

2010 december

Dear friends and members of our family,



Scotland

We wish you a “happy new 2011 year”.

Have a fine feast time, as good as possible.

We take this opportunity to share some news of our past year. This looking back to our life is a gift you offer us. We can pick the fruit of a speed (too speed) life. Never we would do that work so carefully without you.

Our first source of happiness is our family life, with our children and grandchildren.

Each one grows as his own way, and the last one, Célya, born by Sara and Benoist (june 11th) is dynamic and active in the family life. Her brother Alexandre, a speedy boy, uses a lot of gentleness with her. So we can see how the family balance can wave and change. With his cousin Maxime, a peaceful boy, he shares his games; it's a great pleasure to see them together.

Anne-Lise, our oldest granddaughter, who is 15, spent five weeks by us on this summer. She's got friendly holidays with the young people of our village.

Charles came back on November with his friend Jonas. They shared their time between D.I.Y. with Jean-Michel (this year, they had to manage thermal insulation under the kitchen floor), school work and some tourist visits. We went to Salses castle. They shared a part of their holidays with Jean, our neighbours' son.

Estelle and Oriane are as thick as thieves and make a good team with our neighbour Axelle.

We enjoy seeing that, coming by us for the holidays, they meet friends as aged as them.

During that time, the parents took advantage of their free time.

This summer, during the same time, Lydie's family rent a home at Siran, and Sara's family at Cessero. Sara's family was without home, living their old one and waiting for their new one...

But now the holidays are far away and the work's coming back.

During the beginning of the 2010 year, I gave cooking lessons, at home, twice a week. Each Tuesday and Thursday was full of life, fragrances, tastes...

Now, it's no more important, and I cook twice or three times a month for an association (16 to 30 people each time). I'm so happy to share what I love!

On May, I went to Scotland with my friend Sylvette. At London, a night, 15 years ago, we promised each other to go to Scotland together... one day! It's now done! It was a full of discoveries and meetings travel as we couldn't imagine before. Discovering a country through its inhabitants is an extraordinary blessing and give me more and more taste for hosting people and show them my country and it's blessings. I met two Scotlands: one is rich, green, with many castles, and the other one is poor, barren, peaty, black, wind-lashed... but everywhere I met matchless human warmth and favours.

As soon as I was back at home, we went to Strasbourg for the SERVAS association national meeting, saw our friend Marie, stopped at Saint Pourçain for a Christian feast with Charles, and arrived just in time to take care of Estelle and Alexandre during their mother's stay in the maternity hospital to get Célya.

At Cessero, Pierrot, a neighbour of ours, who is 80, comes at home each evening and shares our dinner. It's a very pleasant time for us. We promised to drive him to Saint Martial and Viar viaduct where he spent holidays when he was 10 or 11, during the second world war. It was a wonderful day. For him because his mind found again very old images and souvenirs, and for us because we could see a happy, moved and excited man, so enjoyed seeing again his youth, his games, able to speak about his life... When we're away, some other neighbours take care of him. It's so good to know and see that we are able to help each other, to live together in the same street sharing the most important of the life: LOVE. I make the dream that some day all these little things that make everyday happiness will take place of war, violence, difficulties news on the mass media. So many good things are done, and no TV or radio news about them!

This summer, on August, we went to Orthez for Sister Claire-Benoît's enlistment at the monastery. We saw again her family and got a nice time with our adopted daughter Marie-Reine. We also met our friends near Tournay.

Evidently, all of that occupations let us time enough for SERVAS and AIDES hosting... and many other meetings.

We become nearest and nearest of Roche d'Or Community. We try to go as soon as possible to help them, to work, and also for retreats. Our church engagement is there.

When I look back at our year, I can also see some free times; I'm able to go to the garden, to make embroidery, to knit... I think it's almost a miracle, but we need some in our life... Isn't it?

That's all for me.

I leave you, hoping for you to live and receive as many little happinesses as me.

Jean-Michel we'll speak you about our home progresses, for it goes on!

Happy and holly new 2011 year, and see you next year for sharing a new part of our lives.

Odile

O yes, it goes on!

But, first of all, let me tell you how happy I am seeing how Odile begins to well use word processors!

This year, I attacked the first and second floors of the house. I had at my disposal four stone walls, one concrete slab and one roof. I had to do all of the rest. I began by temporary stairs from the yard to the first floor. I made on it a portico with a hoist, very useful for hauling up heavy building material such as beams I used as joists between the two floors. I had to make the thermal insulation for the floor and walls, make the wall doubling and the partitions, put on the window, make the ceiling, the electrical wiring, the plumbing, the tiling, etc. A lot of work is remaining, but the main part is done. We hope we'll be able to use our new bedroom for springs. It we'll be fit out with a bathroom and a dressing-room. I do like these works. I do come out with it. I also appreciate the help of some friends when needed. Charles enjoyed building a wall!

I go on appreciating the exceptional working conditions I enjoy in my professional job. I gently prepare my retirement for the end of 2011, but probably I'll go on helping Dintilhac Conseil after that. I hope I'll have more free time for the house fixing.

Between all of that, I find some free time to do odd jobs for our children. This year, Sara and Benoist moved with their children to a little house in a village in Gers. I made the minimum work, but it remains enough work for occupying me some days... Next year, I hope I'll be able to do the bookcase I promised to Lydie few years ago.

I don't have to say again all that Odile already wrought, and I agree. Know that Janelle, our Philippine sponsored daughter, works hard at school, and we recently heard that we'll soon be able to see her through a web-cam. It'll be easier for her and for us.

I confirm that our proximity with Fontanilles (Roche d'Or) Community is a very great source of life, and that the people we host at home, be through AIDES or through SERVAS, give us an exceptional open-mindedness.

I hope for each of you a Merry Christmas and a happy new year, full of softness and joy in life.

Jean-Michel



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Jonas et Charles



Anne-Lise



Maxime

Célya, Estelle et Alexandre

