



WINTER 2009

SUDAN CONNECTIONS

VOLUME 4, NUMBER 1

AFRECS - AMERICAN FRIENDS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF SUDAN



SUDAN CONNECTIONS

Connecting Hopes and Gifts

American Friends of the Episcopal Church of Sudan (AFRECS) is an organization of U.S. churches, non-governmental organizations, and individuals who care deeply about the struggles of the Sudanese people.

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Contents

Letter from the President	3
<i>Richard J. Jones</i>	
Letter from the Interim Executive Director	4
<i>Richard Parkins</i>	
Welcome Five New Board Members	5
Comings and Goings	6
Christmas Letter from the Archbishop	7
AFRECS Donors Consultation Successful	8
<i>Carolyn Weaver Mackay</i>	
Appeal Letter from the Archbishop	10
Reflections on ECS 2008 Round Table	12
<i>Richard Parkins</i>	
Archbishop Appoints Two Consultants	15
Conversation with Deborah Abuk Atem	17
<i>Jacqueline Kraus</i>	
"My Palace Is A Mud Hut"	19
<i>Francis Loy</i>	
Bishop Daniel Zindo Remembered	21
<i>Manasseh Zindo</i>	

COVER:

ARCHBISHOP DANIEL
DENG BUL WALKING
INTO NARUS, EASTERN
EQUATORIA STATE,
TOGETHER WITH LOCAL
CHRISTIANS,
OCT. 3, 2008
NICHOLAS RAMSDEN ©



April 10, 2009 is the deadline for submissions for the next *Sudan Connections*. Send information to Susan Jones at susanmjones@verizon.net or afrecs@afrecs.org.

LETTER FROM THE AFRECS PRESIDENT

Richard J. Jones

Dear Friends of the ECS,

2008 has been a year of transition and assessment for the American Friends of the Episcopal Church of Sudan (AFRECS).

We owe deep thanks to Executive Director, Nancy Mott Frank, who helped launch AFRECS in 2005, the year the SPLM and the Government of Sudan signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. She visited the ECS on several occasions, collaborated with Sudanese in Rochester, N.Y., as they grew from refugees to rebuilders, and administered a fledgling American network with a light, uplifting administrative touch.

On September 1, Nancy handed the helm of Interim Executive Director over to Richard Parkins, Director of Episcopal Migration Ministries for fourteen years, and a seasoned international economic consultant. Richard is turning a sharp eye and broad mind to helping the AFRECS Board reflect on the accomplishments of four years and the needs of the present.

The leadership of Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul, consecrated in April, the new role of Bishop Francis Gray as American Representative/Commissary to the Province of the ECS, and the halting implementation of the CPA as the 2011 referendum on unity approaches all require AFRECS to pause and take our bearings.

Has AFRECS fulfilled its mission of connecting hopes and gifts these past four years? Forty-two economic development proposals from ECS dioceses have been posted at www.afreecs.org for consideration of donors, along with seven from other ECS entities and five from Sudanese groups based in the U.S.

Sudan Connections, with Editor in Chief, Jackie Kraus, is distributed electronically three times a year, with plans for broader distribution by mail. During 2007 and 2008, it reported on fifty-seven U.S. travelers to Sudan, five Sudanese travelers to the U.S., three U.S. travelers to the Diocese of Salisbury's pre-Lambeth conference of ECS bishops with external partners, one Sudanese

attending a conference elsewhere in Africa, and an important meeting in Rochester to launch an alliance of small U.S.-based Sudanese-initiated development NGOs. We have celebrated such Companion Diocese Relationships as Missouri-Lui, Bethlehem-Kajo-Keji, Chicago-Renk, and Indianapolis-Bor. The right hand now at least knows there *is* a left hand.

Questions for AFRECS to ponder, and pray about, in this time of transition and assessment concern three major issues as we discern the possibilities of moving beyond connector:

- ✿ Fundraiser and donor to the Provincial Office?
- ✿ Matchmaker between dioceses?
- ✿ Pro-active involvement of Episcopal/Anglican action to advocacy?

This issue of *Sudan Connections* continues AFRECS' mission of connecting hopes and gifts, by offering many opportunities to learn about companionship, the breadth of involvement throughout the U.S., the faithfulness of the ECS to evangelize, educate, and bring reconciliation throughout Sudan. I encourage you to reflect on the past



Photo by Constance Wilson ©

four years, and to envision the possibilities ahead -- partners offering each other hope. In the words of Archbishop Daniel, "Work with me to build God's Church here in the Sudan. Alone we can achieve nothing, but together in the love of Christ, anything is possible."

Faithfully,

Richard J. Jones

President

LETTER FROM AFRECS
INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Richard Parkins



Photo by Constance Wilson ©

Dear Friends of the ECS,

As most of you know, I have been serving the American Friends of the Episcopal Church of Sudan as interim Executive Director, having retired from 14 years as Director of Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM). The opportunity to work with AFRECS allows me to continue

my deep concern for the Episcopal Church of Sudan and, more importantly, my commitment to helping our brothers and sisters in Sudan find the peace and justice that has eluded them for decades.

My initial foray into the life of Sudanese Christians began when Fr. Marc Nikkel, known by many of you as the missionary who brought us to an awareness of the plight of southern Sudanese Christians, and I became friends. Marc always reminded his friends of the urgency of being in solidarity with these courageous and faithful people. I have found it a special privilege and blessing to assist those within the American Church to enrich and expand connections with the ECS.

I am encouraged by the widening support the ECS is gaining among American Episcopalians, coupled with a growing awareness of the vital role the ECS plays in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between north and south, signed in January 2005. While there are many challenges facing the ECS, none seems more formidable than sustaining the hopes and aspirations of southern Sudanese as they struggle to see evidence that the Khartoum government intends to honor the terms of this CPA.

I have come to understand that those comprising the AFRECS network and the many partners linked to the ECS can assist in this effort by expressing solidarity with the ECS and its new Archbishop as they wrestle with the profound

poverty of their people; the task of receiving thousands of returning refugees and internally displaced persons; and attempting to create an integrated, cohesive Province of faithful Christians. I believe that AFRECS can contribute significantly to the education of the American Church to these challenges and prompt others to engage in collaborative efforts to strengthen this important part of God's kingdom.

It was heartening to witness the creative energy of so many partners at an AFRECS-sponsored Donors Consultation on Sudan in New York, October 22. On that occasion, I was able to see firsthand the passion and compassion of an array of dioceses and church bodies who care about the Sudan. I also saw more clearly that these individual efforts need to be shared so that the collective response of The Episcopal Church can be better understood and new possibilities for collaboration and cooperation brought forward. AFRECS can contribute significantly to this process.

Equally encouraging was a decision by the AFRECS Board to make advocacy the centerpiece of its 2009 work plan. The Board is committed to supporting the ECS and its new leadership in protecting the integrity of the peace process by being an active presence at the 2009 General Convention of The Episcopal Church.

Five additional creative and energetic people were recently elected to the Board, which will build upon the work of the many Board members and supporters who have nurtured AFRECS these past several years. American Friends of the Episcopal Church of Sudan is now positioned to make an even greater contribution to the life of the ECS. And, any new possibilities for AFRECS will be enhanced by its recognition, at the recent ECS Round Table in Juba, of the increasingly vital role American partners can play in accompanying our sisters and brothers of the ECS on their journey forward. It's great to be one of the sojourners.

