

THE MISSION OF GOD

THE MISSION REPORT OF VISIT TO DIOCESE OF BOR, SOUTH SUDAN

MARCH - APRIL 2024

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Women's Empowerment



Improving Children's Education

GOD'S WORK IN THE WORLD

"Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. (1 Corinthians 15:58)"

Missio Dei

“Mission arises from the heart of God himself, and is communicated from his heart to ours. Mission is the global outreach of the global people of a global God” (John Stott).

Here in this report, I share the glimpses of my call as a pilgrim to carry God’s mission on the way to the ends of the world. I carry with me prayers of the faithful that I may be a blessing to the nations while seeking welfare of my people I am called to serve. I pray every day during my missional pilgrim to be an instrument of good news of the Gospel and agent of peace and reconciliation in the Episcopal Church of South Sudan. I lead worship services, preach the Word of God and pray daily with the sick and suffering people. The goal of all our mission is the worship and glory of the one true living god. I get 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 on the mission of God as the servant of Jesus Christ.

Following is a brief summary of projects completed for the development of the Diocese of Bor:

- A dormitory for St. Andrews high school girls was built. Fifty senior high school girls can now sleep there. \$30,000.00 were raised for this project. During the rainy season many of them had to walk in standing water to their homes every day. Many missed their school. Now they have a place on the school grounds where they can study after school and sleep.
- St. Andrews received three desktop computers and a printer. High school students learn computer science theory only. Now final year students have started learning to operate computers. After their graduation from high school it shall help them to find jobs.
- Women Empowerment: Since July 2019 Six months of sewing classes at St. Andrews Cathedral have trained 113 young women in sewing and tailoring. We have provided four of the women sewing machines. These women have started their own small business.
- St. Andrews primary and high school student suffer from malaria, diarrhea, and dehydration. We have provided medicine for the treatment of students.
- Last year in June we dug a well with the cost \$25,000.00. Under severe hot weather 3600 children had no source of clean water to drink during school hours. Now Clean fresh water is available to them.

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

February 29 and March 3, 2024
Commissioning of a Missionary

"So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off." (Acts 13:3).

A commissioning service is an important time for both a missionary and his sending churches. Not only does it reaffirm their commitment to each other, it provides a time to rejoice and give thanks together.

Before my journey began, I felt covered by the prayers of the saints of God in Episcopal, Baptist, and Roman Catholic churches as well as Living Word Christian Church in La Crosse, Wisconsin. I want to thank those congregations as well as the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration (FSPA). The sisters and a Roman Catholic priest blessed me during a noon Eucharist in the nuns' historic chapel of St. Rose Convent.

On Sunday, March 3, Pastor Mark Clement and members of Living Word Christian Church laid hands on me during Sunday worship before my missionary journey to serve in the Diocese of Bor, South Sudan.

"The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working." (James: 5: 16b).



March 5, 2024

Missionary Journey to the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church. Meeting with His Holiness Abune Mathias I, Patriarch of Ethiopia, Archbishop of Axum, Echegie of the See of St. Tekle Haimanot.

On March 4, I took my first trip to Ethiopia. When I landed in Addis Ababa after 14 hours on Ethiopian Airlines, I was met by the staff of His Holiness Abune Mathias, Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church. This is the largest and oldest church in Africa. It has 49 million members.



I arrived at the Patriarch's palace two days after the 11th anniversary of his enthronement. I was told 100,00 faithful had gathered at Trinity Cathedral for prayer and celebration. Two priests and the patriarch's principal secretary escorted me to a meeting with His Holiness that lasted an hour and a half.

Here are my opening remarks: "I greet you in the blessed name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Your Holiness, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to meet with you. Yours is an

ancient church grounded in orthodox faith. Your church has been faithful through trials and tribulations and has celebrated its faith with great examples of confidence in the saving power of the Gospel of



Jesus Christ. I bring greetings to you from your brothers and sisters in Christ in the west. As St. Paul wrote in Romans 12: 4-5: "For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others." The church is likened to one body with its multiplicity of members.

I join you in prayer as our Lord in John's Gospel prays for us: "Father, I pray they all may be one." I am here to learn about the mission of Christ and to get to know my brothers and sisters in Christ in Ethiopia. I am a pilgrim who wishes to visit holy places, to see them and be blessed. Thank you again to your holiness."



We shared mutual thoughts of good will and he welcomed me warmly in his church. I also shared my commitment to serve churches going through persecution. His Holiness expressed his disappointment with the western churches on issues of sexuality. He said Eastern churches remain faithful to the authority and teachings of Holy Scripture. Their church proclaims the Gospel boldly and lives under the lordship of Jesus Christ.

The Patriarch gave me two books published for his 11th anniversary. He blessed and gave me an orthodox cross to wear - the same one he gives his bishops when they are consecrated. Two priests then took me to churches and holy places of pilgrimage in and near Addis Ababa. At Trinity Cathedral, I saw where more than 100,000 faithful members had gathered for worship, prayers, and open air preaching. I thank God for such a rich experience of

deep spirituality and devotion of the church of the East. In our last moments together, His Holiness prayed and blessed me on my mission journey to Kenya and South Sudan.

Sunday, March 10, 2024
All Saints Cathedral Nairobi, Kenya



Today I attended 9:30 and 11:30 a.m. worship services in All Saints, which can seat a congregation of 1,300. Evans Omollo, the cathedral's provost and dean, asked me to speak during the services. A children's service that day had 1,200 present. A youth service was attended by more than 800. Teaching from the Bible at the main service in the Cathedral was on Romans, chapter 7. The preacher did solid teaching for a half hour. I was told a total of 5,008 persons attended all services that day in multiple places of worship on the campus of this vibrant and thriving church.

Biblical solid teaching is preached every Sunday. Praise God for their commitment and deep faith in Jesus Christ I experienced. Alleluia!

In the evening, Provost Evans Omollo and I went out to have dinner together.

