

The Mission of God
Mission Report of visit to Diocese of Bor, South Sudan
May-June 2023
The Rt. Rev. Patrick P. Augustine, D.Min. D.D.



A Manifesto of Hope for Society

He has shown his people the power of his works, in giving them the inheritance of the nations.

The works of his hands are faithful and just; All his precepts are trustworthy;
They are established forever and ever, to be performed with Faithfulness and uprightness.

He sent redemption to his people; He has commanded his covenant forever.

Holy and awesome is his name!

Missio Dei

Mission is, primarily and ultimately the work of the Triune God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, for the sake of the world, a ministry in which the church is privileged to participate. This is the deepest source of mission ...there is mission because God loves people (David Bosch).

As a disciple of Jesus Christ this is exactly how I have been called to bring the Good News, bring hope to the poor and oppressed, and to love them as my brothers and sister. I prayed every day during my stay in Bor for peace and reconciliation in the nation and in the Episcopal Church of South Sudan. I was called to hear the personal stories and cries of many orphans and widows who carry pain and are in need for their wounds to be healed. I serve among them as their brother in Christ in the Diocese of Bor. I give thanks to God for providing me this opportunity. My heart is full of gratitude for many churches and individuals who have contributed to allow me to serve there on the mission of God as the servant of Jesus Christ

During my time there I was able to complete the following projects for the development of the Diocese of Bor:

- St. Andrews Primary and High School has 3,600 students. In the last five years, I noticed that under severe hot weather children had no source of water. I raised \$25,000.00 for digging a well to provide clean water for children, teachers and St. Andrews Cathedral compound residents in Bor. On June 16, 2023, we completed this project.
- Two classrooms for primary school children were built.
- St. Andrews primary and high school students suffer from malaria, diarrhea, and dehydration. We have provided medicine for the treatment of students.
- Women Empowerment – A Sewing Center with twenty sewing machines was started in 2019. We have hired a south Sudanese woman who teaches tailoring classes. One hundred young women have been trained so far.
- The Diocese of Bor has a small clinic for mothers and children. The clinic had a well, but the generator to pump water was not repairable. A grant was provided for a new solar panel and pump. This project is completed, and the Women's Clinic has water available for its operation.
- Clergy Retreat – 65 Priests and Deacons have had a three-day retreat to study the Word of God, to pray and worship and have fellowship together.

“Therefore, since it is by God’s mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart.” (2 Corinthians 4:1)

May 9, 2023

Final Preparations for the Mission to South Sudan

My day started by attending 11:00 AM Mass at St. Rose Convent of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration in La Crosse, Wisconsin. The Sisters have been serving in La Crosse since 1871 and have followed the practice of perpetual adoration (praying) in the presence of the Most Blessed Sacrament continually since 1878. The Sisters prayed for me and blessed my missionary journey to Bor, South Sudan during mass. Afterwards, they invited Myra and me to lunch where I shared my ministry in South Sudan.

Later, the owner of Touch of Class in downtown La Crosse donated new women's

clothing to take to Bor. I filled a suitcase with new clothes that I later gave to the Mother's Union.

Trust Point, a Financial Planner in La Crosse, also donated 250 pens for boys and girls in St. Andrews High School that I collected.

I gave thanks to God for our generous donors and supporters.

Praise God! Alleluia.

The following day, I left for my mission journey to South Sudan.



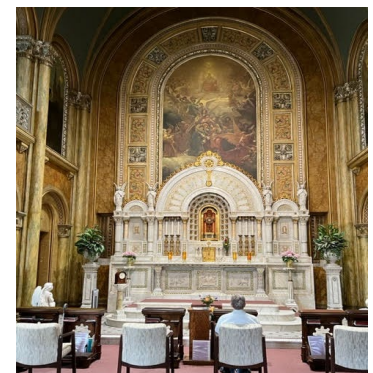
Receiving the Blessing of St. Francis from Sisters



With the Sisters after Mass in the Mary of the Angels Chapel



Trust Point Pens



Inside the Adoration Chapel

Sunday May 14, 2023

All Saints Cathedral Nairobi, Kenya

After a long flight, I arrived in Nairobi, Kenya. South Sudan suffers from the ravages of war, which continues to affect the nation's infrastructure. As a result, it is far easier to coordinate work out of Kenya prior to arriving in South Sudan. I spent several days in Nairobi, meeting with religious leaders and coordinating mission work for Bor. I began by attending worship at All Saints Cathedral, in Nairobi. The Rev. Evans Omollo, the Acting Provost, and the entire cathedral staff warmly welcomed me. I sat with Rev. Omollo and other clergy members at the 9:30 am service where I greeted the congregation on behalf of the churches in USA. The cathedral was packed with worshippers, which reflects the growing and vibrant faith across Kenya. To help accomodate all the worshipers, All Saints Cathedral has 14 services that start early in the morning to into the evening on Sundays. Alongside the worship services are specific youth programs, and there were more than 700 young people attending Sunday school and having their own worship services in a new multistory building. After the 9:30 am service I met with Rev. Canon Capt, Richard W. Mayabi, the executive Director of Missions Anglicanes Afrique. The Primates of Anglican Churches in Africa formed this organization for church planting in ten African countries. Their call is to equip and empower local dioceses and churches to grow through training and evangelism. I invited Rev. Mayabi to join me in my next visit to Bor, South Sudan. The next day at 7:00 am I flew to Juba, South Sudan.



