6194