March 11-13, 2024 - Juba, South Sudan
In God's Service

I left my Nairobi hotel room at 4 a.m. March 11 to catch 7 a.m. flight. When I arrived in Juba, South Sudan, at 7:45 a.m., I was met by two Diocese of Bor priests. We left the airport around 9:30 a.m. in a taxi they hired at a cost of \$100 for the trip to Bor. The temperature was 112 to 114 degrees Fahrenheit that day. I bought along packets of cookies, coffee, tea bags, tins of Ovaltine and powdered milk and chocolate which proved useful to my ministry,

When we arrived [at St. Andrew's Cathedral] in Bor at 3 p.m., a large group of Dinka men and women were waiting for us. In keeping with their tradition, they sang Christian songs and asked me to pray and bless them. Women had prepared fried fish from the Nile River. After eating lunch and an early dinner with 35 people under a tree, I went to my room because I was exhausted. It was stuffy and hot, but I slept for several hours, thanks to a solar-powered fan provided by Rev. Joseph Akout. Although it was blowing hot air, it helped me to sleep. By the middle of the night, the room was a bit cooler because it was about a block and a half from the Nile.

On the morning of March 12 twelve persons gathered in front of my hut. We sat in a circle and had morning prayer. We read psalms and studied the Book of Hebrews from the New Testament. It is my responsibility to teach them in the early morning. After prayer, I gave each person a multivitamin tablet from one of the bottles given by a pharmacist at Gundersen Health System in La Crosse.

After Morning Prayers I invited all of them to my room. They brought their own cups, and I shared a large loaf of brown bread I bought in Juba. I gave each two pieces of bread and a cup of coffee or tea. This morning 10 of us had breakfast in my room. The reason I brought several packets of cookies and bread is that most people who came to see me will not eat any breakfast. My practice is to invite those who live around my hut at St. Andrew's Cathedral to share morning prayer and breakfast. It is a privilege and honor to be a servant of Christ to my people in Bor.

During the day, an average of 30 to 40 persons come to my room at different hours. Before they leave, they kneel on the floor and ask me to pray with them. I love my people in Bor. They are simple and poor with little education, but their faith is their greatest wealth.

On March 13, I visited a clinic run by the Diocese of Bor. Dr. Owen, an Australia, was there for 2 months. An Indian lady doctor was also there for 2 months to deliver babies and provide medical care for young mothers and newly born babies. Dr. Owen will leave tomorrow for Australia.

Saturday, March 16, 2024

Prayer and Praise in Juba

Every Saturday at St. Andrew's Cathedral, 200 or more young persons fast and gather from 7 to 11 a.m. to praise and to pray. There are two opportunities to teach from the Bible, and 12 prayers are offered by different persons. After the prayers and worship service, people may break their fast. It is an amazing time of fellowship, prayer, and teaching from the Word of God.



Sunday, March 17, 2024

St. Patrick's Feast Day in Juba

I woke at 4:30 a.m. to prepare myself for the Lord's Day. It is also my 74th birthday. While it was still dark, I washed myself and sat in my room for a time of personal devotion and thanksgiving for 74 years of life and 50 of those years as Christ's servant.

Because the heat of the day starts early, worship at St. Andrew's Cathedral begins at 7 a.m. and ends at 10 a.m. When close to 2,000 persons attend a service, the church can become almost suffocating inside. By 10 a.m., the outside temperature reaches 114 to 116 degrees F.



Amazing Grace youth choir of St. Andrew's had prepared special Christian songs to welcome me. On their own, young members had ordered a cake from Park Palace hotel and sweets to distribute among youth. During the service, Archbishop Ruben Akurdid, Bishop Thomas, Jongeli State acting governor, and the cathedral's dean and senior leaders greeted me and wished me happy birthday.

Church leaders had planned to give me a Dinka Bor name, which has happened only twice before in the history of the Episcopal church in Jongeli Province of South Sudan. In early 1900, Archibald Shaw, the first pioneer missionary, came to Dinka- Jieng Bor from the Church

Missionary Society (CMS) in England. Shaw stayed with the Dinka under harsh conditions. People in Bor remember him as "Macuor".



Marc Nikkel was the second to receive a Dinka name. He served here from 1980 to 2000 as a joint missionary from the US Episcopal Church and CMS London. He was given the name "Manguangdit" which means "Great Bull Elephant."

Now, in its 120th year, after I have been coming here since 1996, the Dinka-Jeig Bor Church bestowed the name "Mayom-dit" on me as their missionary bishop. The name means a bull with a red body and a distinctive white color on the top of his head. This bull is strong and always leads the rest.

My English translation has rather a pedantic, prissy sound in contrast to the full bodied, aggressive meaning it carries in the Jieng language. As explained by Marc Nikkel, a native speaker, on hearing this name, immediately glows with the imagery, romance, competition, and pride of Jieng cattle camp, bristling with vitality. What comes to mind is an enormous bull, rippling with muscle, the leader of its herd. On its massive neck, it bears a home-smelted bell, 30 pounds or more of solid iron - a symbol of this lead bull's incomparable prestige. With each majestic step, the bell swings and clangs loudly, deftly, slowly—bong... bong...bong—commanding the attention of the entire herd.

I take this symbol with great humility since I wear a rather heavy cross around my neck. It was given to me by the widow of the Archbishop of Sudan after his memorial service in Maridi, South Sudan. She told me Archbishop Joseph Marona wanted me to wear it after his death. When I hold the cross of Jesus in my hand, I begin my preaching with this song:

*I have decided to follow Jesus - no turning back.
The Cross before me, the world behind me
No turning back, no turning back.*



My people have suffered the horrors of war. Two million have died. Four million have been uprooted from their homes and persecuted by the Islamic regime in Khartoum. Disease and hunger continue due to this country's fragile economy.

Bishop Nathaniel Garang, retired Bishop of Bor and a great evangelist, has persistently reminded the people that "God has not deserted you". The God whose self-giving love is revealed to us in the cross of Jesus is also the God who brings life from the dead by the power of the Spirit. We gather here in Bor each morning and evening to pray with confidence that, by the power of that Spirit, God will continue to bring

new life to the beloved people of His church in South Sudan.