May 15, 2023

Arrival in Bor, South Sudan

I hardly slept because I needed to be at the airport at 3:00 am for the hour and half flight from Nairobi to Juba, South Sudan. Bad weather delayed my flight and I arrived in Juba at 9:30. My first shock was the heat wave that hit me in my face. La Crosse was in the 40s and Nairobi was in the 60s but Juba was over 100 degrees. The heat was not the only shock as I was warmly received by two very tall priests from the Diocese of Bor. They both were well over six feet tall and I would estimate that they were both around 6'6". We took a photo together with me in the middle at Juba airport and they tower over me. Despite the heat, the kind greetings from the two priests reminded me of the love and compassion I feel for the people of South Sudan. Truly, I was so happy to be back among people I love, serving as their servant Bishop.

The weather though does make South Sudan a very difficult place. May is the dry season with strong winds blowing large amounts of dust in the air. And the heat was almost unbelievable and unbearable. At 10:00 am the temperature was 105 degrees and it reached to 110 degrees during the day. This year has been especially hot and dry, with some of the hottest temperatures that I have experienced in the 30 years I have come to South Sudan. The extreme heat means that the people have struggled to grow food and the people have prayed for the rainy season to come early.

The good news that new paved road has been built from Juba to Bor. Previously it used to take six hours travelling on dirt roads. Now it takes two and a half hours to travel by car from Juba to Bor.

Arriving in Bor, I was welcomed by dozens of people at St. Andrews Cathedral and was served fried fish from the Nile for lunch. It was a blessing to be so welcomed back by the people I serve. After the travel and early flight, I was quite tired so I napped for several hours, even in the intense heat. I have no electricity in my room so there is no escaping Bor's heat. Back in La Crosse, Wisconsin I would go the YMCA to exercise and then sit in a sauna. But in Bor, God has given me the free gift of a sauna all day!





May 16, 2023

The Anniversary of the Start of the Liberation War

May 16th is an important day in the history of South Sudan. 40 years ago, in 1983, South Sudanese soldiers in the 105th Division of the Sudanese army revolted and started the liberation war against the northern Sudanese Arab oppression.

The South Sudanese had suffered for centuries. In the 1970's the President of Sudan, Nimeiri, declared a very harsh version of Islamic Sharia Law. The law announced draconian punishments for a variety of crimes, with thieves being subject to amputations and floggings for adulterers. Despite a reputation as drinker in his youth, the president staged elaborate ceremonies, pouring tens of thousands of bottles of whiskey, wine and beer into the Nile. There must have been a lot of drunk crocodiles in river after the ceremony! The goal of these very public Islamic activities was to please other Muslim countries for approval and monetary help.

The tensions within Sudan are deep. For hundreds of years, the Arabic northern part of the country would raid the Dinka African southern part of Sudan for slaves and to pillage. The southern part of the nation was filled with violence, with women raped, land plundered, and children captured and sold in slave markets. The violence also extended into a religious level, with the South Sudanese pressured to give up Christianity and their animist faith and convert to Islam.

Sudan was the largest country in Africa and was (and is) filled with many ethnic groups and religious traditions. President Nimeiri and his hardline Islamic advisers were determined to turn of Sudan into an Islamic nation. As the government implemented its Islamic policies and ruthlessly oppressed any opposition, tensions flared between the oppressed South Sudanese and the Islamic forces. Finally, on May 16 the solders outside Bor shot the first bullet for their liberation. The government in Khartoum responded by sending large numbers of Arab soldiers, tanks, and aircraft to crush the liberation movement.

The South Sudanese in Bor, where I serve as Bishop, fled from the violence, hiding the wild bush around the city. Bor was completely occupied by Arab soldiers and the remaining people were subject to horrific violence. In St. Andrews Cathedral compound, where I live when in Bor, Bishop Nathaniel Garang and his family were attacked, beaten, and one member of the staff was murdered. The church building was ransacked and the future bishop and his family was forced to flee. Today Bishop Garang is known as a great man of prayer and evangelist. Even in hiding he continued preaching the Gospel and



baptizing animists, bringing them to Christ. Under persecution and displacement, the church was continuously growing.

We celebrated the 22 years of war that led to the liberation of South Sudan with a service that lasted from 10:00AM until 4:00 PM. The senior advisor to the President of South Sudan, the Governor, members of Parliament, and the military high command and six Bishops of the Episcopal Church were all present.

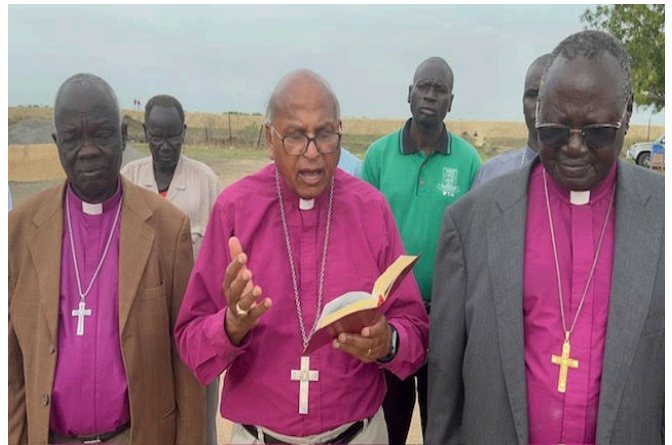
During the celebrations I met an old man, Major General Paul Garang Deng, who was the young soldier who fired the first shots in May 16, 1983. He is an active member of the Episcopal Church in Bor. We gave thanks to God for their freedom and new country. It was hot day with temperatures around 105F and wind and dust blowing in our faces but nobody complained.



