

The Witness

The Newsletter of the Diocese of Yei



A word of the Bishop:

'The problem with communication ... is the illusion that it has been accomplished', George Bernard Shaw

Our first issue of the WITNESS will come out as we celebrate Lent time this year. I was excited when asked to say something on the occasion of the launching of the first ever on line Diocese of Yei newsletter, the WITNESS. The desire to start with a quarterly on line news publication came as we are constantly challenged by the notion of how to portray the image of the Diocese of Yei beyond our confines and local world.

Therefore we need to better communicate the existing developments in the Diocese of Yei. The title of this on line newsletter comes from Acts 1:8..."and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth". The Diocese of Yei is receiving power from the Holy Spirit and is to bear witness to Christ among our communities and beyond. In the pages of the WITNESS, there is something that will compel your interest and you might want to share it with others.

We are all given a small portion in God's mission which must not end with us but that we must push it forward for and to others. You cannot do that otherwise except through witnessing to Christ.

Exactly five years after our enthronement (29 Feb. 2004) as Bishop of Yei, the Diocese has continued to witness to the people. There are encouraging signs of growth in evangelism and the temporal. But there has also been a challenge to our leadership, as expected, and we had to fight a spiritual warfare from the powers of darkness. We remain strong, the same, careful and committed to our calling.

I feel satisfied that with the WITNESS going out to our stakeholders, they may read and be informed about what is happening in the Diocese of Yei. We are on a long journey which has just begun.

In Africa when an elephant has passed by, everybody will know that indeed an elephant has passed by because the track he leaves behind will be visibly clear. The Diocese of Yei needs to leave a track record that others can follow where it is going.

We have an obligation to our partners, our people and friends to know how we are getting on in this journey. Finally I would like to congratulate our editorial team for work well done in initiating this wonderful and powerful tool for communicating. I wish you all happy reading.

Hilary Luete Adeba, Bishop of Diocese of Yei

The ECS first Bishops' and Spouses' Retreat 6th -18th February 2009

I was not apprehensive when the Arch Bishop Daniel Deng Bul informed me in Salisbury during our pre-Lambeth conference there that the retreat for the Bishops of the ECS and their spouses would be hosted by the Diocese of Yei. I had confidence in my people. The retreat was the first of its kind in the ECS. It brought 25 Bishops and 11 spouses to Yei. Our guests included VIPs such as Lord George Carey, former Arch Bishop of Canterbury as principal speaker and his wife Eileen. The Arch Bishop of Uganda Henry Luke Orombi was invited to lead the retreat with Lord Carey. Mrs. Phoebe Orombi led the spouses' retreat. The retired Bishop of Virginia Frank Grant participated in the sessions before Lord Carey and Arch Bishop Orombi arrived. The retreat focused on the Bible for the Bishops and their wives. Its main aim was to expound the Bible for the Bishops and their wives and for them to have moments of quiet reflection on the themes presented by these inspiring speakers.

In the end the Diocese of Yei did not find it hard to accommodate these dignitaries in rooms that offered reasonable comfort to them. A special block with self contained facilities was built in two months to accommodate Lord Carey and his wife and all the Arch Bishops and their wives. When Lord Carey and Arch Bishop Orombi were leaving, they prayed for the Diocese of Yei and blessed us.

Bishop Hilary

The Mothers Union (MU)

The Mothers' Union (MU) is an organ of the Diocese of Yei. Its major objective is family and children welfare. There is a strong ecclesiastical link between the MU and the Diocesan administration. Membership of the union is spread all over the Diocese and there are 1264 members currently enrolled. The MU has its own building and an office where the MU worker, the Leader and the president sit. It is engaged in running projects which are for the empowerment of its members. These include a kindergarten, a training programme, handcraft and a shop that will sell confectionaries, toiletries, food and beverages. The MU faces a challenge in that some of their programmes cannot be completed due to the challenge of raising the necessary finance, e.g. the kindergarten, which is being funded by Carolyn Kiden in England, has not been completed and the children still attend school in their old and dusty grass thatched and mud building.

Mary Gboka Natalino



Immanuel kindergarten; a small seed developing into a big fruit tree

Exactly seven years ago the children of the people living in the western vicinity of Yei town used to walk all the way to Christ the King, a kindergarten belonging to the Roman Catholic Church in Yei.

In trying to meet the challenges facing the children, the church initiated a nursery school to minimize the long distances the children had to walk and to encourage them go to school. Spear-headed by Rev. Jackson Duku, the former provost of Immanuel Cathedral, a committee to oversee the starting of the kindergarten was formed in 2001. Since then this kindergarten has sent several hundreds of children to primary schools, some of whom are in primary 7 now.

Through God's grace and the help of our partners, like Carolyn Kiden and St. Marks Parish Church in Salisbury, UK, the school is being transformed from temporary shelters to a permanent building which we hope will be ready by the end of June 2009. We appreciate the support from Carolyn and our beloved partners.