As my thanksgiving, I want to close this meditation with the first and third verses of Psalm 34, which we recited together at evening prayer tonight:

*"I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.
O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together."*

Alleluia! Amen.

Tuesday, March 19, 2024

Meeting with St. Andrew's Primary and High School Teachers, Bor, South Sudan

Extreme heat (114 to 116 degrees Fahrenheit) on Monday forced rescheduling. The Jonglei state ministry of education closed all schools until further notice since there is no electricity and fans are not in classrooms. Instead, John Kon, high school principal, and John Kuer, principal of the primary school, arranged for me to meet with the staff of both schools at 8 a.m. today.

The Nursery School has 420 students. There are 700 boys and 600 girls in primary school grades 1 to 8. The high school student body includes 800 boys and girls. There are 39 primary school teachers and 32 high school teachers. They have 4-year college degrees and are Episcopal Church members. They are paid less than \$100 per month which does not go far in a country with high inflation. They have devoted their lives to community uplift.

Bishop Thomas and Rev. Jacob Akuot, secretary of the Diocese of Bor, accompanied me. After morning devotions, Bishop Thomas asked teachers to introduce themselves and give us their reports. They thanked me for providing a well and clean water for over 3,500 students and teachers. Before the well was dug, students searched for water in hot weather. Many did not return. Now they stay on campus and focus on their studies.

In recent years, I provided malaria and diarrhea prevention medicines that kept students healthy. Now we are building a large dormitory where 50 high school girls after school can sleep and study in their final year.

The Primary School was declared number 1 in the country in 2021, 2022 and 2023. Their present needs are:

1. Construction of additional class rooms as student numbers increase.
2. Classroom furniture (desk and chairs) for students.
3. A dormitory for 8th graders to stay on campus for their final state exam.
4. Teacher training.
5. Computers for classrooms.

The High School achieved 6th position nationally in academics in South Sudan in 2018. In 2023, 188 students took their 12th grade final national exam. Only 2 students failed, and 186 students earned their high school diploma. The high school needs:

1. A library for both schools.
2. Computers in their classrooms. (There are only 3 computers which Bishop Augustine brought from the United States in 2019.
3. Construction of additional classrooms.



March 21, 2024

Mission Report from Bor

After couple hours of meetings on an extremely hot day, I received several visitors in my room. At 1:30 p.m., Canon Jacob Akout came to take me to the Park Palace Hotel for lunch. Warm winds were blowing dust everywhere, which has been typical since last January because there has been no rain. While I appreciated his invitation, I politely declined. I had a banana and health bar I could eat in my room instead of riding on his motorcycle in the intense heat. I was also concerned about going out for lunch when drought and failed crops mean there is not enough to sustain the people of Bor.

Early that morning, I read a chapter on C. S. Lewis's thoughts on the Church: the body of Christ. "The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were given the one Spirit to drink ." (1 Corinthians 12: 12-13)

After his conversion experience, Lewis learned an important distinction between the local church one attends and the Church universal "spread out through all time and space and rooted in eternity". He had the latter in mind when he wrote in a letter, "The Church is Christ's body—the thing he works through." The Church universal is "that wonderful and sacred mystery...the blessed company of all faithful people" - the Church founded by Christ himself.

1. Matthew 16:18 "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell not prevail against it."

2. Acts 20: 28 "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

It is both this local and universal Church I serve as Bishop and as a servant of Jesus Christ. It takes almost a year of preparation, planning, and prayers for me to come from the United States to Bor. Last year I traveled twice for two months at a time to visit Episcopal churches in central Florida, Washington, DC, and a Baptist church in Cincinnati, Ohio. As I began my missional journey Episcopal churches, Evangelical Pentecostal Church, Baptist Church, Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, Ethiopian Orthodox Patriarch and Anglican congregation of All Saints Church in Nairobi laid hands and blessed my missional pilgrimage.

The faces, voices, and experiences of my journey so far represent a picture of the local and universal body of Christ. All are under the authority of the Lordship of JESUS the CHRIST. Members of all these local and universal churches study the word of God in the Holy Bible. They believe "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path." (Psalm 119:105)

My day here begins at 5 a.m. when there is a cool breeze from the River Nile. By 6 a.m., several people gather in front of my tukla (mud hut) and sing songs in Dinka. We always begin our Morning Prayer with the hymn "Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God Almighty. Early in the morning our songs shall rise to thee." They sing in Dinka and I sing both in Urdu and English. I even hear birds chirping and singing praise to God. We read the appointed Psalms, Old Testament, and Epistle. In the evening, we read the appointed Psalms and the Gospel. I am asked twice a day to give teaching on appointed readings from the Holy Scriptures.

I am now preparing my message for a youth gathering on Saturday morning. On Palm Sunday I will preach at St. Andrew's Cathedral. It is such a joy and privilege to be part of local and universal body of Christ here in Bor.

C. S. Lewis writes in his letter to Mary Van Deusen:

“The New Testament does not envisage solitary religion; some kind of regular assembly for worship and instruction is everywhere taken for granted in the Epistles. So we must be regular practicing members of the Church.”

Brothers and sisters, the Church is not perfect as we experience it, but it is the body of Christ in the world. We must, therefore, participate joyfully, appreciating and learning from diversity because it takes black, white, red, yellow, rich, and poor to make the Church. We must believe what we sing: “The Church’s one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord.”



March 22, 2024

Mission Report: Sewing Center - Meeting with leader of Mother's Union at Diocese of Bor in St. Andrew's Cathedral compound



In June 2019 I envisioned opening a sewing center for the empowerment of young women. Unemployment in Bor is over 80 percent. Young women are not able to find jobs. Persons with government jobs have not been paid since last August. The purpose of this center is to help young women learn skills so they can earn a living. To date, the Sewing Center has trained 113 ladies in the skill of tailoring. I have encouraged Dinka women to start their own businesses when they have been trained.