May 17th, 2023

Breaking Ground for new building of Cathedral

This morning we had a prayer service with several hundred members of the Cathedral before the groundbreaking ceremony for the rebuilding of St. Andrews Cathedral. Archbishop Ruben Akurdid read the story of King Solomon building the Temple of God in the Old Testament. The Archbishop asked me to do the liturgy for the ceremony and I used the liturgy from the book of Common Prayer with a few alterations for consecrating and blessing a new church building. The present St. Andrews Cathedral was built in 1976 and is in need of repair. The church is an important part of the lives of many people in Bor and often has close to 3000 people in the building on Sunday mornings. The cathedral's congregation raised \$16,000.00 to start the first phase and I also contributed a \$1000.00 donation. Thirty five members of the cathedral's youth group are also helping by providing free labor to aid in the cathedral's construction. I was thankful that the Diocese of Bor's leadership invited me and that they asked me to perform the liturgy at the service.



Sunday 21, 2023. Feast of Ascension Sunday.
The Feast of Ascension Sunday



There are services in three languages on Sundays in Bor. St. Andrews Cathedral has a 7:00 am service in English and St. Andrews high school has an Arabic service that has over 150 worshippers. The main service at 8:30 am is conducted in the Dinka language and is attended by over 2000 people. This year on Ascension Sunday the cathedral's generator failed and there was no electricity inside the cathedral. The temperature inside the cathedral climbed as outdoor temperatures reached 105 degrees and there were 2000 people inside the building. I was hot and uncomfortable in my episcopal vestments. In South Sudan the bishops and priests like to wear their full ecclesiastical garb, which made being in the cathedral unbearable for the first hour. I cooled down a little bit after sweating inside my vestments but it was still very uncomfortable.

I spoke to the congregation, greeting people on behalf of churches and mission partners in the United States. I also spoke on the Ascension and the following Sunday talked about the Feast of Pentecost. This service lasted for two and a half hours.



After the church service, the Mothers Union had prepared a lunch of fried fish. I joined dozens of men and women from the cathedral and school's leadership for lunch. After lunch I returned to my room but it was so hot that I could not rest. As I lay in the heat, I thought to myself that the next time I visit that I will avoid the heat of the dry season and visit when it is cooler. Most of men in Bor shave their heads to deal with the heat so I decided to shave my head to help cool down.



Despite the heat, I was excited about the work being done in Bor. The school, compound, and church did not have running water. This means that there was no water available for the over 3000 people who come to worship on Sundays. The next week, by the grace of God, we would start bringing clean water by digging a well. This would help the women who have to carry water long distances.



The young lady standing on my right side is Sarafina. On June 9, 2019, when I was consecrated as Assistant Bishop of Diocese of Bor she worked as a volunteer for Diocese of Bor's small radio station. She calls me Dad. Sarafina married last year and I am glad that God has blessed her with a son.

May 24, 2023

Visit to St. Andrews High School, Bor, South Sudan

St. Andrews School had two weeks of summer vacation and the school reopened on Monday, May 22nd. I visited on the 24th, accompanying Bishop Thomas Agou, Assistant Bishop of Diocese of Bor, Very Rev David Per, Dean of the Cathedral and other senior clergy. We were warmly welcomed by several hundred students from the junior and senior high school. I began by meeting with 33 high school teachers. I thanked them for their sacrifice after learning that they had spent several months teaching without being paid and that their salary is less than \$25.00 a month.



Despite the teachers' difficulties, the school is flourishing. I was shown a letter from the South Sudan Board of Education that said for the past three years St. Andrews Primary School (4-8th grade) and the Senior High School (grade 9-12) have both received awards for excellent performance in the State of Jongeli and in South Sudan. This is even more remarkable because the school has very poor classrooms without electricity or science and computer labs. Teachers told me that they teach science subjects but have no place to perform lab experiments. The students also learn English and the medium of instruction is in English. English is important because it is much easier for teachers to find books and materials in English than in Dinka.



During our visit, three urgent needs were mentioned:

1. Modern classrooms with solar panels to provide light.
2. Computers and a computer lab
3. A science lab room

There is also a constant need for supplies and I donated the 250 pens from Trust Point, the Wealth Management Company in La Crosse. I presented the pens to 33 high school teachers and 150 senior high school students. The students are going to sit for their exams in a few weeks and they can use their new pens to write their exams. There also is no water available for more than 3267 students and 90 teachers in both primary and high school. We have funds provided by all those who have donated to Help with Compassion. The next week we addressed this vital need by beginning the well digging project, which will provide clean water for drinking, cooking, and washing.

By noon the temperature had reached 39 Celsius, 108F. Both my iPad and iPhone stopped working from the heat. It was so hot that even the locals found it unbearable. We all prayed for rain to help break the heat.

