



Province of the Episcopal Church of the Sudan  
Office of the Archbishop

# PASTORAL LETTER

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Episcopal Church of the Sudan**

**Easter 2011**

*Theme: Jesus died and rose again to reconcile us to God*

Ezekiel 37:1-14

Psalm 114

Romans 6: 3-11

Mathew 28:1-10

I greet you all in the name of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and especially greet all ECS members across the whole Sudan.

Halleluiah, Jesus Christ is risen from the dead, Halleluiah!

A very happy Easter to you all.

Judas Iscariot was one of the twelve disciples, he was minister for finance, he disagreed with Jesus and he went to the Chief priest and he asked what will you give me if I handed over Jesus to you?

The deal was done, thirty pounds was given and one of the evening, while Jesus was having the last supper with his disciples, he told them one of you is going to betray me." The disciples were surprised and everyone began to say is it me my Lord! But the Lord said the one who always dipped his hands into the bowl with me will betray me.

Judas said, "Is it me?" Pretending, but Jesus told him you are the one. I want you to listen to what Jesus said "Woe to that man who will betray the Son of man! It would be better for if he had not been born" this is a very strong curse. This statement was said before Judas took action, but he did not listen because the Devil controlled his heart. We need to be careful here if you are controlled by the devil, he does not give you time to listen, he closes your mind and locks up the store of your wisdom and you only become the instrument of the Devil.

After supper Judas slipped away from them, the Devil made him to rebel against Jesus the savior for mankind.

While in the garden of Gethsemane he went to pray, together with Peter and the sons of Zebedee. Prayer is very important to any believer. If the Lord can pray, what about you? Prayers gives you strength, prayer is the weapon to fight evil.

When Jesus was facing the bitterness of death, he prayed deeply. Some of us in positions of responsibility do not want to pray.

Jesus returned to his disciples and he found them sleeping. Jesus told Peter watch and pray, so that you do not fall into temptation the spirit is willing but the body is weak.

The Journey of the Israelites back to their land, Egypt changed their mind and pursued them.

The Northern Sudanese accepted the CPA and the result of the Referendum. To allow the south to go. But they changed their minds and they are now rearming some southerners to kill themselves.

Now Southerners are dying in Abyei, Malakal, and at the hands of the LRA in Western Equatoria. Because of that we have become afraid and terrified. They said to Moses "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us out of Egypt?

Didn't we say to you in Egypt leave us alone, let us serve the Egyptians? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than die in the desert!

When you are afraid and terrified you don't see the future. For the foundation of a new nation there is price to be paid for the new nation.

Those who refuse to leave Egypt formed opposition against Moses because they don't see themselves as a part of the new nation, the same thing today to some southerners who are doubting the new nation.

We need to be patient and work to mobilize them to see the future and the new nation. It is not every body who has a vision for the future. It is our work to let them see that God is gathering us from other countries and bringing us to our land, and he will clean us from our idols and he will give us a new heart, new spirit. And he will also remove the stone heart and give us a flesh heart which listens, loves and respects.

Christianity has civilized us, it has brought us out of the isolation from narrow circle of tribalism, clan and into the vast circle of the Christian community.

Why did Judas betray Jesus? Judas expected Jesus to start a political rebellion and to overthrow the empire of Rome.

Because we are united with Christ in his death our evil desires and bondage to sin died with Christ. Now united by faith with Christ in his resurrection life. Eph. 4:21-24; Col 3:3-15

When we decide to accept Christ's gift of salvation. It is both a one time decision as well as a daily conscious commitment. We are not tribe driven by desire, we must put on the new nature of nationhood in the new direction and have the new way.

The angel who announced the good news of the resurrection to the women gave them four messages:

1. Don't be afraid, the resurrection brings joy.
2. He is not here, Jesus is not dead, he is alive.
3. Come and see the tomb is empty.

4. Go quickly and tell them, they were spread the joy of the resurrection, we too are to spread the great news about Jesus' resurrection.

As Southerners we are to remember that this Easter is the last Easter before we become the republic of South Sudan in two months time. The day of the new nation, to be born and we should not forget the rebellion wish was being lead by Judas Iscariot.

We should not forget the rebellion of Dothan and Abram against Moses in the wilderness. They refused to go to the Promised Land, some of our politicians are refusing to go for the independence of the south Sudan. (Num. 16:1-48) please go and read the whole Chapter. Judas paid the price of the rebellion Dothan and Abram paid the price of the rebellion.