Faithfully,

Richard Parkins

Interim Executive Director

WELCOME TO FIVE NEW AFRECS BOARD MEMBERS

President Richard Jones is pleased to announce the election of five new members to the Board of the American Friends of the Episcopal Church of Sudan, with a brief introduction.

Ms. Gwinneth A. Clarkson resides in Washington, DC. She has a BA degree in International Relations from American University, and an MBA from New York University in International Finance. Her professional experience since 1981 has been in banking and finance. She lived in Bogotá, Colombia, for ten years working in finance and economics. Gwinneth's volunteer activities include two years as Treasurer of a non-profit organization.

The Rev. Kathleen J. Cullinane lives in Indianapolis, IN. Kate is former Canon Missioner at Christ Church Cathedral, Indianapolis, and also served in the Diocese of Los Angeles. She studied at Bishop Tucker Theological College in Uganda in 1988, and is currently serving as a hospital chaplain. Kate has been on the Board of the Global Episcopal Mission Network (GEM).

The Rev. Dr. Ellen J. Hanckel, Rector of Christ Episcopal Church, Martinsville, VA, since 2004, has been a member of AFRECS since 2005. She has Master of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry degrees from University of the South at Sewanee. She has been a freelance writer and reporter. Ellen has served as a volunteer for many community organizations. She represented the Diocese of VA on a trip to southern Sudan for the dedication of the Marc Nikkel School in Maar. She and her husband, Scott Derks, attended the Salisbury-Sudan link conference in July 2008, held in Salisbury.

Canon Margaret S. Larom, Program Officer, International Justice and Peacemaking (Advocacy Center), at The Church Center in New York, has held many positions in The Episcopal Church. She has BA and MA degrees in English Literature from Smith College, and had a career in journalism and publishing. Margaret and her husband, The Rev. Peter Larom, served as appointed missionaries to Uganda. Margaret is a founding member of the Episcopal Partnership for Global Mission, and served as Convener in 1997-98. She serves on the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Telecommunications, and is immediate past Director of Anglican & Global Relations.

The Rt. Rev. A. Heath Light is retired Bishop of the Diocese of Southwestern Virginia and currently resides in Roanoke, VA. The Diocese of SWVA has a long history of relationship with the ECS, and Bishop Light ordained the late Rev. Marc Nikkel in 1981. Bishop Light spoke and preached at the inaugural AFRECS conference in 2005 at St. Paul's, Alexandria, VA. He was present for the first Partners in Mission conference in Juba (early '80's). He has served as President of Province VIII, was on the Council of Advice for Presiding Bishops Allen and Browning, and was President of the Joint Standing Committee for World Mission. He remains an active member of the SWVA's Companions for Mission Committee. 🌸

COMINGS AND GOINGS

JANUARY 2-25

The Rev. Samuel Enosa Peni, Director of Development and Youth, Diocese of Yambio, and currently studying for an MTS at Wartburg Lutheran Seminary, Dubuque, IA, will be in residence at St. Timothy's Church, W. Des Moines, IA, for the J-term assignment. Fr. Samuel will graduate from Wartburg in May, and return to Yambio. Contact him at revsept@yahoo.com for information about Yambio Diocese.

JANUARY 26 - FEBRUARY 25

Buck Blanchard, World Mission Coordinator, Diocese of Virginia, will travel to several dioceses of the ECS located in south Sudan -- Rokon, Lui, Maridi, Mundri, Ibba, Yambio, and Ezo, some of which are unserved by partners. **Phil Darrow**, St. Michael's, Barrington, Diocese of Chicago, and **Robin Denney** appointed agricultural consultant to the ECS will join Phil in Juba, Jan. 28. Phil will return to Chicago from Yambio. Robin and Buck will continue on to the Diocese of Yei and Kajo-Keji. **Buck has made arrangements to have a vehicle purchased in Kampala and brought to Sudan for transportation of the team. The plan is to use the vehicle, and then donate it to the ECS. Estimated cost is \$18,000. Contributions from dioceses, churches, and individuals throughout ECUSA are welcome. Contact Buck at bblanchard@thediocese.net to make a contribution.**

FEBRUARY 4-MAY 4

After a brief time back in VA, **The Rev. Lauren Stanley** returns to Renk Theological College, to continue to serve as Lecturer and Chaplain. She is an appointed missionary of TEC Office of Mission Personnel.

FEBRUARY 4-22

Susan Sullivan, member of St. Paul's, Alexandria, VA, 1999 MTS graduate of VTS, and doctoral candidate at Catholic University, departs for Sudan for three weeks. She will teach Greek at Renk Theological College, as part of the Visiting Teachers Program. The VTP was founded in 2005 by

Drs. Richard Jones (VTS) and Ellen Davis (Duke Divinity School), and sends graduates and graduate students twice a year to teach biblical languages.

FEBRUARY 10-17

Bishop Frank Gray, U.S. Commissary to the ECS, and Bishop David Jones, Assistant of the Diocese of VA, will travel to Yei, Sudan for the ECS Bishops Retreat. **Buck Blanchard** and **Robin Denney** will attend as observers.

Following the retreat, Bishop Gray, Buck and Robin will travel to the Dioceses of Lainya, Torit and Rejaf.

FEBRUARY 22 - FEBRUARY 24

Lambeth Palace Round Table for the Episcopal Church of Sudan, led by Dr. **Ellen Davis**, Prof. of Biblical & Practical Theology at Duke Div. School, and co-founder of the Visiting Teachers Program of Renk Theological College. Attendees will be the Archbishop and other bishops and church leaders of ECS; representatives of ERD, AFRECS, VTS, Dioceses of VA and Chicago; U.S. Commissary to the ECS; representatives of the UK, and others offering contributions in one or more areas of: theological education and higher education; agriculture and sustainable technology; public health and nutrition.

FEBRUARY 2009

Robin Denney, agriculturist from the Episcopal Church, USA, appointed ECS External Agricultural Consultant, begins a year of assisting in developing the ECS Agriculture Office and piloting agriculture projects. (Read more about Robin elsewhere in this issue of *Sudan Connections*.)





CHRISTMAS LETTER FROM ARCHBISHOP DANIEL DENG BUL

ECS Provincial
Headquarters
Juba, Sudan
December 2008

Photo by Constance Wilson ©

Dear friends and colleagues in Christ,

I greet you all in the name of Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and would like to wish you, on behalf of the entire Episcopal Church of the Sudan, a very happy Christmas and New Year 2009 from the Office of the Archbishop of the Episcopal Church of Sudan.

At this time we celebrate the incarnation of the Son of God. As people walking in darkness, we have now seen the great light -- the Son upon whose shoulders shall be the government and who shall be called "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:2-7).

Today is born for us in the city of David, a saviour who is Christ the Lord. Let us therefore sing with the angels "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to all mankind" (Luke 2:1-4).

As we remember that "God so loved the world that he gave us his only begotten Son", we reflect on what we have not done well in 2008 and what can be improved

on in 2009, so that we "should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

In this letter, I will outline some of my activities since my enthronement as your fourth Archbishop and the ways in which we as a Church can move forward in 2009 and the years to come.