May 25, 2023

Visit to St. Andrews Primary School, Bor, South Sudan

This morning I accompanied the Rev. Canon Jacob Akuot, the Secretary of the Diocese of Bor and the Provincial Office, on a visit to St. Andrews Primary School. Help with Compassion previously helped build two classrooms for the primary school. I met with 44 teachers and thanked them for their faithful service in difficult circumstances. Primary teachers are only paid \$20.00 a month and work in deplorable conditions. The school receives no financial aid except what parents can provide. There are 2,667 students at St. Andrews Primary School. I learnt that almost half the school are orphans who have lost their parents during the war and are being brought up by relatives. The school does not restrict children from attending school if their families cannot pay regularly. In spite of all these challenges, St. Andrews School has been ranked first three times in annual tests for all of South Sudan.

The British Ambassador visited Bor and the school three days before I did. The high school and primary school principals met with the ambassador and other representatives of the British Embassy. No promises of help were made but I pray that the school receives help to improve the physical condition of the classrooms. As a part of my role as a Missionary Bishop, I work to raise funds that can be used to help to build classrooms and provide the school with furniture and equipment, along with medicine for the students. The monetary donations provided by Help with Compassion donors greatly help alleviate the great needs of the students in Bor.



May 28, 2023
Pentecost



May 28, 2023

Youth Praise Festival

The last Sunday of every month in Bor is a youth festival. I was told that attendance has recently increased and this Sunday 2700 young people from three dioceses gathered inside St. Andrews Cathedral, filling it to capacity. Most of them had walked between five and eight miles through the high temperatures to get to the cathedral. I was exhausted from the morning worship service and did not join the youth at their 1:00 start time. I waited till 2:30 pm as the festival was going to last until 5:00 pm. There were five praise teams representing the three dioceses. They were praying for revival in Bor town and the greater Bor county. There have been problems with rising crime and increased use of drugs and alcohol, partially due the improved mobility with the new paved road between Bor and Juba. I spoke with youth leaders in the cathedral about these issues. I was greatly enthused to see such a large Dinka youth gathering praising God. The members of the church love to sing and perform liturgical dances in front of the altar as an offering before God. It is a common practice in churches to see people singing and dancing.



The air was thick and hot as I entered the sanctuary. I felt light-headed and slightly sick, like I was going to pass out from the heat and heaviness of the large gathering. But it was my commitment to preach on Roman 1: 1-17: Not Ashamed of the Gospel. I used the book "The Story of Roman's" by Dr. Katherine Grieb, Associate Professor of New Testament at Virginia Theological Seminary. Paul was eager to proclaim to the churches in Rome. He knew his previous

reputation was to be the enemy of the Cross of Christ. After meeting Jesus Christ and being called by Jesus now he described himself as "set apart for the gospel of God." In Paul's case God is the sender to send him on a mission to evangelize or "preach the gospel to" Gentiles to bring about their faithful obedience, "the obedience of faith (Rom. 1: 5; 16:26), to Jesus Christ.

I shared Paul's story at the youth gathering because it mirrors the spread of Christianity in South Sudan, especially Bor. Seventy years ago, Nathaniel Garang was a twenty-year-old young man practicing animism, when he heard the saving message of the Gospel and accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Saviour. He went to Bible School in Kenya and was ordained in the Anglican/Episcopal Church. He came to Bor, to the very area where St. Andrews Cathedral now stands and started preaching and calling tribal people to repent and give up their pagan gods. The Dinka people of his tribe accepted his invitation to believe in Jesus and he baptized them in waters of the Nile river. He became the first Dinka Bishop of Bor. He walked with other evangelists for hundreds of

miles in the vast land of Sudan to preach the Gospel. He and his fellow evangelists baptized thousands of people. Bishop Nathaniel told me that next to Bor is Malak. There they gathered hundreds of local gods and spears representing pagan gods. They held a revival service on the banks of the Nile and burned the spears and pagan gods. He encouraged people to carry crosses of Jesus in their hands. In many Dinka Churches worshipers carry "Dinka Crosses" when they come to worship today. In Paul's story, he is saying to be "Not Ashamed of the Gospel." It can be a rhetorical understatement that means "I am proud of the Gospel." Because it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jews first and also to the Greek." Paul was witnessing the power of God that changed every aspect of his life. Bishop Nathaniel Garang also had his life and the lives of countless others changed by the power of God. As the first local Dinka bishop, he was filled with the Holy Spirit and traveled hundreds of miles spreading the word of God in difficult circumstances. Bishop Garang was not alone in his difficulties, with many of Bor's people having powerful memories of a painful past or difficult history. 2.1 million South Sudanese people were killed in the liberation war and the same Nile river where people were baptized also was filled with the bodies of people murdered during the war. Yet, the people remained faithful and did not deny the name of Jesus. They kept and continue to keep singing "I have decided to follow Jesus. No turning back. The Cross before me, the world behind me. No turning back, no turning back."

I challenged the youth to be new "Nathaniel Garang's". I asked them to bear witness to the power of the Gospel of Salvation, Peace, and Reconciliation in their community in Bor and the nation of South Sudan. Individually and collectively they have many stories and witnesses to the power of God for salvation and for bringing peace in their community. At present there is a great crisis and disagreements going on in the national and church leadership. I humbly prayed that this youth group would lift their prayers before God to heal the strife and dissension in South Sudan. It was a day that filled me with joy to witness the power of praise, the Word of God and prayer. I thanked the Lord for using us as servants to lift high the Cross of Jesus and the Name of Jesus the CHRIST. Alleluia.



