

AFRECS E-Blast: May 1, 2013

PRAY. TEACH. PARTNER. URGE. GIVE.

In the church:

A Message from AFRECS Executive Director Richard Parkins

Eastertide and Peace and Reconciliation

It is good news that the peace and reconciliation project is going forward and that leading Sudanese clergy will take on leadership responsibility for guiding this daunting task. Having this important work entrusted to the Episcopal Archbishop, Daniel Deng Bul, who will have as his able colleague Bishop Paride Taban, a venerated Roman Catholic prelate, gives an added legitimacy and credibility to the endeavor. Putting the faith community front and center on this challenging task offers hope for a good outcome.

I was reminded in a sermon last Sunday that not only are we still in Eastertide but that Easter is much more than a single event or even a single liturgical season – it is an integral part of who we are as Christians and permeates who we are as Christ's followers. Easter teaches us that that the impossible can become inevitable; that the darkest times can be erased by the joy and hope of new life; and that Easter is a time of new possibilities. I say all of this because this peace and reconciliation undertaking occurs against a backdrop of years of ethnic conflict, a human rights situation which shows that in its early years of nationhood South Sudan is already ignoring these rights, and that evidence of widespread corruption is producing a cynical attitude by many toward a government which was to guide and unify a broken nation.

It is, therefore, fitting that the church should be the key player in moving any attempts at peace and reconciliation forward. It is the church that as a spiritual force for Sudanese Christians and the largest civil society institution in South Sudan has a chance to reconcile profound divisions and heal deep social and political wounds. It is the church and those who uphold it that can claim the Easter message of hope and new life and act to make this message real. It is the church that has also been integral to the courageous struggle that Sudanese people have waged to achieve the freedom and independence that they now enjoy.

As South Sudan embarks upon this difficult journey, let our prayer be that those who lead this mission be embraced by the wisdom, patience, and understanding that God provides. May they lead South Sudan into a new beginning where prospects for peace and justice move closer to realization. May those who participate in this endeavor witness the seemingly impossible becoming inevitable. May those of us who care about South Sudan pray that the Easter message will resonate throughout South Sudan as a process of renewal begins.

Richard Parkins

News from AFRECS:

The AFRECS National Conference is scheduled for October 18-20, 2013, in Chicago at Seabury Western seminary. Please save the dates of Friday, October 18th through Sunday October 20th and plan to join us in Chicago.

Reminder: Please check the [AFRECS web site](#) for the Winter edition of SUDAN CONNECTIONS.

In both Sudan & South Sudan:

The US Human Rights Reports 2012 for Sudan and South Sudan thoroughly examine these issues. See them and the executive summary written by John Ashworth [here](#).

In South Sudan:

President of South Sudan, Salva Kiir Mayardit recently made an address at the opening of the National Legislature that gives a thorough look at the state of affairs of the nation. Speaking with a review of history to guide the way forward, President Salva Kiir offers leadership for the country at this crucial time. Follow this [link](#) to read the entire message.

You will find [here](#) the link to the presidential decree granting pardons to the leaders and rebel forces in the country and an article from the [Sudan Tribune](#) (ST) which reports that all except David Yau-Yau have accepted amnesty. In another [ST article](#), some rebel forces deny the acceptance of amnesty while this [Voice of America](#) article reports the surrender of 3,000 rebel troops from the border areas.

Look [here](#) for the presidential decree establishing the National Reconciliation Committee for organizing the Healing, Peace & Reconciliation Conference and process: Chairperson, Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul; Deputy Chairperson, Bishop Paride Taban. Also see this article from [Gurtong](#) news and this one from the [Sudan Tribune](#) for the full view.

In Sudan:

The escalation of Sudanese civil wars is reported in the [Sudan Tribune](#) and the [New York Times](#).

'Sudan's opposition urges freedom and an end to meaningless slogans,' as reported by [The Niles](#) weekly wrap-up.

Pray

Give thanks for the restart of the Healing, Peace & Reconciliation Conference in South Sudan under the leadership of Episcopal Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul with the support of Roman Catholic Bishop Paride Taban. Pray for the strength of the leaders, the members and for this process to proceed towards healing, peace & reconciliation for all concerned in the new nation of South Sudan.

Thanksgiving for the recovery of Bishop Andudu Adam Elnail (of Kadugli and the Nuba Mountains). He plans to return to South Sudan when he regains his health fully.

Also give thanks for the return to Juba of the Principal of Bishop Gwynne College (BGC), Joseph Taban Lasuba. He, his wife, Esparansa, and their family appreciate our prayer support, as does the BGC community. Here is a recent update from Samuel Galuak, the acting principal: "It is with great joy to receive our brother and co-worker in the vineyard of the Lord, the Rev. Joseph Taban, BGC Principal. I call it a great reunion for his children, relatives, and BGC community to see him back, sound and stronger than before. Through your prayers for him, he is back to us. Let us continue to pray for his ultimate healing from the Lord. Blessings."

Pray for an overwhelming response to the advocacy efforts detailed in these E-Blasts. Pray especially for the cessation of indiscriminate bombing in the South Kordofan and Blue Nile States of Sudan and for the people of Yida, as well as other refugee camps, located in Unity State of South Sudan.

Urge

Prayerfully consider going to the [Enough Project Advocacy](#) event in DC, Monday, June 10. See [March 20th E-Blast](#) for more information.

Urge others to write letters to government representatives as outlined in the [March 7th E-Blast](#). It's not too late to do so.

Give

Give a modest amount today to further the work of AFRECS by becoming a member. (See [here](#) for how to join.)

Learn

Learn more by reviewing the last [E-Blast: April 17th](#) and by going to the [AFRECS home page](#).

In Christ, with thanks for your efforts and prayers for peace,
Ellen J. Hanckel, Editor

This bi-weekly Sudan update is from the American Friends of the Episcopal Church of Sudan. You are receiving it because you are currently on an AFRECS listserv. Feel free to forward this newsflash to others who may find it helpful.