Before I do so, I would like to extend my most heartfelt thanks, both as an Archbishop and as an individual, to the First Vice President of the Sudan and President of the Government of Southern Sudan, General Salva Kiir Mayardit, and his government for the gift of a vehicle for the Archbishop of the Episcopal Church of the Sudan -- gratefully received on Monday, 25th November 2008. May the Almighty God bless the Government of Southern Sudan for its generosity shown to His Church.

(The Archbishop's full report on his activities since his enthronement can be found on the new website of the ECS -- www.sudan.anglican.org)



AFRECS-SPONSORED DONORS CONSULTATION ON SUDAN VERY SUCCESSFUL ON ALL FRONTS

Reported by Carolyn Weaver Mackay
Secretary of AFRECS

It all began at the 2008 AFRECS Conference in Chicago, when Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul addressed the attendees gathered to welcome him warmly to his companion diocese and to learn what challenges face him as the newly-consecrated Primate of the ECS. In response to the alarming news about the financial needs of the ECS, including the \$157,000 debt he inherited, and about the very real risk of renewed violence in Sudan, the AFRECS Board met in emergency session with the Archbishop and resolved to organize the following Consultation. (Editor's note.)

Responding to Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul's direct and impassioned plea in Chicago for increased support to the ECS, AFRECS convened a meeting of major donors and partners in New York City, at the Episcopal Church Center, on October 22, 2008. The purpose of the Donors Consultation on Sudan was to encourage communication among American donors and partners so that each would have a clearer picture of what others were doing—and planned to do—on behalf of the ECS, and the ECS would have a clearer (and more complete) picture of what was being done on its behalf. It is our hope and expectation at AFRECS that this gathering and others like it, in which information is shared and new relationships are formed, will foster cooperation and result in more and better-targeted support for the ECS.

I am pleased to report that the consultation was a great success. AFRECS was at its best doing what it does best -- networking and expanding the network on behalf of the ECS. A group of donors and partners were brought together who shared a deep commitment to the ECS, and to the people of Sudan, but who, as a group, knew little about the activities of one another. Bishop Frank Gray, US Commissary (representative) to the Province of the Episcopal Church of Sudan, served as facilitator. In this role, he inspired a sense of shared mission and trust in which openness was encouraged and discussion flourished. AFRECS President Richard Jones welcomed attendees and invited the sharing of important information on financial commitments. Richard Parkins was introduced as the Interim Executive Director of AFRECS.

Who was "at the table" in New York? Thirteen partners and donors accepted AFRECS' invitation and participated in the consultation. Those at the table were The Rev. Jamie Callaway, on behalf of Trinity Grants Program; Dr. Jo Bailey Wells, on behalf of the Visiting Teachers Program of Duke Divinity School and Virginia Theological Seminary; and Lisa Fox from the Diocese of Missouri, The Rev. Ellen Hanckel from the Diocese of Southwest Virginia, Jo Trepagnier from the Diocese of Bethlehem, and Buck Blanchard from the Diocese of Virginia, each representing their diocese's companion relationship with a diocese in Sudan. Also at the table were Janette O'Neill, on behalf of Episcopal Relief and Development, and, from the Episcopal Church Center, The Rev. Emmanuel Swerwadda, Partnership Officer for Africa, on behalf of himself and United Thank Offering, and from the Episcopal Church's Office of Government Relations, Alex Baumgarten. Joining by conference call were representatives of two more companion relationships—AFRECS Board member Jackie Kraus, on behalf of the Diocese of Chicago, and Bishop Thomas Ely, Diocese of Vermont—along with Judith Gregory, financial consultant to the ECS from the Diocese of Delaware. AFRECS Treasurer Fritz Gilbert and I also were at the table, as were David Copley, Mission Personnel Director, Episcopal Church Center, and former AFRECS Board member Robert Franken.

Participants discussed their relationships with the ECS; the projects and activities they had undertaken, and planned to undertake, in Sudan; and the magnitude of their financial and other commitments. Projects ran the gamut from drilling wells, teaching men and women how to use simple farm equipment, and building schools and clinics in a diocese, to equipping the Provincial Office with modern telecommunications and helping to raise up the next generation of Church leaders. Relationships were both formal (i.e., covenant-based) and informal, and were entered into with dioceses and their bishops, with the Province and the Archbishop, and, in one case, with a bible college and the bishop of the diocese in which it is located. The financial commitments made by donors and partners ranged from relatively quite small (as when missionaries and volunteers are sent to Sudan, and the major commitment is of

AFRECS-SPONSORED DONORS CONSULTATION ON SUDAN VERY SUCCESSFUL ON ALL FRONTS, CON'T.

time and talent) to relatively quite large (as when a U.S. diocese raises funds for a companion diocese and spends the bulk of those funds in Sudan).

In the course of our 4-1/2 hours together, much information was shared and much was learned. Jamie Callaway, Director of Trinity Grants Program, reported on the impressive work they are undertaking to establish Internet and email communication in the Provincial Office in Juba, with the hope of expanding it to link all 24 dioceses in the ECS. Buck Blanchard, World Mission Coordinator for the Diocese of VA, told us of his planned trip to Sudan early in 2009. Buck plans to purchase a vehicle (which will be left for the Province) and spend a month on the road visiting unserved dioceses in South Sudan. Jo Bailey Wells, Professor at Duke Divinity School, shared news about the Duke-VTS Visiting Teachers Program, which sends teams of graduate and doctoral students to Renk Theological College twice annually. Jo Trepagnier shared news about the remarkable success the Diocese of Bethlehem has had in raising funds—upward of \$2 million in 2008 alone—for its companion diocese in Sudan, Kajo-Keji. (In the course of these discussions, two participants learned they were raising funds for the same project!) Judith Gregory discussed her 4-month assignment as a volunteer financial advisor to the Provincial Office, working in Khartoum, and the demoralizing effects that unpaid salaries were having on church workers; unpaid salaries comprise the bulk of the ECS's outstanding debt of \$157,000. Janette O'Neill reported on the various activities being funded by ERD, working collaboratively with SUDRA (the Sudanese Development and Relief Agency), its partner organization in Sudan. In the process, she conveyed her sense of the magnitude of unmet needs in Sudan and her genuine wish to be doing more. Bishop Gray brought news that several U.S. dioceses had expressed interest in launching a companion relationship with a Sudanese diocese.

Participants representing Companion Diocese Relationships were particularly interested in the opportunity to meet and talk. There was clear value in beginning to share experiences, lessons learned, and new ideas with one another. Not surprisingly, interest was expressed in initiating discussions again in the future, both at the lay level and bishop to

bishop. Bishop Gray suggested widening discussions to include bishops interested in forming new relationships with the ECS. This was encouraging to those of us representing AFRECS since one of our goals—and one of the Archbishop's priorities—is promoting new companion relationships.

Among other interesting observations about the current situation in Sudan and possible responses to it, Alex Baumgarten noted that peace advocacy would be the big issue for 2009 and that ways to elevate awareness and make a difference in Washington were currently under discussion. Rich Jones announced that the AFRECS Board, at its fall meeting in Virginia, had made peace advocacy their priority for 2009 as well.