Here is how the Sewing Center helped one woman:

Monica opened her business last year in the center of Bor Town market. I provided assistance for her to buy

material and a sewing machine. Most of the downtown market traders are Ugandan, Ethiopian, Eritrean and Arabian. She and another woman trained at the Sewing Center are now partners. Monica's husband graduated from high school in 2015 but has never been able to find a job. He stays home to take care of their four children while she runs her business. Her income makes it possible to pay tuition at St. Andrew's school for two of her children and two of her sister's children.

What the Sewing Center needs

1. Two years ago, flood water from the Nile destroyed eight of the Sewing Center's machines. They need to be replaced since they cannot be repaired. I suggest we buy two machines each year at a cost of \$400 - \$500 per machine.
2. Women trained in the Sewing Center want to work but lack the capital needed to buy machines and fabric. Each would need a start-up loan of \$600 to \$700. A \$5,000 revolving loan program in the diocese could help 8 to 10 women support their families with home-based businesses.

I invited a group of these ladies to join me under the tree behind my tukla mud hut. As the temperature rose, we provided cold water and soda for our guests. One of young mothers I met last year was pregnant, and has since given birth to a son she named Patrick. I was happy to meet him, and I am proud of the training which is helping these ladies succeed.

We closed our meeting with thanks to God for fellowship and sharing of good news about how the Sewing Center helped these ladies start their own businesses.



March 22, 2024

Mission Report: Inter-Churches Committee (ICC) Prayer Service for Peace and Unity in Jonglei Province



ICC is part of the Council of Churches in South Sudan. Representatives from Episcopal, Anglican, Roman Catholic, Pentecostal, Presbyterian, and Presbyterian Evangelical churches met from 8 to 10 a.m. Since last Monday, pastors and members of all 6 churches prepared with daily praise, teaching, and prayers for unity and peace.

I hosted this gathering at St. Andrew's Cathedral. James Aker, Bishop of Makuch and ICC secretary, and Archbishop Ruben Akurdid joined us to greet and welcome this ecumenical gathering. Our theme for unity was Jesus' high priestly prayer for his church: "That they

all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." (John 17: 21)

At Morning Prayer, our epistle reading was Hebrews 13: "Let brotherly love continue."

In my teaching this morning, I encouraged churches to continue their mutual gathering for praise and prayer to uplift the Cross of Jesus in our Bor community. Tomorrow all 6 churches shall meet again in a Roman Catholic church.

March 24, 2024

**Palm Sunday - The Passion Sunday
St. Andrew's Cathedral, Bor, South Sudan**

Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16; Philippians 2:5-11; Mark 14: 1-15: 47 (The Passion Gospel)

Observe the Cross of Jesus

Today we begin the most sacred week of the Christian year. After hearing accounts of the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem and the solemn reading of the Passion of our Lord, one is swept away by the sheer drama. It is also a time of the holiest week in the Jewish year. Historians estimate over 100,000 pilgrims travel to visit Jerusalem. Looking at the events of this week, one is convinced it is "the week that changed the world."

Two separate groups entered Jerusalem on this day. One was the procession of Jesus from the east side of Jerusalem. Jesus rode a donkey down the Mount of Olives, followed by a ragtag procession of cheering, adoring crowds of the lame, the blind, the children, and the peasants from Galilee and Bethany.¹ Jesus' message was of the Kingdom of God, and he healed, blessed, and gave hope to the common people of Judea and Samaria.

Those close to him saw him as "Messiah," "Son of God" and "Savior". For the oppressed people of Judea, this lit a flame of hope in their hearts as they called to him: Messiah has come! He was their

¹ Paul Maier, *In the fullness of Time*, HarperSanFrancisco, 1991, Pp.106-115

Moses, and they believed he would deliver them from the bondage of Rome. They welcomed him into their holy city with great shouts of “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!” (Matthew 21:10)

The other procession was for Pontius Pilate. The Roman governor entered from the west side of Jerusalem. This regal procession was a whole panoply of imperial power: cavalry on horses, foot soldiers, leather armor, metal helmets, weapons, banners, golden eagles mounted on poles, and sun glinting on gold. There were commanding sounds: the marching of feet, the creaking of leather, the clinking of bridles, the beating of drums.

Pilate was there to reinforce the authority of Rome as trouble was expected at the Passover feast. His procession displayed both a rival social order and a rival theology. According to these, the emperor was not simply the ruler of Rome, but the Son of God. Beginning with Augustus, the greatest of the emperors, who ruled Rome from 31 BCE to 14 CE, emperors carried the titles “son of God,” “Lord” and “savior,” one who had brought “peace on earth.” ²

Jesus usually avoided pomp and glory. He recoiled from such religious smells and bells, but he let the crowd hail him “the son of David” as they waved palm branches. “Son of David” was a loaded title at a loaded place. The crowd was excited because it was rumored a revolution might begin. Palms were the national emblem of freedom seekers. Those branches had the same effect as if they were Jewish flags. It looked as if the King had arrived in force to claim his rightful throne. This sent a ripple of great anxiety among the religious elites who collaborated with imperial Rome.

The Jewish Sanhedrin called an emergency session and raised a loud debate. Above the commotion, the high priest Caiaphas said: “You do not understand that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation should not perish.” (John 11: 49-50, 53) They issued the following arrest warrant:

Wanted: YESHU HANNOZRI

He shall be stoned because he has practiced sorcery and enticed Israel to apostasy. Anyone who can say anything in his favor let him come forward and plead on his behalf. Anyone who knows where he is, let him declare it to the Great Sanhedrin in Jerusalem. ³

The Passion narrative from the gospel according to Matthew makes it clear the authorities got what they wanted – or so they thought. They couldn’t have anticipated the aftereffects of Jesus’ death. The crowd was disappointed because Rome wasn’t overthrown under Jesus’ leadership. No one seemed to “get it,” although the prophet Isaiah had made it plain long before:

”Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.” (Isaiah 53: 4-5)

² Marcus J. Borg & John Dominic Crossan, *The Last Week*, HarperCollins, 2006, p.3.