May 31, 2023

The Missio-Dei (Mission of God)

“For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake.” (2 Corinthians 4:5)

It is my 20th day in Bor, South Sudan. We are in the dry season and it has been chokingly hot. Yesterday the heat was so punishing that I could not sleep in my hut. The buildings do not have electric power or air conditioning so enclosed spaces can be unbearable. I couldn't sleep and couldn't remain inside so I took my mosquito net and joined a group of widows who live next to me outdoors. They had built a fire to keep the mosquitos away and I joined them. In some ways, these six women are like a family to me here. They help clean my room, prepare my bed, and bring me water to wash. They also help around the compound, doing a variety of jobs, and in exchange they are given a place to live. We are all neighbors and I lead them in the Morning and the Evening Prayer. I am provided a flask full of boiled water. Every morning after prayer I invite six to eight people to drink coffee, tea, or chocolate milk in my room. Last night, they were the ones who extended the hospitality to me, preparing a bed on the floor that was covered with a mosquito net where I could sleep.

As I lay on the ground, under a mosquito net in the sweltering heat, my mind starting to wander. I thought to myself, “what on earth am I doing here, leaving the comforts of the USA”? I looked up at the stars and felt a cool breeze from the Nile River and wondered if I had a martyr's syndrome, asking myself what I was doing here and what I was trying to prove. It wasn't just the heat but I couldn't sleep and kept pondering, searching my heart and soul, thinking of how I came to be here and how I ended up serving the mission of God in South Sudan.

It began with a copy of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) magazine, “Yes” in 1992. At the time I was serving as an associate rector at the Church of the Holy Comforter in Vienna, Virginia. Vienna is right next to Washington, DC and many of my parishioners worked for the government. This issue of Yes had a picture of Nathaniel Garang, the first bishop of Bor, South Sudan on the cover. The magazine featured an interview with Bishop Garang that described the tremendous growth of the church in South Sudan, despite persecution, war, and violence. I was shocked to learn about the atrocities, human rights violations, and violence that had left more than 2 million people dead and



over 4 million people homeless. It was shocking. The silence also shocked me. I was at a church in a city that was right next to Washington, DC. There was no coverage of the suffering in South Sudan in the Washington Post or New York Times. When Saddam Hussein had invaded Kuwait only a short time before, the world had reacted with outrage. This time, it was me who felt outrage at the duplicity of the US foreign policy. The South Sudanese were being subjected to a modern holocaust but the media had focused instead on freeing a few rich Kuwaitis from the Iraqi invasion. The liberation of Kuwait was treated as a reflection of America's commitment to the freedom of all people. Yet, in Sudan, the South Sudanese were suffering unbelievable genocide and the world was silent.

Later, when I arrived in Juba, South Sudan, I saw first-hand the epicenter of violence. Next to Juba University there was an army barracks that was known as "the White House". For two decades this was the notorious headquarters of the Sudanese government forces. The government arrested anyone they believed supported the South Sudanese liberation efforts and brought them to the White House. Activists, priests, nuns, doctors, nurses, students, and countless others were brought into the White House where they were tortured. Thousands were murdered and buried in unmarked mass graves. And while the White House might have been the violence's center, it had spread everywhere. In Bor there is a mass grave near St. Andrews Cathedral. 20 women who were members of the Episcopal church in Bor were raped and then killed, along with two priests and evangelists who had tried to protect them. The entire country of South Sudan is filled with stories of horror and atrocities.

In these horrible conditions, Bishop Nathaniel Garang's message to the world was that God has not abandoned the South Sudanese people. And they have not abandoned Him. Instead, they are alive, praising Him and the church is growing. His message touched my heart. I was serving as the Diocese of Virginia's Mission Committee's Chair and began praying for the South Sudanese people every day with my family. I kept the copy of Yes magazine, with Bishop Garang on the lamp stand next to my bed for several years, reminding me of the people in South Sudan.

I also started raising awareness. I spoke with church leaders and civic groups to be the voice of the Sudanese Church. In February 1994 I testified before the International and Foreign Affairs Committee at Capital Hill on the crisis in South Sudan. I came back to Capital Hill three more times to testify about the suffering in South Sudan. In July 1996 I began to serve as the rector of St. John's Episcopal Church in Waynesboro, VA. While there, I was appointed as the Chair of the Link Committee of the Episcopal Church in the USA with two dioceses in the UK; the Dioceses of Salisbury and Bradford. The link committee allowed our three dioceses to partner with the Anglican Province of Sudan. In 1997 I had my first opportunity to visit Kakuma Refugee camp is in northeast of Kenya, where I traveled with Bishop Garang and Marc Nikkel, a CMS and Episcopal Church missionary in the Diocese of Bor. Kakuma had close to 100,000 refugees mostly from greater Bor area. After visiting Kakuma refugee community for ten day. We flew in a small Cessna plane into Bor area. At this time the Bor area was an active war zone. I observed the atrocities, mass killings, and the destruction of South Sudan.

Peoples' homes, animals, livelihoods were completely destroyed. I was also experiencing the living faith of the persecuted church grown under the Cross of Christ. Dinka people holding wooden crosses in their hands welcomed us in Bor area. Cross had become their proud symbol of the strength to live and die for Jesus.