Shortly before adjourning, Bishop Gray echoed a remark made earlier in the day, attributed to Missouri Bishop George Wayne Smith, to the effect that "Sudan cannot succeed unless Archbishop Daniel succeeds." This was a reference to the \$157,000 debt of the ECS and the priority that needed to be placed on eliminating it. He urged participants to become active in helping to close this debt as quickly as possible. (*A recent letter from Archbishop Daniel concerning this debt can be found on the next page of this newsletter.*)

When the meeting was finally adjourned, thirty minutes later than initially planned, many people expressed their desire to continue the dialogue that had begun. Among the topics yet to be discussed was that of gaps in support—where do they lie and how can they be addressed? It was agreed that participants would continue to communicate by email and wished to meet again in the months ahead. The meeting ended with a round of sincere thank you's and expressions of appreciation to AFRECS.

Everyone left the meeting heartened by the idea that what we were doing individually was part of something bigger – Episcopal friends and partners of the ECS working together for our brothers and sisters in Sudan – and that together, in Christ, we could accomplish great things. 🌸

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28th October 2008

**SUBJECT: General appeal for debt relief in the Episcopal Church of the Sudan
from Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul**

Dear friends of the ECS,

I greet you all in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Throughout the 1983-2005 Sudanese civil war, the Episcopal Church of the Sudan continued to operate and function, bringing education, healthcare and hope in Our Lord to the people of this war-torn nation. The Church has always been willing to do God's work for low salaries, but since 2004 the Province of the Episcopal Church of the Sudan has been steadily incurring debt towards its staff. Today the total arrears owed by the province to various members of staff are around \$157,000.

This lack of salaries has now been hanging over the core provincial staff for nearly five years, and is slowly sapping the morale of those who have given their whole lives in the service of Christ. This year alone, most provincial staff have not received salaries since May. Increasingly, key members of the provincial staff are complaining that the Church no longer values their services, which could not be further from the truth, and already certain staff have refused to work for short periods.

Consequently the repaying of this debt is a top priority for me as a new Archbishop at the start of a ten year Archiepiscopacy. The repayment of arrears will give me a strong beginning in my ten year office by proving that I can swiftly improve the ECS. It will vastly improve morale and output in the provincial office, demonstrate that the Church still cares for its people, and show that the ECS is operating professionally in the modern world, having emerged triumphant from twenty one years of war. The payment of outstanding arrears will also allow the streamlining of the provincial office and the hiring of better qualified and more professional personnel for a twenty-first century Church.

The ECS is also engaged in internal fundraising for the purpose of clearing these arrears, but I appeal to all our friends and partners around the world for any assistance that may be forthcoming. This is a top priority for the province: unless this debt is relieved the province will have a constant liability hanging over it and will be faced with increasingly non-committed personnel.

Philip H. Darrow of the Parish of St. Michael's, Barrington, in the Diocese of Chicago and retired Assistant Bishop of Virginia + Frank Gray, who I have appointed as my Commissary in the USA, have kindly offered to co-ordinate the US response to this appeal. Phillip has set up "Club 157" – a group whose members have all agreed to donate \$1,000 towards the \$157,000 total.

They can be contacted at: Philip.Darrow@ryland.com and karenandfrank@comcast.net. For all friends in North America, please co-ordinate your responses to this appeal through them.

For friends in the British Isles please co-ordinate your responses through Canon Ian Woodward of the Salisbury Diocesan Sudan Link, who can be contacted at revianw@btinternet.com.

Any other responses can be co-ordinated through the above individuals or my International Co-ordinator, Nicholas Ramsden, who can be contacted at nicholas.ramsden@gmail.com.

Please assist me to justly reward some of the most committed Christians in the Sudan for their years of service in the Lord.

Yours in Christ,


The Most Rev. Dr. Daniel Deng Bul Yak
Archbishop and Primate of the Province of the Episcopal Church of the Sudan



BECOME A MEMBER OF "CLUB 157"

In response to the \$157,000 indebtedness of the Provincial Office of the ECS, which Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul brought to our attention on his visits throughout the U.S., and at the AFRECS Conference in Chicago, St. Michael's Episcopal Church, Barrington, IL, is spearheading a fund raising campaign, "Club 157." The goal is to raise \$1,000 from 157 donors (individuals, churches, organizations).

Membership checks can be made out to

St. Michael's Episcopal Church -- designated for "Club 157"

647 Dundee Ave., Barrington, IL 60010, ATTN: Kim Lessner

For further information, contact Chairs Robin and Phil Darrow,

bardar5@aol.com or Philip.Darrow@ryland.com

Contact Bishop Frank Gray, U.S. Commissary - frankgray@comcast.net

ECS 2008 ROUND TABLE -- ARCHBISHOP'S OPENING REMARKS

My Lord Bishops, partners, ladies and gentlemen, I greet you all in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

I would like to warmly welcome each and every one of you gathered here today. I also especially thank the partners of the Episcopal Church of the Sudan for staying with us throughout the long years of war and for all your assistance, both spiritual and financial. I acknowledge the presence of, and heartily thank the following: the Diocese of Salisbury, the Episcopal Church of the United States, Episcopal Relief and Development, the Diocese of Bradford, the Church Mission Society, the American Friends of the ECS, the Anglican Church of Canada, Tearfund, and the Sudan Church Association.

Friends, we gather here this week to discuss not only the state of the ECS, but the way forward for the Church. As a new Archbishop with ten years of service stretching before me, I look to the future, the future of both the ECS and of the Sudan as a nation. We stand at a critical point in this nation's history. Next year, 2009, will see elections that will determine the look of a government that will guide us toward 2011, when the people of southern Sudan will vote on whether they wish to remain within a united Sudan or secede as an independent country.

The ECS is the largest indigenous civil society organization in the Sudan and, therefore, has a crucial role to play in the next few years of this nation's history. However, in recent years, the Church has become too small-minded, too inward looking and too divided along tribal lines to be an effective player in today's Sudan and the modern world. My vision of the ECS in ten years time is of an outward- and forward-looking Church -- self-sustainable, yes, but interdependently part of the worldwide Anglican Communion and the holy catholic Church as a whole. We must plan ahead, engage with others and share our thoughts -- only then will the ECS be truly able to fulfill the mandate God has given us to minister to His people in the Sudan.

To be fully able to reach such a level, the Church must tackle the twelve pressing problems that I outlined in my speech to the Salisbury ECS Partners'

Conference in July this year:

1. Provincial Arrears - \$157,000
2. Communication for the Office of the Archbishop
3. Provincial Office Refurbishment
4. Evangelism
5. Peace-Building, Reconciliation and Advocacy
6. Rehabilitation and Relief for IDP's and Returnees
7. Agriculture and Food Security
8. Education
9. Health
10. Capacity Building and Leadership Development
11. Reconstruction of Churches
12. Professional Mission Personnel

I, as Archbishop, am serious about addressing all of these issues in the next ten years. If you choose to work together with me to address them, you have my full guaranteed support. As evidence of this, I put before you key recent leaps forward that have already occurred since my enthronement:

- A consolidated financial report assisted by an ECS External Consultant
- A draft 2008 budget
- Internet in the Provincial office and soon in the dioceses
- Reporting on my visits, thoughts and decisions by my International Coordinator
- Plans in place for an Agriculture Office and the appointment of an ECS External Agricultural Consultant
- An interim Financial Policy to guarantee departmental accountability, financial management and planning at the Provincial level. (*Copies are available.*)

The most pressing strategic priorities are the clearing of Provincial arrears and the setting up of efficient Provincial management systems staffed by motivated, paid, professional personnel. Only through this can the ECS start to grow again as an institution, playing the crucial role that it can in the next few years of our nation's history and giving full glory to God.

