

**NEWS FROM KAJO KEJI** BY RANDALL FEGLEY rafegley@yahoo.com

## Reconstructing a devastated area

In January 2005 the government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) ending decades of armed conflict in southern Sudan. This landmark event was a signal to the international aid community to go beyond merely helping the southern Sudan survive and begin the process of reconstructing a huge, devastated area.

In this process a key role is being played by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) which is charged with not only assisting returning refugees but also with coordinating the rehabilitation of the areas they are returning to. This has meant changes for both the Diocese of

Kajo Keji and our relationship with them.

In January 2006 I visited Kajo Keji to access these new developments and strengthen communications and accountability processes between their diocese and ours.

At that time, a new policy regarding schools had just been formulated. During the war, the church had been asked by the SPLM to take over primary schools.

With peace, education policy once again returned to the government. Partnering with the UNHCR, the local authorities redistributed control of the education system.

Many schools were assigned to Jesuit Refugee Services for rebuilding. But recognizing the role of the Episcopal Church, Kajo Keji's government assigned the Diocese



*The people of Sodogo welcomed our team with enthusiastic song and dance.*

of Kajo Keji seven schools, one in each of Kajo Keji's archdeaconries. In the past, the Diocese of Bethlehem supported 28 primary schools as well as a half dozen other educational institutions. At the war's end, there were 40 primary schools, four secondary schools, and a dozen nursery schools.

Our program has necessarily had to change. Instead of one donor helping one school, we have reassigned those adopted schools to one of the seven to ensure that they flourish and not merely survive.

In January 2007 Archdeacon Howard Stringfellow, Charles Barebo, Jo Trepagnier and I traveled to Kajo Keji and were able to assess the results of the previous January's work. All seven schools had received significant resources from our donors and accountability had been without flaw. As Kajo Keji had added an eighth archdeaconry, an eighth school is to be added shortly.

We continued to work away at the prob-

lems of communication between our dioceses; between Kajo Keji's education office and the schools; and between the schools and their donors.

In a visit to the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, the local agency that coordinates all other agencies, we learned that the number of primary schools had increased to 70, and 14 or 15 junior or senior secondary schools which were functioning at some level. Problems of transportation, water, sanitation, insects and limited supplies dogged virtually every school. But the mood was noticeably optimistic.

Next month I will provide details and photos of our visits to specific schools. *Professor of history and political science at Penn State's Berks Campus and a member of our World Mission committee, Dr. Randall Fegley is one of four diocesan representatives who visited Kajo Keji in January. He has been a leader in our diocesan initiative with the people of our partnership diocese in the Episcopal Church of the Sudan.*



*Preparing for a community meeting under the mango trees of Lu'bale.*

**LIVING A BAPTIZED LIFE: THREE QUESTIONS/FIVE PROMISES** BY ANNE KITCH (PART 2 OF 6)

# Learning, fellowship, breaking of bread, prayers



***The Baptismal Covenant consists of two sections. The first is a recitation of the Apostles' Creed, put into question and answer form. The second part consists of five promises intended to help us live a Christian life.***

In the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, after the creed was recited, the candidates were asked, "Wilt thou then obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of thy life?" This same question is found in the baptismal service of the 1928 Book of Common Prayer. In our 1979 Book of Common Prayer, the five questions/promises which conclude our Baptismal Covenant replace this one question. These five lay out for us what it means to live a faithful life. Exploring each one can give us plenty of food for thought as we strive daily to live a good life.

*Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers? I will, with God's help.*

This first question begins to outline for us the specific actions that we are called to take as we live out our faith. This first promise is about our spiritual nurture. If we are to live a life of faith, we need to feed our souls and minds as well as our bodies. This promise outlines four ways to do this: learning, fellowship, breaking bread and prayer. This description of a life in faith comes straight from scripture.

On the day of Pentecost, 50 days after the resurrection of Jesus, the Christ, Peter preaches a powerful sermon to the gathered crowd. Many were moved by his words and were baptized, after which "they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42). Their immediate

response to baptism is to learn more. Those people in first century Jerusalem could easily devote themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship because they knew the apostles. They learned about Jesus from the people who knew him, from Mary his mother and Peter and all the other women and men who had been his disciples. They spent time with the apostles, shared meals with them and prayed with them.

So how do we live this out in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? Where do we find the apostles' teaching now? How do we share fellowship with them? When and where can we break bread and pray? One place to find all four of these is during worship on Sunday morning. We hear the apostles' teaching in the scriptures that are read. We share in fellowship with our faith community. We break bread together when we celebrate the Eucharist and we certainly pray together.

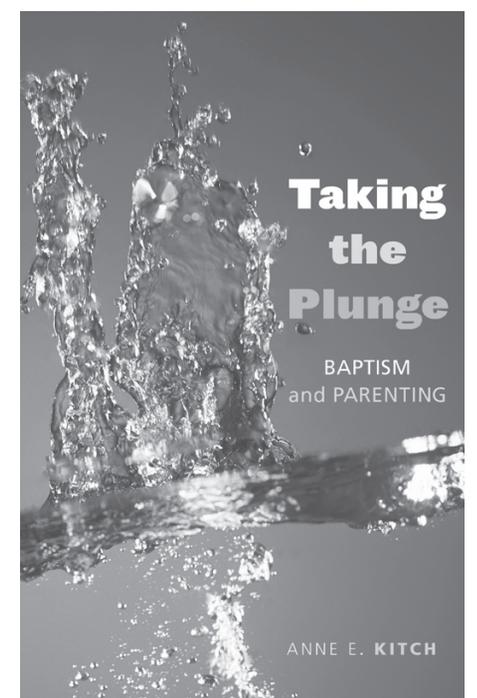
But there are many ways to live into this promise that take us beyond Sunday morn-

ing. Most parish activities include one or more of these areas for spiritual growth. We find the apostles' teaching handed down to us in adult forums and bible studies. Our parishes offer classes, small groups and seminars on various topics including scripture, spirituality, stewardship, science and people of faith. We are fortunate in the Bethlehem area to have the number of opportunities for learning offered by the Diocese, other parishes, local universities and nearby retreat centers.

Fellowship is also important. We need to spend time with other people of faith to nurture our own faith. The hospitality offered on Sunday mornings at many parishes is a brief but important opportunity for fellowship as well as small group meetings. We break bread together whenever we sit down to a meal together, whether it is a Dinner Group or Church Picnic or Lenten Potluck suppers. Opportunities for prayer are also found at social gatherings as well as midweek worship services.

We are not Christians in isolation. By definition, as Christians we are members of the Body of Christ. We are part of a community. We have gifts to offer that community and our faith community has gifts to offer us. Our faith community is not the only community which forms us, but it is an important one. As we live out this baptismal promise, we intentionally engage ourselves in our faith community, offer our gifts to that community, and allow ourselves to be fed by that community.

*Canon for Christian Formation Anne E. Kitch of our Cathedral is a member of the Standing Committee and the Liturgy and Music Commission of the Diocese of Bethlehem.*



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