There are many reasons why it is important to fear God. One reason is that by fearing God we obey him, we then learn how to live the right way. You acquire wisdom. You cannot create a new country if your head is an empty vessel. To create a new country, you are to fear God because the fear of God is the foundation of wisdom.

Fearing God also means to know how to obey him and we do this through a personal relationship with God. You must have a personal relationship with God. Through this, you will have the ability to make wise decisions. And when you have a personal relationship with someone, you grow to love them. The Bible says, 'be devoted to each other like a loving family, excel showing respect for one another.'

Let us begin today, not tomorrow, treating each other with dignity and honour, careful speech, wise and loving words. Out of the seed of peace grows the development of the nation.

If we are hoping for a new country we are to have the fear of God within us. We are to think of the new way of looking at ourselves and understanding one another. Let me remind you, out of the seed of peace grows the development of the nation. All the developed countries in the world now have avoided wars, especially civil wars and fighting amongst themselves but we have been fighting each other and fighting development.

Love for God and the love for evil cannot co-exist, cannot live together. The fear of God rejects all evil activities within us and all who fear the lord will hate evil. Therefore they will hate pride and arrogance, corruption, perverse speech and anger. These things come from fighting as we have experienced.

The new land, new country should be led by transformed leaders who fear God. This means from the 9th of July 2011, let the corruption die with tribalism and nepotism. It is time to turn the hatred into love and forgive and reconcile each other. There was a song which said, no for unity. Let that man be informed to revise that song to say, 'yes for unity of southerners.' We are to forgive each other before we go to the new land.

We have been kept under a law of division for 55 years; Southern time has come to show leadership in the region. Let us surprise people and let them learn from us. Let us change our language and our behaviour. It is time to transform the community. Let us change our hearts and heal the wounds of the weak

My dear citizens of the new South Sudan, we are all sinners, we should not pretend to be angels otherwise we will not move ahead.

What does this mean for us in Juba?

It means the same for us here. Let us be careful when Deng and Lado are quarrelling. It should not be normal for Dinka and Bari to quarrel with one another. Let us begin today to separate personal interest from the common interest. The fear of God takes away favouritism and with the fear of God you are always sincere.

Many of our problems come because we base our choices on our selfishness. We love good things for ourselves and for our tribesmen but if we think that way we lose nationhood and our national identity.

What will be the result?

Our friends in the international community were afraid that South Sudan will be a failed state because of our attitude to each other but I want us to challenge this idea and to challenge ourselves now. The blessings come from obeying the truth and fearing God. The new land and the new country should be led by transformed leaders, not just the politicians. Although as elected representatives we look to them specifically for leadership.

If there are any politicians or government officials present this morning are you ready to work hard to give basic services to the people especially those who are coming from the north and the refugee camps from the nearby countries? Many of the problems come because of our mishandling of public jobs. Are you ready to do your jobs? If not, we are warned about the fate of bad leaders.

In the Book of St Luke 17 verse 2 it says it will be very bad for a person if he makes one of these weak people sin. It would be better for him to have a millstone tied around his neck and for him to be drowned in the sea. If you are not ready to accept this as a warning, you should not be a leader in a country founded on God like ours will be.

Things need to change. We are equal citizens. I am asking our government especially the Central Equatorial Government to provide land to all the citizens who are working in Juba. We need to prepare ourselves, our homes and our land for the change of the nation.

We are on the bank of the River Jordan. We need to be together to cross it. The enemies of peace are still in the river. Never try alone. And when we have crossed it, it will take time to resettle ourselves.

This is the beginning of nationhood and nationalism. Let us keep to the spirit of voting. It is time to work out our unity. Let us tell our brothers in the North and the rest of the world that we are not tribalistic communities. We are a united nation.

Let us unite and forgive each other and let us go to the new promised land clean and transformed. Let us not look at our civil servants based on their tribe but on the ability of the person. That will allow the country to develop quickly. It is time to forgive each other about what happened in the past and start the new country with a change of heart.

The conduct of respect, honour and dignity we have shown to the world during voting should be maintained. Let us continue with that attitude to the new land and the new country.

Let us not leave the job half completed. Let us run the race and honour the God who loves us by fearing him.

Jesus comes to relieve us from our grievenesses. His resurrection is to give us the salvation.

Alleluia. Alleluia.

Happy Easter – Christ is risen indeed he has risen!