ECS 2008 ROUND TABLE -- ARCHBISHOP'S OPENING REMARKS, CON'T.

I, therefore, challenge each of my brothers and sisters here to pledge your agency's support to these ECS strategic priorities this week. Work with me to build God's Church here in the Sudan. Alone we can achieve nothing, but together in the love of Christ, anything is possible. In keeping with this sentiment, I would like to take this opportunity to remind the Diocese of Salisbury of their agreement to link up our 24 Dioceses with their rural deaneries in order to forge closer links between Christians in England and Sudan. I ask them to continue to pursue this.

Only through real, personal, two-way partnership can we begin to understand each other and to work most effectively together for Christ's Kingdom.

Thank you very much, and may God bless you all,

The Most Rev. Dr. Daniel Deng Bul Yak

Archbishop and Primate of the Province of the
Episcopal Church of the Sudan

www.sudan.anglican.org 

REFLECTIONS ON THE 2008 ECS ROUND TABLE

*By Richard Parkins
Interim Executive Director, AFRECS*

It was a privilege to represent AFRECS at the most recent Round Table of the Episcopal Church of the Sudan (ECS), held in Juba from November 2-4. Personally, my former participation at a Round Table of the Sudan Council of Churches in Khartoum was ten years ago, when Bishop Daniel Deng Bul, then bishop of Renk, hosted me. Civil strife and violence were still a reality for the people of Sudan. Christians were still dealing with the discrimination and isolation that had been their fate for the previous twenty years.

Thus, joining brothers and sisters in 2008 in Juba with partners from Canada and Great Britain in deliberating about the future of the ECS was a special joy. While the peace remains tenuous, and much work is required to ensure that Sudan will transition peacefully into a united, stable, and just nation, the environment surrounding this Round Table was vastly more hopeful than that which greeted such gatherings a decade ago. This is indeed something to celebrate. This gathering also serves as a reminder of the work remaining to build on some hopeful beginnings embodying both the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and the enthronement of Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul as the new leader of the ECS. What follows are some reflections on the meeting, with a few additional news items.

The vitality of the representatives from the 24 dio-

ceses of the Province was impressive. As representatives from the various dioceses spoke of their needs and reviewed progress made based on recommendations from the Round Table of two years earlier, it was clear that the ECS is blessed with committed, vibrant leadership. A colleague from England noted that the level of discussion and the quality of recommendations reflected the growing understanding of ECS clergy and lay leadership of the challenges facing the Church. While the expatriate partners were fully engaged in the deliberations, this Round Table was a testimony to the hopefulness of emerging leadership within the ECS. It is this hopefulness against a backdrop of poverty and a fragile peace that demands our prayers and support.

Clearly the role of the ECS as a force for reconciliation and peace received emphasis in the Archbishop's vision statement, only to be reiterated by him in a private conversation with me. As the leader of arguably the largest civil institution in Sudan, the Archbishop is keenly aware of his responsibility and that of the ECS in keeping the peace process alive in a way that restores justice to south Sudanese and the Christian community as a whole. This understanding is coupled with an equally compelling understanding of the fragility of the peace and the severe resource constraints facing the ECS as it attempts to forge ahead to create a more cohesive and effective Church body. The challenge is formidable – made even more daunting as vestiges of tribalism remain and cynicism about the prospect of a united Sudan which ensures fairness to south Sudanese abounds.

REFLECTIONS ON THE 2008 ECS ROUND TABLE, CON'T.

Another salient issue noted by the Archbishop and underscored in a personal conversation was the indebtedness that plagues the Province. This debt which represents primarily back salaries for staff is viewed by the Archbishop as a barrier to making progress in implementing the vision which he has for the ECS. The efforts of Club 157 in making a major contribution in alleviating this debt was noted with great appreciation as was the hoped for support from the Barnabas Fund, an organization in England which supports Christian institutions. Concern was expressed that, in spite of the commendable work of these two entities and anticipated support from other sources, a more aggressive strategy in dealing with the debt was needed. A formal appeal by the Archbishop setting forth the urgency of debt alleviation has since been issued. Linked to the issue of debt relief was the intention of the Archbishop to undertake organizational reform that would lead to a more streamlined, efficient and cost effective operation once the burden of past financial obligations is removed. The Archbishop views this inherited debt as a major obstacle to fulfilling his dreams for a revitalized ECS.

The fact that I had recently participated in the AFRECS-sponsored Donors Consultation in New York earlier equipped me and other colleagues to make some important interventions during the core meeting and subsequent Round Table. Janette O'Neill, Dir. of ERD's Africa Programs, and Emmanuel SSwerradda, Partnership Officer for Africa, were key spokespersons at the Consultation. The October 22nd meeting became a reference point throughout as the information presented allowed us to augment the understanding of the ECS and various partners of contributions of American partners to the ECS, which were not featured in formal presentations. A significant unacknowledged resource was the array of U.S.-based resources devoted to theological education. The work of Virginia Theological Seminary and Duke Divinity School, the Dioceses of Chicago, Bethlehem and Virginia were not noted in formal presentations, but American Church colleagues referred to the New York Consultation where these various bilateral relationships with ECS Dioceses and theological colleges were possibly the most often mentioned resources being offered by American partners to the ECS.

I learned that the focus of the Round Table is solely

on contributions made directly to the Province, and that for a variety of reasons bilateral support gets less recognition or is overlooked entirely. It was possible to refer to information collected by AFRECS at the New York Consultation that broadened understanding of how much the American Church is doing in certain spheres of development and assistance. In examining this problem, it became evident that keeping the ECS apprised of what U.S. partners are doing, particularly work being done bilaterally, is important in not only giving due recognition to these important and sizable contributions, but offering a more comprehensive picture of what support the Church in Sudan is receiving and where gaps might exist. AFRECS has a unique role to play in fulfilling this task. For example, while theological education remains a key concern throughout the Province, it would be important to acknowledge commitments already in place and where models of theological training are available as a basis for future work in this field.

The Round Table concluded with the serious matter of future governance. It is a matter of pride that AFRECS was designated by expatriate partners to be a member of the core group, and would participate fully in future deliberations of the group. Joining AFRECS on the U.S. side would be Episcopal Relief and Development, on behalf of The Episcopal Church. Janette O'Neill was chosen as the new Chair of the core group and as such will chair future Round Tables, succeeding Michael Paget-Wilkes who served as Chair for the past several years. Recognition of AFRECS as a full-fledged player at future Round Tables not only enhances our role, but also creates expectations of AFRECS. This new role obligates AFRECS to equip itself to take on this added responsibility.

