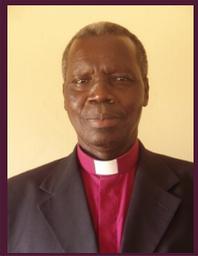


The Witness

The Newsletter of the Diocese of Yei



A word from the Bishop:

My last tour of the Diocese in 2008/09 has finally brought me into station. During the tour I met thousands of Christians and wherever we went we were welcomed with great enthusiasm. In every parish the elders would tell their story. And one of them challenged me.

He said that the church was poor because it could not give money and food to feed the needy and vulnerable. He also complained why Samaritan's Purse did build their own church. I did agree with him on the fact that the church was to help the needy and the vulnerable but refused to accept that it was poor. In trying to rein in this man, I told the huge congregation that the church was not poor.

The whole Diocesan land sits on very fertile alluvial soils. There are huge tropical forests and many open plains all over the Diocese which offer some of the best agricultural farm lands not found anywhere in Central Equatoria State. Huge forestry and mineral resources have been plundered by these foreign businessmen led by the 'big men' of Southern Sudan.

Today they vandalize our teak forests and thousands of mahogany trees that have been there for centuries, for valuable timber to be exported abroad with no return to the communities from these resources. This is criminal and dangerous to generations of our people yet to be born.

While our resources are being stolen by foreigners and the 'big men' of the Sudan, the communities of our people are spectators and raise no finger. We have not reached where people can mobilize these resources for their own development. The church continues to remain poor as long as the people do not have the skills to mobilize the resources necessary for wealth creation to be used for transforming their lives. At this stage of our development, people are unable to recognize why they remain poor. Other factors such as lack of widespread education, exploitation by the 'big men', corruption and bad governance are also involved.

Poor people generally have very little to give out for charity. They have very few possessions and little food. Hence they cannot give to the church. So the church remains as poor as they are.

The solution for this complex problem is to begin the diagnosis now. Our next stage of development in the Diocese of Yei is to begin tackling the root causes of poverty alongside the teaching of good stewardship and the spirit of hard work to our believers. Beginning the process of transforming the attitudes of our people for hard work, self reliance for poverty alleviation and increased prosperity could be some of the processes to undertake.

Hilary Luete Adeba, Bishop of Diocese of Yei

Review of Diocese of Yei

The Bishop asked an independent expert to carry out a review of the administrative and financial arrangements of the Diocese and to make some recommendations as to how things could be improved. The recommendations were presented to the Diocesan Standing Committee for endorsement. This has led to a new administrative structure approved based on the recommendations of the expert in the review. The Diocese of Yei will now have a functional administrative structure.

Florence Kebita, Bishop's Secretary

Immanuel Cathedral Vestry

In 2004, Immanuel Cathedral had a dream to build a vestry. The Bishop, seeing the lack of office space in the Cathedral thought it would be a good idea to have an office block for the Cathedral. In the same year a committee was set up to oversee the plans concerning the project and to find the resources necessary to do this. They began to mobilize for the fund mainly from the congregations of Immanuel Cathedral. This was a test for all worshippers belonging to the different congregations of the Cathedral, whether or not they would give for the office block to be built. After signing of the CPA, many people returned home from the neighboring countries. The economy of Immanuel Cathedral improved and the offertory and other forms of giving began to go up.



The building was completed early June 2009 and it was officially dedicated by the Bishop on the 14th June in the presence of a big congregation. Today we are blessed to have a meeting hall and several offices for the Dean, the curate, a library, a store and an extra room for the Bishop to robe in for service. It makes such a difference in our slow journey in improving the diocese of Yei. The role of the believers in supporting the church is crucial.

Rev. Richard Ali Sworo, Curate Immanuel Cathedral

The Bishop's Appeal Fund (BAF)

We launched our Bishop's Appeal Fund (BAF) on the 7th October 2008, targeting it at all our beloved in Christ, the Christians from Yei wherever they may be in this world. Our objective for the Appeal is to raise awareness among our people and our friends to the development issues of the Christian communities in Yei. The Appeal makes it possible for its target groups to have an understanding of the need to support the church and to treat it as their own institution, which provides spiritual guidance to them and also the badly needed services.

Chairman Building Committee

Tearfund funds for HIV and AIDS

This year 2009 Tearfund is giving funds to 9 Parishes of the Diocese of Yei for awareness seminars to train young people on basic facts on HIV/AIDS, stigma and reduction of people living with HIV/AIDS in the targeted Parishes. Despite the awareness on HIV and AIDS, the rate of infection is on the rise, according to the County AIDS Commission. He gave a figure of 8% prevalence rate and the anti retro-viral therapy (ART) centre of Yei is currently treating 571 clients. However, Martha PHCC is testing all ante-natal patients on HIV/Aids and finding the rate is only 2%.

