



## Chester Diocese DR Congo Link update

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Chester Diocese is linked to the Anglican Dioceses of Aru and Boga in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Here is the latest news from Aru the northern of the two diocese we are linked to in DR Congo.

We give thanks to God for His many blessings upon Aru Diocese. Our vision is 'Abundant life in Christ for all' and our activities seek to make this vision a reality across the Diocese. Pray that this may become a reality for more and more people throughout our Diocese.

### **Mothers' Union and the Development Office :**

Under the leadership of Mrs Grace Maneka, MU is planning visits to 4 different Archdeaconries between now and July for seminars for MU leaders and members, which will include teaching as well as evangelistic outreach at local markets. Alongside MU's work strengthening family life and marriages, they have an extensive adult literacy programme (open to women and men) as well as savings groups, which are spread across the whole diocese and supported by Five Talents and MU UK. The Development Office continues to deliver a wide range of programmes, including tackling gender-based violence, community and family transformation through a variety of development initiatives, environmental protection plans and peace and justice initiatives.

### **Higher Education**

There is a large cohort of theology students studying at our Salama University here in Aru, a number of whom have come from other dioceses. Since February, two of these students - from Kamango Diocese and Boga Diocese - have lost family members as a result of the ongoing atrocities being committed by ADF/Nalu in Ituri and North Kivu Provinces. Students are working hard academically and also in their placement churches. At our medical college, ISTM, we have almost 500 students this academic year who are studying a range of courses, including general nursing, midwifery, laboratory techniques and others. Many of the students are actively engaged in the life of the church through various choirs.

### **Schools**

Aru Diocese runs primary and secondary schools in many of its parishes. Each school has a chaplain (who is also a teacher) to support the pastoral needs of both staff and pupils and to encourage them in their Christian faith and discipleship. Each school holds a weekly worship service. Pressure is mounting for students in 6th year primary and secondary who are preparing for national exams in May and June.

### **Evangelism and Christian Education**

After the constraints of the Covid pandemic, in September 2021 we launched an intentional evangelistic initiative whereby we encourage every Christian to reach out to friends and neighbours with the good news of Jesus Christ; our hope and prayer was that every Christian in the Diocese would bring at least one person to faith in Christ. We trained our Christians to share the Gospel one-to-one with friends, neighbours and family; in addition various departments such as youth and MU regularly organise their own outreach activities. This focus on evangelism continues. In God's grace we have seen many coming to faith or renewing their faith in Christ, and joining our church. The Christian Education team is gradually introducing the Rooted in Jesus discipleship course in the relevant local languages across the Diocese. In April Rooted in Jesus was launched with a training and envisioning conference in Mahagi for three Archdeaconries though sadly participants from Kpandroma Archdeaconry were unable to attend due to insecurity in their area.

### **Pentecost Sunday**

We will celebrate Pentecost with a service of ordination of deacons and priests in All Saints Cathedral in Aru. Please pray for God's anointing on the ministries of all those being ordained.



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### News from the Province

In late April theological educators are gathering in Aru from across the Province, together with two partners from Australia, for a 6 day conference to evaluate our theological education programmes and work together to produce a common programme for our Bible Schools and theology faculties.

On 8 May 2022 the new Diocese of Kalima, ceded from Kindu Diocese will be inaugurated and its first bishop Rev Kangamina Sadiki will be consecrated and enthroned. The Christians have worked hard over many years to prepare for this exciting new chapter in the life of the church in that region.

### Parts of the Province of Congo are suffering greatly:

- in early February the majority of Christians from Kamango Diocese fled into exile in neighbouring Uganda, following violent attacks perpetrated by the ADF;
- elsewhere in the Dioceses of Beni, North Kivu, Boga and the southernmost part of Aru armed groups associated with various rebel groups continue to attack innocent communities, causing massive population displacement, trauma, loss of life and property;
- in the Diocese of the Two Kasais there is a huge problem of malnutrition amongst children under 5 and hunger
- in Kinshasa Diocese flooding has impacted many households, including some in Anglican parishes

We are seeking funding through some of our International Partners to respond with compassion and practical help to these suffering people across our Province.

### Prayer and praise:

Give thanks for all those who have come to faith in Christ, or renewed their faith and pray for fruitful ongoing evangelistic outreach across the Diocese, through one-to-one conversations and events, and discipleship training through Rooted in Jesus groups.

Give thanks for the work of the Mothers' Union, strengthening family life and providing opportunities for personal transformation through literacy classes and savings groups and for the impact of the Development Office, promoting change and development in the lives of individuals, churches and communities

Pray for students in schools, college and University: for good learning and growing faith in Jesus amongst students and staff

Pray God's blessing and anointing on the ministries of those being ordained deacon and priest at Pentecost

Pray for new creative initiatives to build peace and reconciliation throughout eastern Congo, and for an end to the trauma and violence inflicted on so many innocent people. Pray too for the provision of resources to enable the Church to provide practical assistance to those in need.

Give thanks for the creation of the new Diocese of Kalima out of the Diocese of Kindu, and pray for God's anointing on Bishop-elect Sadiki and his new leadership team

Give thanks for the consultation on theological education and pray for the development of programmes that will provide an excellent training to future clergy and lay workers

Pray for Archbishop Ande as he works to lead the Province and realise his vision for the Province; pray also for God's hand upon all his travels and interactions with church leaders and Christians throughout DRC and internationally in the coming months.

With warm greetings during this Eastertide.

Judy PP Archbishop Ande