



Jos Jottings, August 2024 – a “thank you” report to Synod!!

*“I thank my God every time I remember you, ... because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now.”
(Philippians 1:3-4)*

I am sure that, like me, you are a great fan of St Paul’s letter to the Philippians, the great “epistle of joy”. It starts with Paul giving thanks that this precious small “under pressure” 1st century community of followers of Jesus had overflowed with love through generous gospel sharing of the good news of Jesus in word and wallet. As indeed have you, as true companions of our faithful Anglican sisters and brothers in the Diocese of Jos in northeast Nigeria, through our Diocesan Missional Partnership supported by Anglican Aid.

For in this past financial year 202/24 alone, no less than \$112,975.33 has been donated and transferred to Jos Diocese to support our three Missional Partnership programmes!

- \$19,334 has gone to Emergency Relief support of the thousands of rural villagers displaced and left destitute, bereaved, traumatised and wounded by ongoing Islamic extremist attacks (with a further \$9,000 about to be transferred for the specific support of communities devastated in the Christmas 2023/New Year attacks);
- \$6,150 has gone to provide a year’s tuition, board and lodging scholarships for each of 10 trainee future church leaders from Jos Diocese and surrounding under-resourced Anglican dioceses (with further funds in hand to significantly expand this program in the coming year); and,
- \$87,391.33 has gone to help build the new Tambes/Pankshin campus of the Zambiri School, a special project of Bishop Ben and Mama Gloria to provide a new campus of family-style hostel care, protection, nurture and top-quality education for up to 400 orphans and disadvantaged youth (a major heart-wrenching by-product of the ethnic-cleansing violence being visited on predominantly Christian communities).

And via our partnership with Anglican Aid, the generosity of parishes and individuals in our Diocese has encouraged other Anglicans from all over Australia to join in our missional partnership with Jos Diocese: as Paul knew, “sharing in the gospel” isn’t just a good and joyful thing, it is infectious joy! So keep being infectiously joyful in word and wallet, as we stand with our sisters and brothers in the persecuted church!

The new Pankshin/Tambes campus of Zambiri School

As part of a 8-16 May liaison visit to Nigeria and Jos Diocese, I was able to see good progress being made towards the planned September 2024 opening of this new school and hostel campus, especially the student accommodation/classroom facilities and the water reservoir which are particular targets of Australian fund-raising. The new campus is designed in particular to enable teenagers who might otherwise be at risk in the Jos urban environs to thrive in a learning family-like community in a rural setting. The testimony of Yusuf Phebe (an August graduate of the Jos campus of Zambiri) highlights the life-changing value of this vision.



“I am Yusuf Phebe, born 10 September 2004, from Riyom LGA, Plateau State. I want to register my profound gratitude to God Almighty, my Creator. I remember vividly the attack on my village by the Fulani herdsmen in 2013. It seemed that all was lost with most of my family members being murdered and properties lost. For a week and a half were in hiding without food. This was a difficult time of suffering but I believe it was all part of God’s plan for me. My mother, being uneducated, remarried and didn’t see the need for us to be educated, and our step-father showed us no care. However, in such a moment like this God showed me favour by giving me a family in Zambiri. On 30 October 2019 I came to Zambiri and struggled to read and express myself. That I am graduating today is a miracle. I am today a graduate with a GCE Certificate. Zambiri has truly blessed my life from the very first day I was welcomed. It is flabbergasting that there is hope of a future for one such as me. Zambiri is a home and a family where I learned to do things decently and orderly, treating each other as brother and sister. Zambiri is a holy ground, providing a future for every child. I am grateful to be one of the first set to live in the hostel ...”

Emergency Relief: inasmuch as you did it to the least of my family, you did it to me (Mt.26:40)

Ethnic Fulani and Islamist terrorist attacks on rural communities in Plateau State and elsewhere in Nigeria are continuing. Until you as a comfortably affluent, safe and well Australian visit burned-out villages and buildings and sit with those made homeless, destitute and scarred by attacks in the night – as I did again in May – it is impossible to grasp the sheer depths of the inhumane violence being inflicted and suffered. Your ongoing generosity will continue to make a huge practical difference in binding up physical and mental wounds and rebuilding shattered families and communities, as our sisters and brothers marvel at the realisation they are not alone, even if deserted by their own government and security forces. The Open Doors 2024 World Watch List records the appalling fact that more Christians are killed for their faith in Nigeria each year than everywhere else in the world combined.

Pastoral and leadership training at the Christian Institute, Jos

I still cannot really believe that \$650 is enough to fund board, lodging and theological and community leadership formation for one student for a whole year at the Christian Institute, Jos (the only Anglican seminary located in and training specifically for ministry in northeast Nigeria). Talk about maximum gospel “bang for the buck”! My May visit enabled me to see the results of this – young catechists doing evangelism, church-planting, adult literacy and community transformation ministry in isolated disadvantaged rural communities and struggling township slums, often in the face of strong spiritual opposition. When leaders and governments fail, it is exactly this sort of full-bodied “sharing in the gospel” that gives hope, peace, health and the fruit of transformed lives to raise up entire communities and even the nation!

“Get with the program”! Join the parishes and many individuals already overflowing with joy and moved to share in the gospel in this way via our Missional Partnership!

“Joy for Jos” fund-raising concert 7.30-9.30pm, Saturday 14 September, Hughes Baptist Church



If you're in the Canberra region, don't miss the chance to join other friends of Jos for a “Joy for Jos” fund-raising concert sponsored by St George's Anglican Church Pearce (with venue support from Hughes Baptist Church) to help build the Tambes school for orphans and displaced children! Vocalist Rachel McNally and pianist Mike Dooley will launch their new gospel album, “Water of Life”, backed by top musicians, including Eric Ajaye on bass, Con Campbell on sax and Luke Glanville on drums. Followed by refreshments!

Venue: Hughes Baptist Church, 34 Groom Street, Hughes.

Cost: \$35 adults. \$25 concession. Family ticket \$80

Book through TryBooking www.trybooking.com/CTKHO

Any questions email: office@stgs.org.au Phone: 6286 6466

For prayer:

- Keep praying for persecuted Christian rural communities in Plateau State, and especially for the many women left widowed and children left orphaned and destitute by this violence.
- Pray for the resources to be raised up, and construction work to go ahead quickly, enabling the initial opening of the Tambes campus of the Zambiri School in September 2024, and its completion.
- Please also continue to pray for God to raise up quickly one who deeply shares his own Good Shepherd heart for the flock and for the lost as the new Anglican Bishop of Jos, succeeding Bishop Ben.

To make a tax-deductible donation to Diocesan partnership projects for training at the Christian Institute, or to support our persecuted fellow-Christians in Plateau State in Nigeria, or ministry to “at risk” children”, go to <https://anglicanaid.org.au/locations/Nigeria> , and select the project of your preference. To book a presentation on the situation in Nigeria and our partnership with Jos Diocese for your church, school or fellowship group, contact Rev Canon Patrick Cole on pandncole@bigpond.com .