

In His Hands



(Isaiah 49:16)

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Rob promised that in our next letter you would hear from me, so it is my turn to share my part in our ministry partnership as a doctor here at the Christian and Missionary Alliance mission hospital in the jungles of Gabon! Even as an African, Bongolo has been an adjustment for me since I'm from the city. Thank you for your love and prayers. They are a grace to us, because we could not be here without you!

I work under the supervision of Dr. Renee Valach. She is an American doctor, with degrees in both internal medicine and pediatrics. Normally, we have a pediatrician on staff, but she is on home assignment, so Dr. Renee has to cover both departments. Her case load is heavy, so though I am still learning, my help is much appreciated.



Bintou, Dr. Renee & Dr. Parker, a visiting family practice doctor
<http://petersonfamily.info/robert/gallery/Bintou-at-Hospital>

Everyday our staff and workers start with devotions and prayer. Then Dr. Renee and I do rounds, visiting the hospitalized patients in the internal medicine, pediatric, maternity and emergency sections.



It has been one month now that I have been in Bongolo. I am in the orientation phase, which means I am learning the protocols applied here. I basically follow Dr. Renee all day long and listen carefully to her American medical English while she teaches me. The level of medical practice here is a lot higher than I was used to in the Cameroon government hospital where I worked previously. At times the level of learning is stressful and overwhelming, but I am also thankful to have this opportunity to grow.

Mondays are often busy and stressful and one Monday several weeks ago was particularly so. Dr. Renee and I were involved in several emergencies. Mid morning, we were working on a 60-year-old patient, who was in a coma and hardly responding to the perfusion of insulin we were giving him, so we were watching him closely. While doing that, a nurse from the pediatric unit came and pulled discretely my shirt, whispering in my ear: "Doctor, we have a problem in pediatrics." I thought to myself, "*What?! I am still in my orientation phase, I cannot help, I may mess up terribly!*" So I turned to her and whispered, "*I cannot help you, you will have to wait for Dr Renée,*" so she left.

The man with diabetes was going downhill and the family was looking at Dr. Renee as their last and only hope. I knew it was not time to tell her that there was trouble in pediatrics so I stayed silent. Then another nurse came and spoke aloud, "*Doctor, we have a child who is hardly breathing!*" I turned to Dr. Renée and she asked me to go and have a look. As I rushed off to the pediatric E.R. unit, I was praying: "*My God, help me! I am going to see a child here in this Gabonese hospital known for its excellence. I don't want to be the person to destroy that reputation!*" When I arrived, I was met by a cute little girl, desperately trying to breathe, with noise coming from her lungs and yet still trying to smile and be so brave. Her mom was carrying her. I looked into the mother's desperate eyes and saw she was looking to me to bring a solution for her child. "*Oh, this must be the most terrible acute asthma attack I've ever seen in my life,*" I thought to myself.

I gave orders rapidly to the nurses and after an E.R. consultation we started the child on oxygen and some drugs. I was praying for God's help that I should not do something Dr. Renee does not approve of and for the child that she would start breathing well. About forty minutes later, the child was better and an hour later the patient in the E.R. was now stabilized! Dr. Renée arrived and she approved of what I did. She added some drugs and I had a lecture on asthma and I thanked the Lord for answering my prayers!



Later, I learned that the child has been in such a bad shape since the evening before, but living far away, there was no way to be at the hospital when she had an attack. She and her mother had to first find a bush taxi then travel through all the night to come here in Bongolo hospital. Since arriving here, these kinds of stories are becoming common to my ears, but my heart's ears are still not used to it. People come from near and far because not only do they receive exceptional medical care here, but people care with their hearts. People come from near and far because not only do they receive exceptional medical care here, but people care with their hearts. The hospital staff make it a point to share the gospel with every patient during their stay. Last year, there were 1,517 patients and their family members who prayed to receive the Lord! I am blessed to be in this place!



Dr. Nutt, visiting OB/GYN and Dr. Fabruce (PAACS Resident) and family.

Rob is working hard in the aviation program. Before marrying Rob, I did not have much understanding of what is involved in maintaining an aviation program. But now I am learning it is a difficult project, especially when you are the only pilot! God is sustaining him and he has made a lot of encouraging progress. The hospital here at Bongolo has visitors coming from the USA to help for short times. It is amazing that with the use of the airplane, Rob can transport people from the capital city of Libreville and they can start working right after they arrive! I remember when we arrived the first time, after a long road trip, I was hardly functional for two days. I tried to push through and fell sick for two weeks! Rob also lends a hand in trying to keep the hospital's internet connection system working. The hospital does not have a computer and network engineer, so when the internet system is down, all brains are welcome to help. Actually the "all-brains" is short the Medical Director who is an American general surgeon, and Rob.

Thank you for welcoming me into the family! After my first letter, I could not believe the multitude of emails that came to reassure me of your love and acceptance! Rob and I have been married nearly 10 months! They have been filled with challenging circumstances and major transitions. We are grateful for your prayers, because it is God's grace that has sustained us. I am happy to say that we are growing in our love for God and one another. I am blessed to have a godly husband!

Praise and Prayer Summary

Praises:

- 1) The Lord's strengthening for Rob during a detailed and extensive aircraft inspection. His provision of much needed parts and equipment.
- 2) The timing of the work on the airplane in Yaounde allowed Bintou to participate and lend music leadership to the evangelistic concert in August; a joint ministry of church and her family.
- 3) The Lord's provision for Bintou's employee number which is allowing her to apply for release from government to work at Bongolo Hospital.

Prayer:

- 1) That Rob and I would learn more and more to abide in Jesus and walk with Him in all circumstances.
- 2) Bintou's ongoing process of paperwork, including eventually obtaining a USA visa.
- 3) Strength and grace for me and the other doctors as the patient-load is heavy.
- 4) On-going projects for the aviation program, the hangar, the airplane and safety in the flights Rob makes.

In Him,

Bintou & Rob

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Attach a separate note: "preference for Robert Peterson #231923"