

Voice of Hope

Newsletter of the Diocese of Kajo-Keji, South Sudan

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Psalm 77

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'Home' to many of Christians from Kajo-Keji

Word from Bishop Emmanuel

Rt. Rev'd Emmanuel Murye Modi

Owing to the most recent conflicts in Kajo-Keji County and the severe humanitarian and refugee crisis that have followed in January and February, at least 98% of the county's population, including many Christians of the Anglican faith under the Diocese of Kajo-Keji, have been forced to flee to and settle in refugee camps, mostly in the Moyo and Yumbe districts of Northern Uganda. There they suffer from severe lack of food, water, shelter, disease, post conflict trauma, tribal animosity, and many other issues.

Support

As the Episcopal Church of South Sudan and Sudan, and specifically the Diocese of Kajo-Keji, our biggest role and commitment is to stand with all our people and support them during such difficult times. We are tasked with the role of providing in the first place spiritual and psycho-social support, and secondly, material support where we can.

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In the past months, we as a church have tried to the best of our ability to offer as much spiritual support as possible to our people in the refugee camps, and also in the Internally Displaced People settlements within Kajo-Keji County.

According to the officials of Moyo district, over 100,000 refugees have been registered and settled under the UNHCR from the central equatorial region of South Sudan. Between January 25th and February 1st, Moyo district received an average of 4500 refugees from Kajo-Keji every day, an overwhelming number, even for the implementing humanitarian agencies such as the UNHCR and Lutheran World Federation (LWF).

A recent report from Mercy Corps also states that South Sudan now has the world's third largest refugee crisis after Syria and Afghanistan, and that while 2.1 million are displaced within the country, at least 3.6 million have fled their homes for refuge. The report also shows that 1 out of 3 South Sudanese have been displaced, and 6 out of 10 displaced South Sudanese are children. The most recent disaster now is the famine declared in the nation with 5.1 million South Sudanese in need of aid, and 4.8 million people facing severe hunger

Visits

Starting February 19th 2017, I, as newly consecrated and enthroned Bishop of Kajo-Keji, together with a team of clergy and staff from the diocese of Kajo-Keji, visited three large refugee camps in the districts of Moyo and Yumbe, where most of our people, including those from the dioceses of Morobo, Lainya and Yei are settled. Our main aim during this visit was most importantly to pray with and encourage our people in the camps, and also to do an assessment of the situation in order to effectively plan the means through which we can provide more support as a church.

I therefore hope that we are able to share our assessments and experiences from the refugee camps through this report, and invite you all to join us in supporting our dear people who are now settled there, going through extremely difficult situations every day. I urge the SPLA-IG and SPLA-IO to stop hostility and request them to resolve their problem in a peaceful means.



Bishop Emmanuel Murye Modi



Bishop Emmanuel Prays with the refugees



Evangelist Abiggo Manson leads the praising choir in the camps

A Diocese in Exile

Rev. Alex Aciga



The Clergy hold a meeting in the camp

After the Consecration and enthronement of the third Bishop of the Diocese of Kajo Keji, Rt. Rev. Emmanuel Murye Modi on 15th January 2017, five days later on the 20th consecutive killings started and within ten days Kajo-Keji was evacuated. With all its flock gone and after the looting of one of its institutions, i.e. the Kajo-Keji Ecumenical Training Programme (KaETP), we had to relocate our Diocesan office to Moyo.

The Moyo District Authorities and the Madi and West Nile Diocese of the Church of Uganda have welcomed the people of Kajo-Keji warmly.

We will continue with most of our programs in the refugee camps in Uganda and in the internally displaced camps in Logo, Keriwa, and Ajio in Liwolo County of Greater Kajo-Keji which is an In-Opposition (IO) controlled area.

Currently the following activities have been planned:

- Spiritual activities: evangelism and discipleship. This means starting congregations under trees. There is need for Bibles, Prayer books and Hymnals, both in English and Bari languages.
- The Radio ministry that supports evangelism and discipleship “*Reaching out to all*” is seeking airtime broadcast at *Voice of the Nile* if we could get funding for airtime.
- Education. Refugees and the internally displaced (IDPs) are encouraged to start self-help pre-school, primary and secondary classes for their children as the UN Agencies are taking too long to support in this area.