I left Juba feeling encouraged by the leadership of the Archbishop and the respect with which he is held by his bishops and the ECS. These feelings were coupled with a respect for the faithfulness of the clergy and lay leadership of the ECS, as they face the daunting task of moving an impoverished, but faithful people, into a peaceful and stable future. We are challenged to be strong partners in accompanying our sisters and brothers in the ECS on their journey, for the glory of God, into this uncertain and perilous future. 🌸

ARCHBISHOP DANIEL DENG BUL APPOINTS INTERNATIONAL COORDINATOR & EXTERNAL AGRICULTURAL CONSULTANT FOR PROVINCE

Introducing Nicholas Ramsden, International Coordinator & Robin Denney, External Agricultural Consultant

As reported to Sudan Connections Editor



Nicholas “Nic” Ramsden began his “missionary” life in 1985, when he was born in Goroka, Papua New Guinea, first son of British Anglican priest, Fr. Peter and wife, Sue, who were serving in the small highland jungle station of Koinambe in the Diocese of Aipo-Rongo. He started pre-school in Lae, where his father served All Souls’ Parish. The family moved back to the UK for three years while Fr. Peter studied at Leeds University, returning to serve in Nic’s birthplace for the next three years.

In 1996, Nic and his family returned to the UK so he and his brother, Stephen, could attend secondary school and university in the west. His father served ten years as Vicar of St. Bartholomew’s, Longbenton, in the Diocese of Newcastle.

History, particularly of politics and the Church, is a key interest of Nic’s. In December 2006, his father was elected fifth Bishop of Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea’s capitol city. This gave Nic a chance to return to his “roots” for the consecration March 25, 2007. Having grown up in a developing country and being re-acquainted with it after a decade in the west, he decided that he wanted to do some-

thing, in his twenties, other than sit behind a desk in London. Upon graduation from Balliol College in the University of Oxford, June 2007, he made the decision to go overseas and do something more interesting and worthwhile.

The Chaplain at Balliol connected Nic with Charlie Goldsmith, another Balliol graduate serving the ECS as an Education Development volunteer. Charlie was about to return to his management consultancy position, and he recommended Nic to ECS Provincial Secretary, Enock Tombe, as a volunteer for ECS. In October 2007, Nic arrived in Juba to serve ECS/SUDRA, fulfilling his interest in getting experience in overseas development.

By February 2008, Nic was appointed to assist the ECS Education Office as Development Manager, supervising school building projects and building up relationships with donors and partners of ECS. On October 1, 2008, Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul appointed Nic as his International Coordinator, in recognition of both the problem of ECS communication with its partners, and Nic’s unique placement and ability to be a bridge between the ECS and the outside world. “The installation of internet in the Provincial office this August, for which my thanks go to the Diocese of Virginia and Trinity Wall Street, shows rapid progress on the issue of communication”, explained the Archbishop in his opening remarks to the ECS 2008 Round Table.

Job description of the International Coordinator involves drafting international correspondence; reporting the Archbishop’s visits inside and outside the country; following up on peace issues in the office of the Archbishop in conjunction with the Peace Commission; helping the office of the Archbishop with educational matters; and any other duties assigned by the Archbishop.

Contact Nic Ramsden, International Coordinator in the Office of the Archbishop, Province of the ECS at nicholas.ramsden@gmail.com. Support Nic and the Province of the ECS with prayers.

ARCHBISHOP DANIEL DENG BUL APPOINTS INTERNATIONAL COORDINATOR & EXTERNAL AGRICULTURAL CONSULTANT FOR PROVINCE CON'T.



Robin Denney, an agriculturist from the Episcopal Church, USA, has been appointed to be the ECS External Agricultural Consultant, beginning in February 2009. Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul reported to the 2008 ECS Round Table, in Juba, November 6, that she will assist in developing the ECS Agriculture Office and in piloting agriculture projects. "Already the Governor of Western Equatoria has promised us land in her state for agriculture", he reported.

Robin brings a year's experience as agriculture missionary working at Cuttington University, Suakoko, Bong County, Liberia, from September 2006 to 2007, where she was placed as a Young Adult Service Corps missionary by The Episcopal Church USA. The emphasis of YASC includes cultural engagement, spiritual commitment, and vocational reflections lived out together in a work of service. www.episcopalchurch.org/yasc Robin was sponsored by Episcopal churches and individuals in the Dioceses of El Camino Real and Northern California, as well as individuals throughout California and The Episcopal Church USA.

Robin left her job of five years, feeling strongly that God was calling her to something else, and when Hurricane Katrina struck Mississippi and Louisiana in 2005, she went through Red Cross training and was assigned to Camp Coast Care, where she served as liaison between the Red Cross and Jackson and Harrison Counties in southern Mississippi. She has returned twice to aid in the clean-up and rebuilding efforts.

Upon returning from Liberia in September 2007, Robin was ready to re-up, and David Copley, Volunteers for Mission Officer, was looking for an agricultural specialist, at the request of Archbishop Daniel, and she found herself being assigned to the ECS as External Agricultural Consultant for one year, "possibly longer". She is excited to return to another developing country to do missionary work she calls "frustrating and transforming".

"We are called to be a people of action, people who go out and meet the needs of the suffering. But it's not just about what we get done or the outcome, it's about relationship. It's about allowing the people we call the 'least of these' into our hearts, and being willing to let into their hearts. And then we realize that we aren't different after all. We are the same beloved children of a loving God." *From Robin's blog, <http://robin-mission.blogspot.com>.*

Fundraising is an important part of mission. There are three active participant groups in any one mission: the missionary, those who receive him/her, and those who send him/her. Contact Robin at redenney99@yahoo.com to offer her prayer and financial support. She will begin her assignment for the Province of the ECS in February 2009.



A CONVERSATION WITH DEBORAH ABUK ATEM WIFE OF ARCHBISHOP DANIEL DENG BUL & HONORABLE PRESIDENT OF THE MOTHERS UNION - ECS



Photos by Constance Wilson ©

Interview by Jacqueline Kraus, AFRECS Editor

Mama Deborah Abuk Atem, wife of Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul, and Honorable President of Mothers Union for the ECS, agreed to be interviewed on the occasion of the enthronement of the 2nd Bishop of Renk, Joseph Garang Atem, September 1, 2008. She served as President of the Mothers Union of Renk Diocese when her husband was Bishop. Bishop's wives serve important leadership roles throughout the ECS. Roda Samuel Chol, wife of Bishop Joseph, now becomes President in Renk.

Q. It is an honor to interview you, Deborah, as you begin the next chapter of your life as partner in ministry with the Archbishop. Tell me how this journey began for you, and the source of your strength.

A. When I was a youth leader, long ago in 1975, before knowing the Archbishop, I read in Ezekiel 18:27-28, God's message to turn away from sin and come to know Him and work for Him, and your life is saved forever. I have not turned back, and I share this message with all the people.

Q. As wife of the Archbishop, you now serve as Honorable President of the Mothers Union. What is your vision of this new ministry?