³ THE ARREST NOTICE: But for the caption and the last sentence, this proclamation is verbatim from the tradition on “yesu Hannozri” in Sanhedrin 43a of the Babylonian Talmud trans. By Jacob Shachater (London: Soncino Press, 1935), Nezikin v, 281. The last sentence derives from what is probably the NT version of this proclamation in John 11: 57.

Jesus had mixed feelings during the clamorous parade. St. Luke reports that as he approached the city, he began to weep. He knew how easily a mob could turn. Voices who shout “Hosanna!” one week later shall shout “Crucify Him! Crucify Him!” Let us ask ourselves: What would I have done or said if I had been in that crowd?

We began our service today with the triumphant entry of our Lord in Jerusalem. Everybody loves a winner. People in Jerusalem wanted him to be Messiah to free Israel from the slavery of Rome. But Jesus had a higher agenda: To fulfill his Father’s will to free humanity from the power of sin and death.

This week, as we enter into the passion of our Lord, I invite you to stay awhile with Jesus as the divine drama for the salvation of humankind unfolds. Come, journey with him on the road to the cross.

The CROSS is where the perfect Lamb of God whom John the Baptist foretold on the banks of River Jordan: “BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD WHO TAKES AWAY THE SINS OF THE WORLD.” On the cross, the perfect lamb of God will give himself as a perfect sacrifice. The power of sin and death will be defeated. The bonds of hell will be broken. And one week later on Easter morning we shall shout “Alleluia Christ is risen! The Lord is risen indeed.”

For such a great victory to celebrate, the first step is to admit we are broken. We are sinners. We have been led astray from the straight path who is Jesus. He says, “I am the Way, the Truth, the Life.” Come to Him and admit “ Lord Jesus The Christ, I am broken. I need your mercy. Cry to him, please have mercy upon me.”

The second step is to realize what Jesus did for you on the cross. He paid the price for your sins. He came to die, to be sacrificed for your sins and my sins, the sins of everyone, the sins of every person who ever lived or ever will live.

God is just, and justice demands a price for our rebellion against His magnificence. Someone always has to pay. So, God pays it himself, in his mercy toward us and in his love for us. It’s the most famous verse in the Bible, John 3:16:

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

Step one is to admit you are broken.

Step two is to realize Jesus can forgive sins.

Now comes step three: Ask Jesus to trade. Go to him, give him your brokenness, and ask for a piece of his righteousness. That’s it: one, two, three. The Gospel is easy. Maybe even easier.⁴ (Douglas ELL, Rise Above, pp. 194-195). Paul tells us if you declare with your mouth ‘Jesus is Lord’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” (Romans 10:9)

⁴ Douglas Ell, Rise Above, Pp. 194-195

Hear the challenging words of Max Lucado:

The Cross

You have seen it, you have worn it. Maybe you have even prayed to it. But do you know it?

Any serious study of the Christian claim is, at its essence, a study of the cross. To accept or reject Christ without careful examination of Calvary is like deciding on a car without looking at the engine.

So take a good look at the cross. Examine this hour in history. Look at the witnesses. Listen to the voices. Watch the faces.

Most of all, observe the one they call the Savior.

Because what he did is the one thing that matters most of all.



March 25, 2024. Monday in Holy Week
Theologia Crucis



During yesterday's Palm Sunday service, I saw hundreds of men and women holding a palm branch in one hand and a wooden cross in the other as they shouted "Hosanna!!" Churches around the world place crosses on top of their buildings. Crosses stand in the center of their church altars.

Last August, in the city of Jaranwala, Pakistan, Islamic militants attacked 29 churches. One could see despicable hatred in their rage as they climbed on the top of many churches, breaking crosses in pieces, stamping on them, and claiming victory "Allahu Akbar." Christians in the early church faced the same issue.

Early Christian preaching announced the entrance of an itinerant Jewish teacher upon the stage of history. He had been ingloriously pinned

up alongside two of society's castoffs to die horribly, rejected and condemned by religious and secular authorities alike, discarded on the garbage heap of humanity, scornfully forsaken by elites and common folk, leaving behind only a discredited, demoralized handful of scruffy disciples who had no status whatsoever in the eyes of anyone. (Fleming Rutledge)

The prophet Isaiah had prophesied 700 years before about the Messiah of Israel: "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." (Isaiah 53: 3-5)

One has to wonder where the power of the message of Jesus' disciples abides which transformed lives such as Saul, an enemy of the cross of Jesus who declared after his conversion: "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. (1 Corinthians 1: 18)

It is this unique message more than any other that the Christian faith proclaims. Martin Hengel writes of "the utterly unique event of the passion and crucifixion of the Messiah of Israel which is without any parallel in the history of religion." Dietrich Bonhoeffer also wrote that the weakness and suffering of Christ was and remains "a reversal of what the religious man expects from God."

The same crowd who welcomed Jesus with "Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" shouted "Crucify him, crucify him!" on Good Friday. Their expectations did not come true that their Messiah would hold a sword in his hand to declare jihad against Romans. Instead, he was willing to die for the liberation from sin for the whole of humanity on the cross as a perfect Lamb of God.

The message of the cross is not victory through the power of the sword but redemption through love. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, to the end that that believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

Prayer

Almighty God, whose most dear son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

March 25, 2025

St. Andrew's Primary and High School, Bor, South Sudan

Because of extreme hot weather, all schools were closed today. The Ministry of Education allowed primary and high school children to come to St. Andrew's from 7 to 9 a.m. for devotions and to receive gifts I brought from La Crosse.

Trust Point, an investment company, donated beautiful pens for high school final year students who shall sit for their high school diploma exam when schools open again. Teachers and 170 high school boys and girls received pens this morning.



A basketball coach donated 80 shirts. Students were happy to receive these shirts from Central High School in La Crosse. Since Dinka are the tallest people in the world, I want to build a basketball court and form a boys and girls basketball team.



