



Jos Jottings, March 2025

***"He will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more."
(Revelation 21:4)***

The transforming beauty of our hope in Jesus

As we are in the final run-up to Easter, and to the opening of our national HOPE 25 outreach campaign, what an encouragement it is to look forward, with the Apostle John, to what Jesus says is our destiny as his children. When all too often in our world we experience grief, pain, sickness, material and emotional poverty, relational break-downs, ageing, and even death, Jesus's promise of what life with him forever will look like should bring tears of joy and longing to our eyes and hearts! Leading to us joining with the church down the centuries in crying out "Maranatha! Come, Lord Jesus!". Here in relatively materially-comfortable and secure Australia, we tend to fend off our individual aching needs for hope and healing by turning to the incredible social, economic and health-care blessings which we enjoy. So it is only at events such as funerals or serious illness or failures in life that the painful reality of our brokenness calls out for a hope and certainty we know our world cannot give. Perhaps that is one of the greatest blessings to us of our Diocesan Missional Partnership with Anglicans in Jos Diocese, northeast Nigeria. Their poverty and daily exposure to ill-health, colossal social injustice, and even deadly persecution reminds us just how precious that promise of Jesus is, not just to them, but to us also.

Your emergency relief contributions at work ...



Thank you so much for your generous support of emergency relief for victims of extremist violence against peaceful Christian rural communities in the Diocese of Jos, whether specifically under the Missional Partnership, or as part of the special Anglican Aid appeal on behalf of persecuted churches! Jos Diocese has sent us a harrowing report from the first responders and subsequent assistance visitors to those villages northwest and southwest of Jos which were attacked just before Christmas 2024 (as I reported earlier), and others attacked southeast of Jos in Mangu Local Government Area in February 2025 (photo of homes burned in one of these villages, on the left).

Archdeacon Anukam writes that, with your assistance, the Anglican Diocese of Jos has been providing urgent relief supplies, counselling, pastoral care, and advocacy support, while visiting refugee camps and make-shift homes put up by internally displaced persons. The Diocesan mission and relief team has provided and distributed relief materials such as food, medicine, clothes, blankets, and mosquito-treated nets, while also assisting with the re-building of communities and re-settlement of affected people. He adds, "May God remember your sacrificial love for people



you do not even know and may He send you help in your time of need." In communities where burying their dead (above) comes at the same time as celebration of Christmas, your generosity to destitute displaced families (photo at left) is deeply appreciated.



Meanwhile, once again, Islamic extremists in neighbouring Kaduna State, have continued targeted killings of Christian leaders. In Kafanchan Diocese, southwest of Jos, 45 year old much-loved Catholic parish priest Sylvester Okechukwu of Tachira parish was kidnapped and killed on 4 March, allegedly by Fulani tribesmen.

Zambiri School and the new Tambes campus



Meanwhile, ad hoc reporting tells us that good progress is being made at both the Zambiri School campus in Jos, and the new campus at Tambes. At the latter “new school” location, bulldozers are forming the access roads through the campus area, preparing building sites, and levelling the areas which will be used for farming so that the school is self-sustaining (photo at left). Mud-brick making has resumed, with a view to completing the perimeter wall and starting construction of the hostel and classroom blocks (delayed until on-site security against vandalism can be guaranteed with an on-site permanent residential presence). The strength

and ease of construction afforded by use of these specially shaped and produced-on-site mud-bricks has been well and truly demonstrated in the completion of the outer and walls of the Tambes main residential block, as seen in last month’s *Jos Jottings*. Back at the Zambiri School home campus in Jos City, other donors are assisting with the refurbishment of school facilities, and the commencement of work on a formal St Athanasius chapel building to supplement the all-purpose meeting, teaching and examinations hall currently used (see photo, Bishop Kwashi laying the foundation stone). It is clear that the needs are such that the work of attending to, protecting, raising, and educating orphans and disadvantaged children in Jos City will continue alongside the opening of the new Tambes campus.



Christian Institute, Jos: adjusting to change, training for challenging mission ...

As the students at the Christian Institute come towards the end of their academic year, please pray for them to finish their year of study and of pastoral formation well. We look forward to receiving incoming Registrar Rev Timothy Gora’s report on their progress and academic and personal growth over the past academic year in the next few months, along with the usual encouraging stories and prayer requests. Please pray also for the opportunity over coming months for Anglican Aid, myself and the new leadership at the Christian Institute to engage on possible expansion of our assistance program to the Christian Institute, enabling the folk in Jos to raise up many more effective gospel workers who are community leaders in the many disadvantaged rural communities scattered throughout Plateau State, and more broadly.

For prayer:

- Thank God for Jos Diocese’s effective use of Australian emergency relief aid in a time of great need, when Christian rural communities have been feeling isolated and unsupported by their own government.
- Keep praying for God’s continuing protection of these impoverished Christian rural communities in Plateau and Kaduna states particularly, most of all for the Nigerian Federal and State governments to develop workable plans for restoration and resettlement of displaced communities and for the prevention of “ethnic cleansing” attacks, targeted kidnappings, and the breakdown of law and order.
- Pray that the local security situation and funds availability will enable construction work and production of the necessary mud-bricks to go ahead quickly at the Tambes campus of the Zambiri School, so that the student hostel buildings, the perimeter security wall, and water supply are finished soon.
- Keep praying for the appointment of the right person as Rector to lead the work of the Christian Institute, that our bursary students finish the academic year well, and that we are able to expand the program wisely.

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 through the Tambes campus of the Zambiri School, 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 .