



Jos Jottings, September 2023

“But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness”

At his valedictory service at St Luke’s Cathedral, Jos, on Saturday 23 September (the day before laying up his diocesan staff at a diocesan farewell Eucharist Service on Sunday 24 September), Archbishop Ben appropriately chose to speak from Matthew 5:33, the text for his consecration service sermon in Jos some 31 years ago:

“But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness...”

What a great word of encouragement we have there direct from our loving Lord! A word that gives us peace in the midst of all our worries and strivings, that calls us to choose to trust Jesus’s loving

provision, rather than striving anxiously like the rest of the world in our own strength after the material things he knows we need.

Archbishop Ben and many other dignitaries attending the services gave moving testimony to Jesus’s faithfulness in meeting needs over the last 31 years of ministry by Ben and Gloria in Jos, as they personally showed how to strive first for God’s kingdom and his righteousness.

Anglican leaders from around the world (including our own Bishop Mark) sent messages of congratulations and good wishes to Archbishop Ben and Mama Gloria for their next season in ministry. A good number of bishops (including of the 21 bishops originally ordained by Ben as priests to serve in Jos) shared in the celebrations, and in a special commissioning of Ben and Gloria for the new work at the Pankshin/Tambes School outreach to orphans and disadvantaged children.

Thank you for your generosity!

As Ben and Gloria travel for the next few weeks to speaking engagements in the UK and to the Holy Land, progress on their retirement home and on the Pankshin/Tambes school is proceeding well. In coming days, over \$50,000 from your generous giving is due to be

transferred to the school building account. I have seen photos of plenty of wet and drying cement as Ben and Gloria’s vision for their continuing fruitful ministry into the lives of many comes into being! A reminder that you can see and hear Ben and Gloria’s vision for this work on YouTube at

https://youtu.be/m_Df7ysgvGg .





In the final days of Ben's episcopacy, the Diocese of Jos also formally adopted a new Charter for the Christian Institute, Jos (one of the projects under our Diocesan Partnership), providing ongoing continuity for the Institute, and allowing Ben to re-appoint the Ven Godwin Makabi as Dean and Rector for a new 5-year term. Again, you can hear more of Godwin's vision for the Institute in preparing resilient shepherd leaders willing to serve persecuted communities in my interview with him, available via YouTube at <https://youtu.be/Gak2fMGUMRA>

Ven Godwin Makabi and his wife, with Archbishop Ben

Ongoing attacks on Christian villagers

Regrettably, Fulani and Islamic targeted terror attacks on local-level Christian leaders and rural communities in Plateau State (as well as neighbouring Kaduna State) continued through August. The need for grass-roots emergency support through that element of our Diocesan partnership continues!

- On 10 September, according to local reports published by Morning Star News, armed Fulani herdsmen and other terrorists attacked the predominantly Christian Kulben village in Mangu Local Government Area (south of Jos, in Plateau State) killing 10 villagers and injuring one (following on from earlier attacks in Mangu LGA in July and August);
- Meanwhile, in neighbouring Kaduna State, Morning Star News published local reports of armed Fulani attacks on Christians: on 15 September on Dogon Noma village, Kajuru county, south of the state capital Kaduna (15 killed; 32 kidnapped); on 26-27 September on Angwan Magaji and Kigam villages in Kauru county, just east of Kajuru county; and on Takkanai village in Zangon Kataf county, near Zonkwa in southern Kaduna State, due west of Jos (15 killed, 8 wounded).

Ironically, the Kaduna State attacks immediately followed formal 12 September Christian Association of Nigeria representations to the Kaduna State Police Commissioner Musa Garba, seeking more active security force protection for Christian communities from fierce persecution.

For prayer:

- Pray for refreshment and safety for Archbishop Ben and Mama Gloria Kwashi as travel after retirement and prepare for moving to take up their Pankshin/Tambes ministry to disadvantaged and orphaned kids.
- Pray for wisdom for Vicar-General Ven. Justice Okoronkwo and Jos Diocese leadership as they navigate the ongoing challenges facing the Anglican Church in Jos and Plateau State ahead of appointment and consecration of a new Bishop in late 2023/early 2024.
- Keep praying fervently for protection and provision of needs for the thousands of Christians in rural communities either fearing, or living in trauma after, violent ethnic cleansing attacks by Fulani and other militants, in both Plateau and Kaduna States.
- Keep praying for Plateau State Governor Caleb Mutfwang and others in leadership to be strengthened in their efforts to bring peace, safety and effective security force protection to the ordinary people of Nigeria.
- Pray for ongoing effective Jos Diocese work in emergency relief, in raising up new pastors to serve despite persecution and suffering, and in caring for orphaned and at-risk children.
- Praise God for the continuing generosity of Australian donors to the Diocesan mission partnership, and pray for a continuing growth in generosity and our support base.

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> . 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 .