Last year we had to dig a well to provide clean water for 3,600 children and 100 teachers. The well is working well. We call it Ell well. Having clean fresh water on the campus of school under such extreme hot weather is a blessing and great relief for students. It was a beautiful morning with primary and high school children. Praise God.

March 26, 2024

Tuesday in Holy Week, St. Andrew's Cathedral, Bor, South Sudan

Christ Our Mediator

As pilgrims, we travel with Jesus on the road to Calvary. Many of us wrestle with the idea: What does Jesus' death on the cross a long time ago have to do with us? Over 2,000 years, there have many theological debates and books written, but those can take us just so far.

In her book, "The Crucified", Fleming Rutledge relates a story. The revered American writer Joseph Mitchell was raised in the church in the South and knew its language. In the last decades of his life, he attended Grace Church in New York with some frequency. He told a group of parishioners about a conversation he had with his dying sister in North Carolina.

As he sat by her bedside, she asked him, "Buddy, what does Jesus' death on the cross a long time ago have to do with my sins now?" Mitchell, who was an instinctive theologian, though certainly not a trained one, struggled to find the right words as you would expect a meticulous writer to do. He finally said, with his characteristic occasional stammer, "S-s- somehow, he was our representative. Jesus himself says, "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13)

Many of us are familiar with a common offertory sentence we hear in our churches:

"Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God."

(Ephesians 5:2) God revealed himself to us in the person of Jesus Christ as a triune God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - at work on the cross as our mediator-representative. He was to suffer, to redeem and to set us free from the bondage of sin and death. He is the same God with his creative Word/ logos who brought creation into being ex nihilo - out of nothing.



The cross was the sign of a most cruel and disgusting punishment. Thousands were crucified by Romans, and nobody ever wanted to remember their horrible deaths. But the sacrifice of Jesus was not of a criminal suffering for his crimes. On the Cross, the unblemished, perfect Lamb of God without any sin gave his own sacrifice that humanity might be free from the powers of hell and sin.

The sign of the cross became a sign of victory. Since the first century, Christians are marked with this sign at their baptism. The cross is erected on their graves. It is a sign for Christians that death is not a period but a comma. As pilgrims, we momentarily live and die on earth and rise in glory with Christ in heaven.

In the early church, Christians not only drew, painted, and engraved the cross as a pictorial symbol of their faith but also made the sign of the cross on themselves or others. (John Stott). One of the first to witness this practice in 200 A.D. was Tertullian, the North African lawyer-theologian, who wrote:

"At every forward step and movement, at every going in and out, when we put on our clothes and shoes, when we bathe, when we sit at table, when we light the lamps, on couch, on seat, in all the ordinary actions of daily life, we trace upon forehead the sign [the cross].

"If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is perfect offering for our sins, and not for our only, but for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 2:1-2)

Prayer

O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life. Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake of your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

March 29, 2024

Good Friday, St. Andrews Cathedral, Bor, South Sudan.

The Word of the Cross as Power: Living Under the Cross

"If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me." (Luke 9:23)

St. Paul the apostle insists upon the Cross as the Gospel's central concept. The first two chapters of 1 Corinthians are at its heart. The Cross is an offense and foolishness to those who wish to escape it, as the Corinthians do. But for those who believe "the word of the cross is the power of God", Paul means God is present and powerful specifically in the message of God.

There is something disingenuous about this, since Paul was a scholar, trained to discern stupidity. However, he is deadly serious in what he says about wisdom and foolishness. This should increase our appreciation for his courage. To be an apostle to the gentiles, he had to turn away from his honorable position as a leader among religious elite to a life of almost unimaginable danger and affliction. He traveled the world over, preaching Christ crucified to people of every sort, including slaves and those at the bottom of the socioeconomic heap.



To take up the cross means to identify with Christ, sharing in his rejection, shame, suffering, and death. When I travel to Sudan to visit and worship with the Christian community there, I encounter the faith of brothers and sisters who carry their cross daily and follow Jesus Christ. I once wrote in my journal, "The living faith of this persecuted church has grown from the Cross of Christ. It has become their proud symbol of the strength to live and die for Jesus Christ. The followers of Jesus in this land of oppression have adopted the cross to symbolize the only life they want to live. In the sign of the cross they conquer the forces of darkness, oppression, hatred and evil. To them, the cross represents their daily struggle, the pain of betrayal, suffering, affliction, and the triumphant faith to follow Christ."

Archbishop Carey has said, "In our Western Church we have lost the dimension of radical discipleship to identify with Christ in the suffering and pain of humanity. We have replaced it with a following of Jesus which is virtually costless. Indeed, some evangelists are guilty of going to the other extreme of offering

the carrot that if you accept Jesus, he will solve your problems, help you find a good job, husband, wife, peace, contentment, etc. The motive behind this may be admirable – it is true, after all, that the presence of the Lord is healing – but the result is a 'filleted' Christianity, with sacrifice removed."

To carry the Cross of Christ in our lives is not to make a stylish fashion statement or a lifestyle choice. A recent example of its true meaning comes from Abdul Rahman, an Afghan who converted to Christianity 19 years ago as an aid worker helping refugees in Pakistan. When he was arrested, the Afghan police found him carrying a Persian Bible. He was charged with rejecting Islam, which is punishable by death in Afghanistan. In many such places even in the 21st century, it is risky, costly, demanding, and often dangerous to commit one's life to live under the cross. It is what Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German Pastor who died under Hitler, called "costly discipleship."

The Church itself and our individual lives are ultimately built on faith that must extend beyond belief merely in a theology of prosperity and happy living. It must be a faith that dares to risk, to reach out, to put Christ at our center instead of our selves. The 14th century theologian Thomas a Kempis said, "Jesus now has many lovers of the power of God, of his heavenly Kingdom, but few bearers of his Cross."

To bear the Cross is not a romantic idea. It is a costly venture for Abdul Rahman in Afghanistan and for us who want to witness to the redeeming power of the Cross of Christ. As the war and unrest in Middle East, recent cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad have caused a furor in the Islamic world, which has already concluded the Christian West is in a crusade against Islam. There is a great wave of hatred towards the Christian church in the Islamic world.