- Other development activities like vocational skills trainings, livelihood empowerments like community managed microfinance and Church and Community Mobilization Process (CCMP) that we were undertaking back home, should continue if the donors of these programs continue to support.
- The health department of the diocese is seeking permit from the Uganda authorities to run a mobile clinic in the camps.
- All other institutions like orphanage, Evangelistic Revival Movement, and others are struggling to get support to continue to serve their vulnerable people.
- Generally, there is hunger and lack of water in the camps. Here, we are praying for help from the UN Agencies.

Prayer Points:

- ❖ The suffering people in the camps. May God have mercy on them if they have wronged, that God should indemnify them.
- ❖ Protection of the administration of the diocese of Kajo-Keji under the leadership of Bishop Emmanuel. There is no financial support to sustain the administration since we lost the community church offertories.
- ❖ May God provide funding through partners (good Samaritans)
- ❖ The government soldiers to see humanity – to stop killing innocent civilians and to stop looting property of the people.
- ❖ Generally, pray for peace in South Sudan
- ❖ Blessings to Uganda for hosting the people of Kajo-Keji in particular and South Sudanese at large.

Retired pastor still serves God in the Camp at Bidi Bidi – World’s largest refugee camp.



A Lamentation of the Diocese of Kajo-Keji:

Psalm 77

I cried out to God for help;

I cried out to God to hear me.

When I was in distress, I sought the Lord;

*at night I stretched out untiring hands
and my soul refused to be comforted.*

I remember you, O God, and I groaned;

I mused and my spirit grew faint.

You kept my eyes from closing;

I was too troubled to speak.

I thought about the former days,

The years of long ago;

I remembered my songs in the night.

My heart mused and my spirit enquired:

“Will the Lord reject forever?

Will he never show his favour again?

Has his unfailing love vanished forever?

Has his promise failed for all time?

Has God forgotten to be merciful?

Has he in anger withheld his compassion?”

Then I thought, “To this I will appeal:

the years of the right hand of the Most High.”

I will remember the deeds of the Lord;

yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago.

I will meditate on all your works

and consider all your mighty deeds.

Your ways, Oh God, are holy.

What god is so great as our God?

You are the God who performs miracles;

you display your power among the peoples.

*With your mighty arms you redeemed your
people,*

the descendants of Jacob and Joseph.

The waters saw you, O God,

the waters saw you and writhed;

the very depths were convulsed.

The clouds poured down water,

the skies resounded with thunder;

your arrows flashed back and forth.

Your thunder was heard in the whirlwind,

Your lightning lit up the world;

The earth trembled and quaked.

Your path led through the sea,

your way through the mighty waters,

though your footprints were not seen.

You led your people like a flock

by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

Prayers for Peace in the Camp



Visits to the Refugee Settlements:

Maziina Fred



In March, Bishop Emmanuel in his pastoral visits to the refugees witnessed life and how the Church can encourage the refugees to give a message of hope to the displaced and grieved. We visited Morobi and Bidi Bidi which is the largest camp in the world according to reports by UNHCR. It is estimated to host over 290,000 South Sudanese excluding the non-registered refugees. Other camps include Belameling, Chinyidi, Pasu and Koguru.

We visited the Cathedral Dean, Canon Pianilee, in the camp to pray together and counsel him for the loss of his brother (Wojo) who was robbed and killed on the way from Kajo-Keji. Due to insecurity in Kajo-Keji, his body was buried in the camp. He is survived with a widow and 4 children. Please pray for them.

At Morobi, we visited a scene where a lady had jumped into a blazing fire and burnt to death, perhaps due to trauma, stress and depression.

We met some of the displaced and resettled pastors from all denominations now in the camps. Many of them are struggling to start-up churches. At the moment Christians are praying under the trees. Many families are separated from their loved ones.

By the time of our visits, many had not yet received tents and there are rampant sicknesses. There is no access to medicines and the schools are not enough. In one of the schools there were more than 400 children in a single class!

There was also little or no access to water (especially drinking water) and animals are dying from lack of water, People survive on 2 cups of beans and 4 cups of maize flour for a month... the list can continue.

We prayed together under the trees. Many don't have Bibles or hymn books, but still with faith many attended the prayers.



Most Children stay home, few schools



The Mothers Union is still strong! They do family visits and Christian counseling



... Arise, O Lord; O God, lift up your hand; forget not the afflicted... (Psalms 10:12-18)