Clement Ayuku, HIV/AIDS Coordinator

The ECS Guest house

The ECS Guest house has now put up its second self-contained block comprising four additional rooms. The main construction work has been completed and the only thing left now is to complete the other details and the building will be dedicated for use. This is yet another success story of the Guest house. The funds for this extension work were generated locally by the management of the Guest House through the provision of efficient services from their existing facilities. We are stepping up our modern services to meet the needs and demand of our esteemed guests. Apart from the physical development of our joint, we are specializing in providing delicious meals, ranging from local dishes and an assortment of classic and western dishes as well, served in our dining hall with clean, quiet and beautiful internal environment by ever smiling staff.

Jenny Siama, Manager ECS Guest House



Panyana Primary School

Over 400 children in Panyana will soon benefit from the construction of a permanent Primary School, to replace their buildings of wood and thatch. Pupils at the school said how happy they were that they will soon have proper classrooms so that their study will no longer be disrupted by rain.

The first turf was cut by Bishop Hilary on Sunday 21st June 2009 and a crowd gathered after the Sunday service to witness the occasion and to pray for the construction of the school, which is fully funded by the Basic Services Fund. As well as 8 classrooms, the school will have a large staff room, offices for the Principal and Deputy, a store, latrines and a borehole.



Bishop Hilary said, "I thank God for His provision of this school. My dream was that the Diocese would build a Primary School in each Archdeaconry. With the help of CMS Ireland, we have built in Yei and it was the top performing school in the State. Thanks to the Diocese of Connor, we have nearly finished the school at Mongo. Thanks to churches in Ireland, we have completed the first block at Payawa. And now, thanks to the Basic Services Fund, we will soon have a new school in Panyana."

The contract for the construction of Panyana Primary School was won by William Construction Co. Ltd and the target is to complete the school by mid-November 2009.

John Spens, CMS Ireland affiliate

College news

Already this year the Vocational Training College has welcomed nearly 150 students on its courses, which are proving more popular than ever. Now running a two semester year, the College is able to offer new 8-week short courses in various subjects during the period when the full time students are on holidays.

A big change is that at the end of May 2009, the Board appointed its first Principal, Canon John Kanyikwa. John is a well known figure both in the Diocese of Yei and beyond, having held various senior positions in his career. John will serve as Principal for the remainder of 2009 and 2010. We are delighted that he has accepted this new opportunity and challenge. The Board has also appointed Logulomo Morris, the previous Acting Coordinator, to be the Deputy Principal and College Bursar.

John Spens, CMS Ireland affiliate

Samaritan's Purse

We are delighted to announce that after further discussions with Samaritan's Purse they have agreed on building another three churches in the Diocese of Yei. This is bringing a total of 22 churches built by Samaritan's Purse.

Also Samaritan's Purse provided funding from their Benevolent Fund to support the staff of Martha Clinic, when they were working at the hospital while the hospital staff was on strike over a weekend.

Florence Kebita, Bishop's Secretary

The Mother's Union

The M.U. President, the leader and worker embarked on a tour of the whole Diocese. It took them 10 weeks to cover the entire Diocese.

The aim of the tour was to awaken the women in the Diocese to the realities of life. There is so much at stake for the MU to impart into hearts of hundreds of poor women who love Jesus. The Bishop's conceptual ideas of "tackling the root causes of poverty" in the Diocese is now the new focus for the Diocese of Yei.

Seminars, workshops and conferences are planned in our next development strategy. The Diocese of Yei is very wide, therefore reaching the women for training in this matter is made difficult due to lack of transport of their own.

In the picture MU members are discussing how to reduce poverty in the villages.

Mary Gboka Natalino, MU Worker



Standing Committee

The Bishop opened the Standing Committee meeting 17th-18th June 2009. He said the Diocese had started to tackle some of the most challenging issues. Progress has been made in the process of addressing the most complex and challenging headache, the land issue.

Florence Kebita, Bishop's Secretary

Prayers for Southern Sudan

On the 5th of July the Bishop requested the youth of the church to form small groups to pray on a weekly basis for the situation in Southern Sudan and the upcoming elections.

Poppy Spens, CMS Ireland affiliates

Water is Health

Basic Services Fund is providing a mobile clinic which will be going out to at least 5 villages every week. The mobile clinic will be operational from the end of September this year. Each village the mobile clinic is going to will have a borehole, latrines and if needed a new primary school.



The first 4 boreholes are drilled and will be operational by the middle of July. One currently broken borehole will be repaired. This provision of clean water will make a big difference to the health and wellbeing of hundreds of families in Yei Diocese.

Poppy Spens, CMS Ireland affiliate

Prayer list

Please pray with us for the following things:

- There is an eminent threat from the Government of Sudan against the implementation of the CPA and their desire for total collapse of peace in Southern Sudan.
- The Christians of the Diocese of Yei join hosts of prayer movers all over the world for CMS Ireland Mission Executive Director Ian Smith who is very sick.
- The Bishop of Yei and Christians hold in prayer, the Archbishop of ECS and the Bishops for unity, wisdom and sacrificial service to our nation.
- Pray that the mobile clinic will arrive safely, in order for us to start the medical outreach to the villages which are in need.
- Pray for the new YVTC principal, John Kanyikwa as he settles into his new role.
- Pray for the implantation of the school programme.