How do we carry a cross in such a charged atmosphere? Many of us debate the merits of war in Middle East. I would say the response of Christian cross-bearers is to pray as the Lord's Prayer makes clear: "Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us." As people from the West we must extend our hand in love to those politically and religiously disagree with us in the Muslim world. Our Savior Jesus Christ stretched out arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone, without discrimination among Jews and Gentile, black or white, Muslim, Hindu or Christian, might come within the reach of His saving embrace. The cross of Christ broadcasts as loudly as it can a message of forgiveness, love, and reconciliation between God and human beings.

To live under the cross means every aspect of a Christian believer's life is shaped and colored by the example of the crucified and risen Christ. *"Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God."* (Ephesians 5:1-2) During this time of war, uncertainty, and chaos, let our Lenten prayers direct us to "seek peace and pursue it."

Peacemaking is a serious endeavor. The peace God promises is never cheap. It is always costly as God made peace with the sinful humanity through the blood of Jesus Christ's cross (Colossians 1:20). To work as peacemakers among our human family for justice, peace, the elimination of poverty, a cleaner environment, and building bridges with those who differ with our faith or political ideology, we will have to demonstrate our authenticity as God's children. Nietzsche, an atheist and nihilist, once remarked, "You Christians will have to look a lot more redeemed before I start believing in your Redeemer."

I hope and pray the cross is not a theological abstraction but a reality in our everyday lives, inspiring us to serve God and His people in our communities and the world.

– Shanti, Salaam and Shalom of Christ! + Patrick

March 31, 2024

Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday, St. Andrew's Cathedral, Bor, South Sudan

Last night 300 young members gathered at 10 p.m. for their form of Easter Vigil: praise and prayer until 2 a.m. The 7:30 to 11:30 a.m. Easter service was begun early to avoid heat. My half-hour sermon, translated by Bishop Thomas into the Dinka language, lasted an hour and 15 minutes. More than 3,000 worshipers sat or stood inside the cathedral. The sanctuary was very warm, and my vestments were soaked with sweat. At least another 1,000 people stood outside around the Cathedral. Several high government officials also attended. In the afternoon, the day was so hot, strong winds began to blow. Finally, two hours of rain relieved the unbearable heat and was welcomed as a blessing from God upon farmers preparing their land to grow food. The rainy season is from June to September. I wish you all a very Happy Easter.

Monday, April 1, 2024 - Easter Week

St. Andrew's Cathedral, Bor, South Sudan

Every morning we meet for Morning Prayer. One of the readings appointed in the day's lectionary was 1 Corinthians 15: 1-17: "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." (14)

St. Paul gives examples of persons for whom the story of resurrection is not a hoax but an actual historical event. He writes with absolute certainty that "Jesus was seen of by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that, he was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen by James, then by all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time" (1 Corinthians 15: 4-8).



After Morning prayer I came back to my room and read other stories of resurrection in the Gospels of Mark (16: 12-13) and Luke (24: 13-32) - the episode known as “The Emmaus Road.” After Jesus was crucified, two disciples were disappointed because their hope in the Messiah of Israel had been shattered. He had been crucified and could no longer free Israel from Rome’s control. As they returned to their village of Emmaus (about seven miles from Jerusalem), they talked about the events of the past week. Jesus appeared and began to walk with them, although they did not recognize their resurrected Lord.

When Jesus asked them about their conversation, they responded: “Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?” After Jesus probes further, he declares, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?”

The two disciples invite the stranger to their home for dinner as it is late in the evening. As they sit down to eat, Jesus blesses and breaks the bread and gives it to them. It is a Eucharistic event. Scripture says their eyes were opened and they recognized Him before He vanished from their sight. They say to each other: “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?”

While meditating on this event after the resurrection, Charles Spurgeon writes, “Your hearts will burn too, and your whole spiritual system will flame and glow if you walk in the company of Jesus. I recommend constant fellowship with God as one of the best remedies for spiritual sloth.”

This week I will meditate daily on the events of the resurrection. If we want our own road to Emmaus experience, we must study the resurrection events in the Word of God. Please don’t hurry. Savor and absorb each passage you read. It is my prayer that your hearts and mine will burn while we spend time in fellowship with the risen Christ.

April 2, Tuesday in Easter Week.
St. Andrew’s Cathedral, Bor, South Sudan

My Lord and My God (John 20: 24-30)



Thomas was not with the other disciples when Jesus appeared to them after his resurrection. Thomas had a hard time believing what happened because he knows dead men don’t walk. He tells the others he won’t believe Jesus is alive unless he sees the nail marks in his hands, places his finger into them, and places his hand on the Lord’s pierced side. As a man of reason, he will not believe. Facts in life matter to him.

After eight days, Thomas was still adamant he had to touch and feel if Jesus was real and risen. They were all sitting in a room behind locked doors when Jesus walked in and said “Peace be with

you.” He invites Thomas, saying “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see, a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have...”. He told the disciples, “This is what is written, the Christ shall suffer and rise from the dead on the third day.” (Luke 24: 36-45)

Those disciples in the upper room had a firsthand experience of the resurrection of Jesus the Christ. Thomas declares: “My Lord and my God.” He and the other disciples transformed from skeptics to authentic believers in Jesus Christ.

In the New Testament there are few places where Jesus is (directly) referred to as God. For Jewish men to acknowledge Jesus as “Lord God” could have been blasphemy and punishment was death. It is a moment of epiphany and their eyes of faith are opened to see risen Christ as the face of God carrying His glory. Thomas here offers the highest possible confession of faith in Jesus.”

Christianity is not about great teaching or miracles. Without resurrection, there can be no Christianity. Paul wrote to the church in Corinth that if Jesus had not risen from the dead, “your faith is futile.” (1 Corinthians 15:17) Resurrection is not negotiable.