Rev. Amule Andu, Diocesan secretary



The Diocese of Yei fights ignorance

One major objective of the Diocese of Yei is to enhance education and training to its people as a means of empowering them for transformation, development and progress for the future of the church and Southern Sudan. The church is not only to preach the word of God, but also to ask for wisdom from Him for knowledge and skills to be transmitted. The projects for this purpose include Yei Vocational Training College (YVTC), Yei Teacher Training College (YTTC), Lay Training Centre (LTC), Theological Education by Extension (TEE) and 41 primary schools in the Diocese. These institutions have brought a lot of appreciation and attention from the Christians of Yei.

Obadiah Batali, Coordinator Education & Training

Good news

Immanuel Model Primary School (IMPS), established in 2003 with support from CMS Ireland, came top in the Primary School leaving examinations in the whole of Central Equatorial State.

Angelo Wani, Head master Immanuel Model Primary School

Primary Education Programme

The Primary Education Programme (PEP) is top priority of the Diocese of Yei which comes within its ten year development plan 2003-2013. Immanuel Model Primary School (IMPS) is the first project the Bishop started at the beginning of his ministry in 2003. It is designed as a model primary school for future development of others. The school was established with funds from CMS Ireland. Other schools under construction as we went into press are Payawa in Mugwo Payam, funded by two churches in Southern Ireland through CMS Ireland and Mongo Primary School in Wotogo Payam funded by the Diocese of Connor. Work on more schools will start in June 2009 at Panyana in Morobo County and in January 2010 another school will be built at Angebi in Tore Payam, both funded by DFID-UK, through the Basic Services Fund.

Obadiah Batali, Coordinator Education & Training

Confirmation Tour

Every year we embark on the annual confirmation tour and criss cross the Diocese from west to east and north to south. This is an extensive tour that takes the Bishop to practically every parish and it remains one single event where the Bishop meets thousands of people and equally confirms thousands of new Christians. This year the Bishop will confirm over 4000 new Christians as indicated by statistics collected during the week of witness (wow). During the wow in October, thousands of people hear the gospel. During the wow October 2008, 138,414 people heard the gospel all over the Diocese of Yei just in one week compared to over 100,000 during the last wow in 2007. When on this tour, the Christians welcome, accommodate and feed the Bishop and his team. The Christians, even though in dire need, often present the Bishop with gifts which include food, goats and chickens.

Rev. Amule Andu, Diocesan secretary

Ordination

The Sacrament of ordination takes place whenever candidates are prepared for it. It may not happen every year, depending on whether or not the Bishop is himself available for it.

The Diocese of Yei has passed a standing order to all archdeacons instructing that the Bishop is reluctant to ordain those with no formal theological training. The order is working and for the last 5 years, only those who received basic theological training have been ordained. This has uplifted the standard of our clergy and has meant that a beginning is set to gradually improve the delivery of the gospel to the people and to replace the priests who worked hard and sustained the Church during the war but who now do not seem to fit well into the present circumstances. The Bishop has a high regard for those priests who kept the Church alive during the war single handed without the guidance of a Bishop.

Bishop Hilary

Martha Primary Health Care Centre

The Martha Primary Health Care Centre has now been open for one year. The facility is modern and well equipped. A full outpatient service is provided and numbers are around 3500 patients each month. The staff members are well trained and well motivated and provide an excellent service, which has been endorsed by visitors from NGOs and Ministry of Health. Recently a new waiting room has been built to accommodate rising patient numbers. The patients receive health education while they wait, and thanks to PSI, all the expectant mothers and children aged under 5 receive a long lasting insecticide treated bed net.

In December we heard that CMS Ireland with the Diocese of Yei had successfully obtained a grant from the Basic Services Fund for the HEART project. This stands for Health, Education And Rural Transformation and will enable the Diocese to build 2 new schools, train health workers and teachers, provide water and sanitation to several communities, and to provide a mobile clinic for rural villages that have been selected in conjunction with the county Health Department in Yei. This project has already started with the training of some health staff in Kampala, and the rest will develop over the next few months. There is a team of three working on the project in Yei -John and Poppy Spens and Nelie Janssen, under the leadership of David Gough from CMS Ireland.

Watch this space for reports of the project as it develops!

Poppy Spens, project manager CMS Ireland

Health Care Training

Five students from Diocese of Lainya and five from the Diocese of Yei left Sudan for a nine months training in Kampala to be Health Care Assistants at the International Health Sciences University. The ten students were selected from over 100 applicants and were very excited about this opportunity. The training in Kampala will be of a much higher standard than similar courses and it is hoped that many of the 10 may progress in due course to further training. This is part of the Health line Sudan project and is part funded by Irish Aid and part funded by the Basic Services Fund.