A. My vision is to bring the wives of the bishops together to share the word of God, and then we will become equipped to do our work in Sudan, and help our husbands do theirs. In Salisbury, at the meeting of ECS Bishops and partners, I told them the idea. But, I said this is not just for bishops' wives, but also for clergy wives. We must share with clergy wives how they must help their husbands do their ministries, too. The bishops' wives accepted this idea highly, and a committee was formed with a representative from each region to plan a retreat the first week of February. Serving on the planning committee are Rebecca Ezekiel, Bor; Rebeka Garang, Malakal; Helen Alapayo, Rumbek; Linda Amidi, Lainya; Queen Yugusuk, Torit; Jennifer Micha, Juba; and Thuria Kondo, Khartoum.

Q. Will this be the first such retreat for bishops' wives, and what is the most important outcome that you're hoping for?

A. This will be the first retreat for bishop's wives in the history of the ECS. Many wives of the new Bishops are young and inexperienced and need to be ready to help in the community and teach the wives of the clergy in their dioceses. They need to become leaders in the diocese, ministering to the people. They cannot bring shame to their husbands. The call to be bishop extends to the wife of a bishop.

Q. How will the accommodations and travel for this retreat be supported?

A. There are twenty-eight bishops in the ECS, and the retreat is planned for five days, two travel days and three days to sit together. The estimated budget is \$28,000, and in the spirit of teaching ourselves to give, each lady is expected to contribute at least \$100, and will provide foods from their regions, such as Egyptian beans, lentils, sugar from Khartoum, and beans, honey, ground nuts from Western Equatoria. We can use assistance with expenses for transport and accommodations in Juba, as well as perishable foods for meals.

A CONVERSATION WITH DEBORAH ABUK ATEM WIFE OF ARCHBISHOP DANIEL DENG BUL & HONORABLE PRESIDENT OF THE MOTHERS UNION - ECS, CON'T.

Q. If people are willing to help with donations, how do they send them to the ECS for this important, historic retreat, which purpose is to support the work of the bishops and equip wives for leadership in their dioceses?

A. We would highly welcome assistance from our friends in the US and UK. Gifts can be sent to the Diocese of Virginia, and they will be wired to the ECS Provincial office for the Bishops' Wives Retreat. (Editor's note: Diocese of VA, 110 W. Franklin St., Richmond, VA 23220, Attn: Joy Buzzard, Financial Administrator)

Q. Share with me the role of Mothers Union in the ECS. How much do the clergy, bishops and community rely upon the women? I understand that it is a very important ministry.

A. Yes, the Mothers Union (MU), which came to the ECS from the Church in England, is an essential part of the ECS. Appointment to the Mothers Union is made by the bishop of the diocese based upon involvement in the Church. A life of prayer is part of every day at noon. The MU is considered the backbone of the Church, and we reach out to the community by bringing the community together every Tuesday for prayer and sharing. We visit prisons, hospitals, every home, and if we cannot handle a problem, we take it to the priest. We advise and counsel couples planning for marriage and for parenting when expecting their first child, and generally care for the spiritual needs of the community.

Q. Tell us about the role of the MU in service to the Church assisting the priests. And, does the ECS ordain women?

A. Thank you for asking that question. Yes, the MU is charged with preparing the church for services -- cleaning and preparing the table. We preach the Word of God and administer the chalice at the Eucharist. And, yes, there are women clergy in the ECS. In fact, the first woman Dean of a Cathedral in Africa is at St. Matthew Cathedral, Renk Diocese. She was raised up from the MU, The Ven. Martha Nhial.

Q. If you were to identify the most important work of the MU, what would that be?

A. We in southern Sudan are coming out of a twenty-one year civil war, and the internally displaced persons and refugees are returning. During the war, all the women served wherever they were, leading the Church, caring for the army in the bush, and now we are thinking a lot of things, such as the big problem of resettling our people, how to prevent HIV/Aids, which is killing our people, our young generation. We discuss many things about the country, the Church. We say, "Let us wake up, open the eyes of our people, find people to teach about peace and justice". People have confidence in the Church in Sudan, because we know it will help us. For the women, it is easy to go into the community and bring hope and care to the people.

Q. How can your friends in the US and UK join in the work of peace, justice and reconciliation in southern Sudan in meaningful ways?

A. My sister, Jackie, tell the people to pray for us every day. An essential need to carry on the work in this large country is transportation. We dream for every diocese to have a car to reach the people. Tell the people who can bring their gifts of teaching, healing, training, agriculture, and technology to come to Sudan. Now!

Q. Thank you for the gift of your time, for your serving spirit, for answering the call to be the Bishop's wife, now the Archbishop's wife. Do you have a message for the women of the ECS, since you are now the Honorable President of the Mothers Union?

A. You are highly welcome. I want to say to my sisters in Christ in Sudan, don't see me as your boss, but I am your servant. God bless you. 🌸



"MY PALACE IS A MUD HUT . . . MY CATHEDRAL IS THE HIGHEST TREE"

BY THE RT. REV. FRANCIS LOYO



Photo by Constance Wilson ©

The Diocese of Rokon, established in 1987, is located 54 miles west of Juba town. The village has a population of 9,000, based on figures of non-governmental organizations (NGO's). The first Bishop, Matthias Lemi Rianga, died in 1993, and at the House of Bishops meeting in Nairobi in 1995, I was elected Bishop. The diocese had not been operational because the late Bishop Matthias was confined in

Juba town due to restrictions of movement by the government of Sudan Islamic forces (GOS) and the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M).

I was consecrated and enthroned in February 1997 and embarked on revamping the diocese in Kera, a location with a large population of internally displaced people. With the end of the civil war, the headquarters has been established there. The diocese has fifteen parishes, spread throughout eight deaneries and four archdeacons. Most of the clergy do not have good theological training, only local training. The Mothers Union has been in the forefront in helping the young families.

In 1999, during the war, Tearfund, UK, and CORAT Africa (a Christian organization in Nairobi) led the diocese through a capacity-building process, and the diocesan vision statement stands today:

The community in the Diocese of Rokon knows Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. Each informed person lives a healthy, wholesome and prosperous life that glorifies God in an environment of love, justice, joy, peace, and unity.

The Mission Statement of the Diocese of Rokon is:

To glorify God through worship and proclamation of the Good News. The diocese is committed to building a strong united community that lives in peace and relates well with others. The diocese endeavors to enable the community to live wholesome and sustainable lives through fellowship, social services, and development activities based on biblical principles.

The diocese is guided by the systems and structures of the Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS). The Constitution for the diocese and plans for a cathedral have been developed, but because of the war, a cathedral is imaginary; we are still worshiping under a big tree as the symbol of our community in Rokon. We pray that the Good Lord will help us build a cathedral and other permanent church structures where we can worship Him.

There are systems in place for diocesan administrative functions to respond to the needs and to support the key functions essential to make the diocese operational. The Bishop is chief executive and has overall responsibility for pastoral, administrative, and development initiatives of the diocese. Other key functions included: Secretary, Treasurer, Mothers Union/Young Families Unit, Evangelism Unit, Evangelism, and Theological Education by Extension (TEE).

Today, the people are returning home to their villages to resettle. They are in need of social services, clean drinking water, basic education for children, reconstruction and rebuilding of structures, especially churches. The people suffered frequent attacks and looting by both the SPLA/M and GOS during the war, and the church lost properties, including documents, vestments, bibles, prayers books, and bicycles. Assistance from partners is urgent to develop the community and restore stability.