While on this first trip to Bor, I began writing my diaries, which later were published as "Hear My People's Cry—the Story of the Persecuted Church and Their Witness to Triumphant Faith". After I returned back to the USA, I was invited to serve at the 1998 Lambeth Conference as an Advisor to the Archbishop of Canterbury. I had gotten the first version of "Hear My People's Cry" published at Virginia Theological Seminary and I brought 800 copies with me, which I distributed to the Bishops of the Anglican Communion at Lambeth Conference 1998.

After Lambeth, I was appointed as the Canon and Commissary to the Archbishop of Sudan in 2001. I served in this role, alongside Archbishop Joseph Marona of Sudan until 2008. During this time Archbishop Marona and I would travel from Kampala, Uganda to South Sudan and visit different dioceses for six weeks at a time. When I returned home, I would write articles for papers in the US and UK, continuing to raise awareness about South Sudan.

In April 2018 I received a letter from the Most Reverend Ruben Akurdid, Archbishop of Jongeli Province and Bishop of Bor that the Executive Committee of their Jongeli Province and Diocese had passed a resolution, inviting me to serve as the Assistant Bishop to serve in the Diocese of Bor. I was consecrated as Bishop on June 9, 2019 at St. Andrews Cathedral in Bor. This made me a Missionary Bishop and I felt my role in the Diocese of Bor is to teach, preach, pray and support the Mothers Union work, help with the education of 3600 children of St. Andrews Primary and High School. It is an honor and privilege for me to be a servant of Jesus Christ to serve here. I live with my community day and night. It means I am experiencing their suffering and triumphant faith every hour I spend with them. It is a very simple life, at times difficult, but it gives me a deep sense of solidarity to be one with them in Christ.

Now, let me end with why I do not call my work the "Mission of Bishop Patrick Augustine" but instead the "Mission of God", *missio Dei*. The Old and New Testament, is a revelation of "God's mission." I will share several Scripture passages:

1. "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth. (Isaiah 49:6).
2. God took a very decisive step to redeem humanity from the power of sin: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. God sent the Son into the world not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. (John 3:16-17)
3. Jesus fulfills Isaiah's prophesy to tell the world charter of his mission: "the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed to preach good news to the poor. He has

sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed to proclaim the acceptable Year of the Lord. (Luke 4: 18-19)

4. Jesus Christ makes it very clear in sending his disciples on the *missio Dei*: “As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world”. (John 17:18)

During my doctoral study at Virginia Theological Seminary I read several articles and books of the eminent scholar and missiologist David Bosch who clearly articulates: That Mission is, primarily and ultimately the work of the Triune God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, for the sake of the world, a ministry in which the church is privileged to participate. This is the deepest source of mission ... there is mission because God loves people.

As a disciple of Jesus Christ this is exactly how I have been called to bring the Good News, bring hope to the poor and oppressed, and to love them as my brothers and sisters. I pray every day for peace and reconciliation in the nation of South Sudan and in the Episcopal Church of South Sudan. I have been called to hear personal stories and cries of many orphans and widows who carry pain and are in need to their wounds to be healed. I serve among them as their brother in Christ in the Diocese of Bor, South Sudan. I give thanks to God for providing me this opportunity. My heart is full of gratitude for many churches and individuals who have contributed that allow me to serve here on the mission of God as the servant of Jesus Christ.

Therefore, since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart. (2 Corinthians 4:1)

yin Ca leec (Dinka), Shookrun (Arabic), Thank you.



June 7, 2023

Meeting with the Leader of the Mothers' Union

The Mothers Union is a strong and important part of churches in Africa. I had a meeting with the members of the Mothers Union in Bor on June 7th. I woke early, prayed, and mediated, seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit for this important meeting for women's empowerment. I was directed to follow two verses to meditate upon before our meeting:

*"And whatsoever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men" (Colossians 3:23).
"And let our's also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful" (Titus 3: 14).*

The Daughters of The King National Chapter in the USA had provided me with a grant of \$3000.00 to support the work of the Mothers Union in the Diocese of Bor. I had met with leaders of Mothers Union in 2019 at my bishop's consecration and had asked them how I could support their work. They told me that many years ago the Mothers Union in Australia had provided twenty sewing machines for women to learn sewing and tailoring. The instruction provided by the sewing center gives women a trade to support themselves. The colorful dresses worn by some of the women in Bor were made in the sewing center. But the center suffered damage when the Nile flooded and became unusable. The sewing center needed financial help to resume their work. I raised funds in 2019 and the sewing center was opened again. Funds provided from the Diocese of Bor helps them purchase cloth for dressmaking and also supports a teacher at the



center. Since 2019, 100 women have been trained and have started earning money to support their families. In 2023 the 5th group of women started their instruction at the sewing center. But flooding again damaged some of the sewing machines. To fix the machines, they need to be sent to Juba but the cost of transporting the machines is high and the machines are aging. I suggested in future to purchase two new sewing machines. This will support the sewing center and also the Mothers Union. And the training provided by the sewing center will continue to provide a skill for young women to support their families. The Mothers Union and I gave thanks to God for the support provided to them.

