



Christmas Message 2023

To: All brothers and sisters, sons and daughters

Re: Christmas is the Hope of every believer

“The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned” (Isaiah 9:2)

This year Christmas in our country, Sudan is very different because of the war situation since 15 April. People live in a very different life particularly people from Khartoum, Darfur, El Obeid and Kadugli. In addition, people in the more stable states are also affected as they live a very different life due to the flooding of people to their states, cities and their houses. Many people lost their lives and no one burring them, while many got injured and still many got missing. People live in fear because of bullets, hunger and health reasons. People lost their properties while they live as displaced in their homeland and still others as refugees in foreign countries. People's lives are like living in darkness and they see no future. I salute the Bishops who are with their people in the Dioceses of El Obeid, Kadugli, Port Sudan, Wad Medani and particularly the Clergy in the Diocese of Khartoum. I thank God for each of them, for their faith and courage at this difficult time.

Prophet Isaiah in the Old Testament, people experienced the same situation as we today, but he gives a message of hope and courage. In the darkness, the light has shown. “The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire”.

(Isa. 9:1-2; 4-9)

He speaks about a son who is a King and who comes with great power whose government will last forever and he will rule with justice, righteousness, and people will live in peace.



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“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace”. (Isa. 9:6)

Mathew quotes Isaiah when he said:

The people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death, a light has dawned." **Matthew 4:16**

As the Bishop of the Diocese of Khartoum and Archbishop of the Episcopal Church of Sudan, this year I celebrate Christmas outside Khartoum and All Saints Cathedral because the Cathedral was occupied since April. People of the Church of Savior Omdurman are not celebrating Christmas in their Church because it was bombed to ashes on 1 November! Many people could not celebrate Christmas in their Churches and their houses and cities because of the war.

Thanks and Gratitude:

Despite of the instability, we thank God for His faithfulness, believing that he will intervene at his own time. We wish to express our thanks and gratitude to our friends and partners abroad and within Sudan for standing in solidarity, support, encouragement and prayer for the Sudanese people in general and Christians in particular.

Appeal to the Country Leaders:

On this great occasion on which we celebrate the birth of the Prince of Peace and at which angels from heave sang: “Glory to highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased.” (LK 2:14)

I appeal to the two warring parties, Sudanese Army and Rapid Support Forces and their supporters on this especial occasion to consider putting the guns beyond use and silence them for peace as a matter of urgency. Continuing using guns, there will be no people left to rule over nor will



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there be a country called Sudan to live in. Enough is enough to the suffering of innocent people. Enough is enough to death.

As we celebrate Christmas at this exceptional time some with no food leave alone clothing for the children, let us not lose faith in God. Let us call and lean on the Prince of Peace, who will rule with Justice and Righteousness.

Let us have faith in the Prince of Peace and call for the restoration of peace to our beloved country, Sudan. May the Leaders of our country see the suffering of the people and stop this war, which entered its ninth month.

I wish you a very Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year 2024

***The Most Revd. Ezekiel Kondo
Archbishop & Bishop of Khartoum
December 2023***