The late philosopher Dallas Willard once said, “It’s the person who wants to know God that God reveals Himself to.” I ask myself and you: Do you have a will, a desire to believe and experience the power of the resurrected Christ? If so, John 1:12 contains a formula for faith: “But as many as received him, to them gave he the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.”

April 2, 2024

Visit with Bishop Nathaniel Garang, Spiritual Father of the Church of South Sudan

“How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”



Yesterday, Archbishop Ruben Akurdid, Bishop Thomas, and Canon Jacob Akout took me to visit Bishop Nathaniel Garang, the spiritual father of the Episcopal Church in South Sudan. He is now more than 96 years old. (There are no birth records here for most people.) I have been visiting the Episcopal Church in South Sudan for almost 30 years. Bishop Nathaniel has been my friend for throughout that time. He served the diocese as a priest for more than 50 years and is its longest serving bishop.*

Last March, in the presence of His Holiness Pope Francis and thousands of worshipers at All Saints Cathedral in Juba, Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby gave the Anglican Church’s Alphege Award for Evangelism to Bishop Garang.

Bishop Nathaniel accepted Christ in his twenties and was sent in 1970-1973 to a Pentecostal Bible College in Nairobi. He was ordained in 1975 at All Saints Cathedral in Juba by Archbishop Alinana in the Episcopal Church. In 1976 he was sent to serve

as priest in the Diocese of Bor. He was given this call from Archbishop to evangelize Dinka people. There were no roads or mission stations. He and his evangelism team have walked hundreds of miles to preach the Gospel. Bishop Nathaniel translated Biblical stories into Dinka songs. Most of his people

were illiterate. Dinka were introduced to Christ's teachings through songs and his preaching. At first, most Southerners they encountered were animists. Through his team's efforts, thousands gave up traditional pagan ways and accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Spears and gods of medicine men were broken, and the cross of Jesus became the emblem of this young church. This is why hundreds of Dinka carry wooden crosses at morning or evening prayer and Sunday worship services.

I first met Bishop Nathaniel* in 1996 when I visited Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya. During war in 1992 Arab soldiers came to kill him in his house in St. Andrews Cathedral in Bor. He was spared miraculously and led an exodus from Bor area of more than 37,000 Dinka Christians to Kenya. After walking for days, they reached this camp.

I visited refugees in the camp for 12 days. Many told us "It's high time you have come." I was appalled, outraged and heartsick at the living conditions for these brave, faithful survivors. At the same time, we were struck by the vibrant faith of the Sudanese Christians expressed in songs, dance and prayer. They were always holding Crosses in their hands, and their deep, deep faith in the Lord was obvious.

During my visit to Kakuma refugee camp, I attended Sunday worship with 6,861 people. Bishop Nathaniel gave a powerful sermon with the theme: "This Kakuma is the school of God. Here is the place where we find God. Even though we are suffering, God is with us."

In 1998 I invited Bishop Nathaniel to visit us in the United States. Since then, I have been blessed by his passion for evangelism. Bishop Nathaniel is a humble man of God with deep faith and a life soaked in prayer. It was such a joy to meet him again. I pray for his health and thank God for his ministry. We shall meet again, by the grace of God. I take it as a special privilege and honor to serve as a bishop in Bor and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ unapologetically with passion and vigor.

Bishop Nathaniel has served as the Dean of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan. After the death of Most Reverend Joseph Marona, Archbishop of Sudan. He was appointed by the House of Bishops as Acting Archbishop of Sudan. This faithful servant of God after serving for half a century he retired from the Diocese of Bor in 2012.

Next Sunday, we will open a new church. It will be called St. Nathaniel the Apostle Church. This church is built in village Tibet Junction place of his birth. I look forward to bringing the Word of God to a large gathering at consecration of a church.

**Note: The mud hut I live in here at St. Andrews Cathedral was a one-room house built for Bishop Nathaniel and his family.*



April 7, 2024

Dedication and Consecration of St. Nathaniel the Apostle Church, Episcopal Diocese of Makuach, and Heading for Home

Today's weather was challenging, but when a new church is to be dedicated in honor of "the spiritual father of the Episcopal Church in South Sudan," we endure!

Bishop Nathaniel Garang is a longtime friend of mine and a Christian leader in this war-torn land. Born in the Tibet Junction area, where the new church now stands, he is now more than 96 years old. For years, he and his evangelical team walked hundreds of miles to preach the gospel to new Christians who had converted from animism.

Every day people travel to Nathaniel's house and ask him to pray for them. It is very appropriate to name this new church and dedicate it to God in honor of this bishop's life and ministry.

It rained all night on Saturday and stopped around 5 a.m. Sunday. Local people consider rain to be a blessing from God, so standing water and slippery mud were just another aspect of the celebration. Archbishop Ruben picked me up at 6:30 am and we left for Tibet Junction. We were warmly welcomed by 1,000 or more members of the Episcopal church in this area. We went in a procession, and nobody seemed to mind walking in mud and water to the dedication service led by the Archbishop. It lasted 3 and a half hours. I was the main preacher and 1,000 faithful received Holy Communion in a church so packed one could hardly move.

A feast prepared by members of the Mothers' Union was served to the 1,000 or more guests. The local congregation had slaughtered three bulls, two goats and several chickens.

We finally returned to the St. Andrew's Cathedral compound around 3 p.m. - just long enough to get my luggage before the 3-hour ride to Juba so I could return to Nairobi for my flight home.

I give thanks to God for these wonderful opportunities to serve my brothers and sisters through this Mission of God.



Major Projects Completed



Drinking water provided for 3600 children - June 2023



Dormitory built for 50 High School Girls - June 2024



Help with Compassion is 501 (c) (3) organization incorporated in the United States whose goal is to work with the persecuted, the poor and the marginalized by carrying the cross for Christ. To this end, Bishop Patrick Augustine, Missionary Bishop to Bor South Sudan leads and organizes a dedicated volunteer team to support mission work in Asia and Africa. All the work, including Bishop Patrick, is done voluntarily. There are no operating costs to pay salary for Help with Compassion. All donations are directly used to support charitable work overseas.

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