Rokon is an agricultural area, the main crops being sorghum, cassava, and groundnuts. The diocese has a tractor, but no skilled person to operate or maintain it.

Agricultural needs are: training in improved farming methods; encouraging collective farming; development of tools; promotion of short-period maturation seeds and drought-resistant seeds, such as cassava; promotion of agricultural extension services. With training, the

“MY PALACE IS A MUD HUT . . . MY CATHEDRAL IS THE HIGHEST TREE,” CON’T.

community can learn how to raise goats and sheep, and keep bees for honey production.

Fishing is a most important industry. When I was on a study sabbatical at St. John’s College, Durham, UK, in 2004-5, I visited the widow of a fisherman and told her about the methods of fishing in Rokon. As a result, an ecumenical group of women, and an organization called “Operation Sunshine” raised funds to purchase a boat. But, today, because of our lack of capacity to manage, and the need for a new engine and fishing nets, the project has stopped. The hope is that the women can operate a fishing business to support their families and provide nutrition for the community. Most of the women are returnees and we need to engage them fully. Today, the fish comes from Uganda, and is very expensive for the local people.

The diocese has one community health center in Kera, built with a grant from United Thank Offering (UTO) in 1999, and with support of medicines from the Salisbury-Sudan Medical Link, UK. Major diseases are malaria, river blindness, worms, polio, sleeping sickness, whooping cough, leprosy, meningitis, and a new disease, nodding head. A large number of people, including youth, are totally or partially blind. There is a lack of clean water, poor sanitation, inadequate food, spread of communicable diseases, and prevalence of tsetse fly. Urgent needs to respond to the health situation are: health education, and development of networks and collaboration with other organizations, which can provide preventive and curative health services.

Rokon is behind in education compared with other war-torn areas of south Sudan. There are seven basic schools, two of which are under the diocesan education program. One primary school is under construction with the support from the Edith Jackson Trust, based at the University of Durham, UK. The returning displaced children are in need of basic educational opportunities since a child has the right to education. The diocese seeks to: initiate adult literacy education; establish early childhood development programs; contribute towards human resource development of children’s education through teacher training and provision of materials and support for teacher incentives.

The signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement

(CPA) in 2005 provides an opportunity for the Church to restore hope to the people, offering spiritual growth and making a contribution to improving the standard of living for the long-suffering displaced people in southern Sudan. Some of the opportunities we envision for the diocese are: agriculture, education, health care, economic activities, and trade with neighboring dioceses. If these opportunities can be realized, the diocese will have contributed towards shifting the people’s mindset from dependency to productivity.

Implementation of a five-year strategic plan for the Diocese of Rokon will be crucial for development of our area of south Sudan. The expectation is that the diocese will build appropriate structures and develop programs through which the plan will be implemented.

It is important that the Diocese of Rokon seeks partnerships to carry out the responsibility for mission. Responsibility for mission belongs primarily to the diocese and local church in that place. And, each part of the worldwide Church also carries responsibility for mission in every other place.

The Diocese of Rokon is prepared and ready to share with companions on a personal and spiritual level within life situations of the partners. Face to face encounters are particularly important; sharing of bible study and theological reflections; intercessions and worship; exchange of information or strategies on issues of common concerns; and pastoral visits to demonstrate solidarity and strengthen each partner’s faith.

God has brought us all to this place in this time for His purpose. Come to Rokon, come to Kera, pray with us at the Cathedral Under the Highest Tree.

Bishop Francis Loyo serves as Secretary of the ECS Council and is Chairman of the Education Commission. He was guest speaker at the 4th Annual Conference of AFRECS in Chicago 2008. He can be reached at bployo@yahoo.co.uk

To learn more about a companion relationship, contact The Rt. Rev. Francis Gray, U.S. Representative/Commissary to the Province of the ECS, frankgray@comcast.net, or Carolyn Mackay, AFRECS Chair of CDR Task Force, mackcon2@aol.com



BISHOP DANIEL ZINDO REMEMBERED

ON THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS UNTIMELY DEATH

OCTOBER 20, 1998 - 2008



By Manasseh Zindo, Freelance Journalist & 5th Child of Bishop Daniel & Grace

It is exactly ten years ago today since our beloved father, Bishop Daniel Zindo, was tragically killed in a road accident in Nairobi, Kenya, as he traveled to Kampala, Uganda, en-route to South Sudan. I write from Eldoret, as part of my work as

a journalist and a Masters student in Peace Studies and International Relations, and I am obliged to post this memoir as the Episcopal Church of Sudan, the Diocese of Yambio, and the family of Bishop Zindo remember his death.

Bishop Zindo was on his way from attending the Lambeth Conference of 1998, when he died in Nairobi. His death came only eleven months after our mother, Grace Zindo, was tragically killed in Yambio, shot by our brother-in-law, who later took his own life. Alongside our mother, our adopted brother, Khalifa Musa, was also killed. As we remember today the passing on of these very important people in our lives, we want you to join in prayers.

Our mother remained with the suffering people of South Sudan, until she was killed in their midst. She never traveled out of Sudan for leisure, only visited Arua in northern Uganda once for treatment for a fall. We remember Bishop Daniel Zindo, Acting Archbishop of the ECS, and Bishop of Yambio, as a true soldier of God who offered his life to serving the people of God in Sudan and the world-wide Anglican Communion.

At the height of the civil war in Sudan in 1998, my late father and I, plus his entourage, on a visit to a Sudanese refugee camp in Central Africa Republic,

were arrested and held for fourteen days in what was seen as a conspiracy by forces against freedom of South Sudan to harass him. He remained unshaken. We were released when the SPLA threatened to storm the CAR, and we returned to South Sudan.

Ten years later, I remember my last conversation with him as if it were yesterday. His laughter lingers in my mind. A friendly man, he was, and one I was proud to have as my biological father, since he was also the spiritual father of Yambio Diocese, and the ECS.

The Diocese of Yambio gave him the highest honor and most decent burial in the history of Yambio and the entire ECS. He was buried inside the Cathedral of Yambio. He was laid to rest in our presence on October 26, with thousands of Christians, SPLA officials, and church leaders who filled every corner of All Saints Cathedral in attendance that day.

His death, shortly after our mother's, left us, twenty-one dependents, in darkness. But God came to our rescue and has seen us through. Today, five live in Australia, three have graduated with degrees, myself pursuing a Masters Degree. Two others are on their way to receiving degrees, and those who were small children in 1998 are now in high schools.

And, a total of six grandchildren have been born since Bishop Zindo's death, the youngest born October 12. We have remained thankful to God, and we thank Him for all that He has done for the Zindo family since our father's ascendance to glory in heaven. We have the faith that we will see them both again.

To my siblings, I say, we have lived a life of unity, respect, love and understanding. We should continue to support one another and show the love of God to others. To my friends around the world, I say "Thank you".

Bishop Daniel Zindo trained for the priesthood in Uganda and at Oak Hill College, London. He taught Theology at Bishop Gwynne College, where he was V. Principal (1982-1984). He was elected 2nd Bishop of Yambio and served 14 years (1984-1998). He was Dean of the Province of ECS (1988-1998), Chairman of NSCC (1994-1997), and Acting Archbishop at the time of his death. 🌸