Poppy Spens, project manager CMS Ireland



Yei Vocational Training College (YVTC)

Friday 5th December 2008 saw the graduation of 91 successful students at the end of their year of training. All 91 students were awarded either a toolkit or, for mechanics students, their GOSS driving license. 2008 was a great year



for the college. The College recruited four new instructors to teach the two new courses in electrical installation and plumbing. This brought the total number of certificate

courses to five – a selection not equalled by any other vocational training college in southern Sudan. The college taught a record number of students and an amazing 100% of mechanics/driving students passed their driving test. A new workshop was built, which proved ideal for the graduation ceremony, and two large new classrooms.

Late in 2008 we heard the good news that the Diocese had been successful in its application to the Sudan Recovery Fund. The YVTC will play a big role in the delivery of the proposal and will be able to offer free places to 60 students in the next two years to needy students from across Central Equatoria. In addition, the College will organise three 8-week short courses for a total of 160 students from Central Equatoria over the course of the next two years. The term started on the 9th of March with 30 students from 5 dioceses.

John Spens, project manager CMS Ireland

Turning Point

During the war, many people in Yei went to exile in the neighbouring countries. In 1997 when the SPLA/M liberated Yei, many people returned to the town with their different cultures and behaviours. In all the years when they were in the bush, people were serious about their faith in Jesus. In 1998 the number of people attending churches ranged from 20 to 30, because of the air raids which used to take place in the mornings. In the last 4 years, Immanuel Cathedral has witnessed a phenomenon growth and we have now three services. The first is mainly for young people, and in this service the attendance is above one thousand! Because of all the returnees, Yei has now big congregations where lots of worshipers go to church.

One of the amazing things I have observed among people is that they now own the church and that they are doing good things in it. They have many activities such as, fellowships, song practices, bible study and intercessions. They are also very generous in giving to the church. The Cathedral is expanding and last year we built a very beautiful office block opposite the cathedral for our pastors.

Rev. Richard Ali

ECS Guest house

The ECS Guest House in Yei is situated on secured area of the church and provides a quiet environment away from the noisy town of Yei. It stands out as an important symbol of income generating projects that would enhance the economy of the Diocese. We are encouraged by the achievement the management of the Guest House has made. From a humble beginning where guests used to sleep on mats on the dusty floor in 2000, we have moved towards offering reasonable comfort to our guests. Recently we have added a new block of self-contained rooms and hope to start the construction of similar blocks of self-contained facilities for our esteemed guests.

Jenny Siama Baba, manager Guesthouse



Snatch us from the fire.....!

C.I.L.I.A stands for Christian Integrated Local Initiative Against HIV and AIDS. It is a church response to the killer disease AIDS.

Holistically the program has impacted our communities in Yei Diocese, through raising awareness on HIV and AIDS and other issues related to development.

The vulnerability of our communities to HIV and AIDS are many such as, poverty, wars and conflicts and lack of information about the pandemic of AIDS. We encourage our target groups who are the children, youth, women and men to take the lead in fighting the virus and to reduce the stigma and discrimination of PLWH, and to empower our communities to have skills, attitude and knowledge about HIV and AIDS.

In order to create a community free of HIV and AIDS related diseases, the challenge is how to equip and nurture our children to prevent themselves from it.

We thanked Tear Fund UK for their continued support, which had made a difference in our communities. Pray for continuation of C.I.L.I.A in Yei Diocese and pray to God to use me and lead this plan.

Clement Ayuku Emmanuel

Word of the president of the MU

We, the wives of the Bishops, feel no longer recognized only as house wives. We want to be seen as part-takers in the ministry of the Church as we support our husbands.

The time has gone for us to remain timid, miserable and ignorant. Many of us are not educated. The reason for this is that we were born during the periods of the two wars in our country which deprived us of education. But now let us be given the opportunity of improving our lot. We will continue to pray that the Diocese of Yei will be able to empower the whole lot of the women in the Church.

God bless you all.

Joyce Adeba, MU President

The Bishop's Appeal Fund (BAF)

The Bishop launched his appeal fund on 3rd September 2008 with a special request for Christians of and from Yei to give donations towards this fund that he can use to carry out his holistic programme in the Diocese of Yei. The appeal received no support from Christians from Yei in the Diaspora. The local people generously gave US\$ 1,600 towards the fund which went to meeting some of the urgent financial needs of the Diocese. We were able to replace the stolen motorbike of the office without which the administration of the Diocese would be a set back. The appeal comes within the context of encouraging the spirit of giving locally to support the work of the church.

Diocesan Secretary

Prayer list

Please pray with us for the following things:

- *A prayer for durable peace for the Sudan, God's Church the leaderships and the governments, the forthcoming elections, and the referendum in 2011*
- *Pray that God's word will be heard by many people over the world.*
- *Pray that God blesses our spiritual leaders.*
- *Personal peace and discernment for the Bishop as he leads this difficult ministry of the Lord in Yei.*
- *Pray with us for CMS Ireland and its mission director for quick recovery.*
- *Pray for continuation of C.I.L.I.A in Yei Diocese.*
- *Pray for continuation of all the projects within the Diocese.*