Since it was a hot day I invited the leaders of the Mothers Union, along with students from the sewing center to meet with me under the shade of a large tree. Roda, the leader of Mother Union, and Monica, a teacher at the sewing center, shared their

thoughts with us. While I was preparing for my travel from La Crosse, Wisconsin to Bor, South Sudan, Kim Pretasky, the owner of a Touch of Class, a women's clothing store, donated new clothes for women in Bor. I brought a suitcase full of clothes. These were distributed to women meeting with me under the shade of the tree. It was a token of love shared by Kim with the women in Bor. Thank you Daughters of the King and Kim Pretasky.



June 9, 2023

Medicine for Children at St. Andrews High School

There are two doctors from India who live in Bor and have a deep and remarkable commitment to the Bor community. Dr. Anil Cherian and Dr. Shalani Cherian have been in Bor for five years and are members of St. Andrews Cathedral. They are both highly trained medical doctors who are graduates from the prestigious Vallore Medical College in India. With their medical training, they could be employed anywhere around the globe, making a substantial salary and living in comfort. Instead, they live in a small trailer home situated on the campus of John Garang University in Bor with minimal basic housing facilities. They run a program out of the small clinic they operate in Bor. The program allows young men and women to be trained as nurses and medical technicians over the course of three years. I visited the clinic and learned that six weeks ago their generator stopped working and there was no water there. I donated funds to help with the solar power that helps power the clinic's well.

I also coordinated the purchase of medicine for the clinic and local schools. A large box of medicine arrived from Juba that included medication for malaria, diarrhea, antibiotics, hydration, fever and pain. Dr. Anil explained the use of the medicine to the principal of St. Andrews School. The principal and teachers thanked everyone who donated money to purchase medicine for the school children.



June 10, 2023

Boat Ride on the Nile River

The town of Bor is situated on the bank of River Nile. Bor's name means the land of flooding. The Nile has flowed along the town's area for thousands of years. Although I visited this area for many years, I had never gone on an outing to enjoy the beauty of this mighty river. Dr. Anil and his wife Dr. Shalni Cherian arranged a boat ride. Canon Jacob Akout and I accompanied them with two of their students. It was a nice and bit cooler afternoon. Away from Bor, we saw a fisherman's hut in the bush that was flying an American flag with water buck horns hanging underneath. While riding in the boat we saw exotic birds and two big water bucks. On the riverfront there were two large trucks being loaded with fresh and smoked dry fish. These trucks take fish from Bor to Uganda and Congo. Along the river, there are tall grass reeds and papyrus that grows for miles along the Nile River's banks. There are islands that were partly cleared for cattle camps and fishermen smoking fish to dry. For miles I did not see any development or resorts for vacationers. Tourism is not at all developed as decades of war and tribal conflicts have left this area insecure. On my return I asked a young Dinka man, "Could you gather here by the river when Arabs from the north had occupied this area?" One replied, "we would be arrested or shot if we came in that area". Now there was great hustle and bustle and people of Bor were enjoying their freedom won in 2011.



More Photos from the Nile River



June 11, 2023

The 5th Anniversary of my Consecration as Bishop in the Diocese of Bor, South Sudan

On June 9, 2019 I was consecrated as Bishop in the Church of South Sudan. It had rained most of the night. I wondered how the church could have a service because there was standing water everywhere. The Rt. Rev. Ruben Akudid, Archbishop of Jongeli Province and Bishop of Bor, came to my room during rain and asked me to get



ready. We waited for the rain to stop and it did for a short time. We walked through mud and water in a large procession to find the cathedral packed with an estimated 4000 people who had also walked through the rain. As soon as we entered inside St. Andrews Cathedral a torrential rain resumed and Archbishop Ruben announced that it was a good day and rain is a sign of God's blessings. The service continued for three hours.

Today, I began my fifth year serving as Missionary Bishop of the Diocese of Bor. Again it rained most of the early morning and it continued to 11:00 am. Next to St. Andrews Cathedral the local congregation is building a new cathedral. The construction area is fenced off and we had to climb over the fence. The rain had left standing water everywhere and I had to have several people help me so that I did not slip and fall in the mud. There were 697 people who all walked in the rain to attend the Sunday service. I praised God for their commitment to worship Jesus Christ during rain, war, and in staying in refugee camps without food and shelter but kept singing:



“We have decided to follow Jesus No turning back, no turning back.

It may sound strange to us who live in the west but I have experienced the depth of their faith in an undeniable way. I must say that the poor are blessed with their qualities of love for Jesus Christ and their courage to lift high the Cross of Christ. In all circumstances they willingly depend on the living God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and Father of Jesus Christ. Every day I see this total trust and dependence on God in the affairs in their lives. There are six single older women who are my neighbors that live here without any pension or source of income. They gather everyday in front of my hut in St. Andrews Cathedral compound and they will start singing praise songs inviting me to join them for Morning and Evening Prayer. Two of the women are in their late eighties and throughout the day they keep praising God and blessing the name of Jesus. Hearing and seeing them helps me discover everyday that these poor mysteriously are blessed.

When I visit churches in the USA I encourage and invite them to join me in sharing their love and compassion for the weak and poor. Many churches through their prayers and generous giving have responded. I give thanks every day for the generosity of churches and donors. For the first time at St. Andrews School, 4000 people will have access to clean water to drink, cook and wash. This project will cost \$20,000.00. The diocesan clinic for young mothers and children has had no water for the last two months because their generator is irreparably broken. We are contributing \$5000.00 to restore the water system by having it run by solar power. High School children have received medicine for malaria and stomach ailments. The Mothers' Union has received \$3000.00 for training young women at their Sewing Center. On June 14, 60 pastors from three dioceses are joining us at St. Andrews Cathedral for fellowship, prayer, praise and I shall teach on the book of Acts. We shall provide them loving hospitality to thank them for their faithful ministry under challenging circumstances. It will be time to recharge our batteries.



During my conversations with ordained and laity, men and women, young and old I ask about the source of the strength of their faith. There are some people who will be holding Dinka crosses in their hands and they point me to Cross and raise their hands saying “Yesu” Jesus. Religion for them is not a source of endless debates on sexuality and issues only an affluent society can afford to debate. Here the poor, oppressed and persecuted find their inspiration in Jesus and in the image of the cross. It gives them hope in all circumstances and convinces me and them that the Crucified Jesus and resurrected Christ knows their suffering and daily labor. They believe and keep trusting the faithfulness of the living God. Some people might say that religion is “opiate of the people”. By living with the people of Bor day and night I will not hesitate to say that such a myth is developed by irreligious social scientists who had very little actual everyday living contact with the confessing poor faith communities. Jesus the risen Christ is real and I find his presence among us every day. Alleluia!



June 14, 2023

Clergy Retreat Day at St. Andrews Cathedral

There was a clergy retreat held at St. Andrews Cathedral. Bor is the Mother Diocese which has given birth to 14 dioceses in Jongeli Province and clergy came from across the diocese and beyond. 55 priests and deacons were invited from the Dioceses of Bor, Anyidi, Makhach and Chueikeer for one day of study and fellowship. Some of the priests traveled by public transport and others walked on foot for several miles to come to St. Andrews Cathedral in Bor.



25 members of the Mothers' Union came early in the morning and prepared and later served breakfast and greeted the clergy attending the retreat.

We started our first session with praise and Morning Prayer. In the opening remarks I explained that our purpose of gathering as Deacons, Priests and Bishops is to spend time in prayer, praise, fellowship, and studying the Word of God to recharge our batteries. One of the quickest ways to charge yourself up again is to remove

ourselves from the busyness of our lives and spend time in fellowship in the presence of the Lord.

Jeremiah 20:9

- A. You don't get weary from serving the Lord and obeying the call on your life.
- B. Weariness comes from resisting God and holding back from flowing in the gift that God has given you.
- C. When you remove yourself from this "forbearing," your strength and joy will return almost immediately.

We studied the Word of God together. We divided our day in three sessions:

1. Introduction to the Book of Acts.
2. Readings by four people from the first two chapters from the Book of Acts.
3. Readings by two persons from the third chapter from the Book of Acts.

In the beginning of each session I invited us to sing two praise songs and two prayers. These are three weapons of our spiritual warfare that I believe are our three most powerful to aid us. 2 Corinthians 10: 4-4:

- A. *The Word of God*
- B. *The Name of Jesus*
- C. *The Blood of Jesus.*

Hebrews 4:2:

a. *Be one of those who “do” something with the Word.*

b. *Mix the Word in your heart, put it in your mouth, and say it.*

Mark 11:23. Must believe it. Read it, and meditate on it until you believe.

2 Timothy 4:2. *Preach the word.*

Ps. 119:5. *“Your word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”*

At our Ordination as Priests at our examination we made the following promise”
“We will be diligent in the reading and study of the Holy Scripture, and seeking the knowledge of such things as may make us stronger and more able minister of Christ. I reminded to us all about the importance of the Word of God in our lives by reading the following Collect: *“Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, Mark. Learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

In the third session we read Acts chapter three. The teaching was on the Name of Jesus.

Philippians 2:9-11

a. Name above all names.

b. His name has more authority. Every other authority must bow at that name

Matthew 28: 16-20. The name of Jesus is the power of the great commission.

Mark 16: 15-18. The name of Jesus gives us permission to function with New Testament power.

At the close of our session I invited all gathered to come and kneel at the Altar area and we laid hands on each other seeking fresh anointing of the HOLY SPIRIT.

It was an amazing day of prayer, praise and teaching from the Word of God.

We closed our day with an early dinner that the Mothers’ Union had prepared for us. What a day of blessings. Thanks be to God. Alleluia!



June 16, 2023

Fresh Clean Water for St. Andrews School and Cathedral Compound

Three years ago, I realized that 3,600 children at St. Andrews School had no source of clean water. The girls from the school had to carry yellow jerry cans on their heads from the school into the Bor community to bring water every day. With the temperature being hot most of the year, carrying water was difficult and the school needed a better solution.

I decided to bring water to our school children. I found out that it would be a very expensive project that would cost close to \$30,000.00. I started working on this mission and God blessed my efforts. Many churches and people have helped me complete this project. On June 16th, we held a service of thanksgiving and blessed the completion of this project. It is a state of art water system. Two large containers sit on a tower platform that holds 5000 gallons of clean water. The solar water pump system uses solar energy as a power source to directly draw water from a deep well through a water pump. The primary school has six stations for children to drink the fresh clean water. The high school has four stations and the cathedral compound has two stations to get water to drink, cook, and wash. Every day 4000 people shall benefit from this water supply. I want to thank all of those who donated money to complete this project. There were three Bishops, several members of the clergy of the Diocese of Bor, government officials from the Jongeli State government, and several high officials from the national government who were also present with us for the service of giving thanks to God.





Your donations are welcomed to support

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