



PAN-AFRICAN ACADEMY OF CHRISTIAN SURGEONS
A commission of the
Christian Medical & Dental Associations

December 2018

THE TRANSFORMING POWER of GOD'S GRACE

by Rev. Ed Searce

"For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned... Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them..."

~Romans 12: 3-6

Most of us have a healthy dose of pride and self-centeredness. It is something we are born with and it grows without much urging as we go through life. Both sprang forth from our fallen human nature. Both are contrary to God's design for us. According to Romans 12:3-8 both find remedy in the transforming power of God's grace. What then is our response?

Live with a proper view of one's self

In the transformational life of the believer pride has no role. After all, we are not in competition with fellow believers. We each are saved by God's grace and empowered to live by faith for His glory. That is what verse three of Romans 12 points out to us *"... not to think of himself more highly than he ought but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned."*

In other words, don't think you are better than you really are! How highly should I think of myself? Not much in human terms. Each of us are more sinful than we could ever imagine. Humility must be our desire. Humility is one thing we must strive for. But remember, the moment we think we have attained it, we just lost it!

We combat prideful thinking by using sober judgment (v.3). Be honest in your evaluation of yourself. The way we do this is to use God's standard *"... according to the measure of faith God has assigned."* The context is talking about various spiritual gifts and how they are used within the body of the church.

Live for the good of others.

Verse 6 expands on the previous three verses. *"Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them."* The use of these gifts are always "others centered."

The Greek word for "gifts" in verse 6 is "charismata" often translated as "grace gift". It is from the same root word in verse 3 *"... grace given to me ..."* So in essence, it is an undeserved ability or capacity God gives to each believer. When we exercise our spiritual gift, the Holy Spirit works in such a way that all are edified. This is the beauty of transformational living. It is the power of God's grace.

When you compare yourself to others abilities, what are your thoughts? Do your thoughts find its foundation in *"the measure of faith God has assigned?"*

Ask God to reveal any pride issues in your life. How are you using your spiritual gift(s) to strengthen the faith of others?

PAACS Alumni Newsletter

Dear PAACS Family

Welcome to the 8th edition of our PAACS Alumni Newsletter. As we head into the Christmas season, we celebrate not only the birth of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, but also our growing PAACS alumni family. With December graduations approaching, PAACS will now have 88 graduates serving across the African continent. In this issue, we highlight two of their remarkable stories - **Dr. Rasamimanana Sahalnirina Harison**, PAACS' very first general surgery graduate, and **Dr. Catherine Mlelwa Mung'ong'o**, a saint to the children of Tanzania.

Please remember all of our graduates in your prayers. Each of them is a light shining on a hill bringing the gospel of Jesus Christ to their patients through His healing hands. May the Lord continue to bless all of them and their families.

Please prayerfully consider a gift to PAACS during this Christmas season so we can continue to train surgeons for Africa to be the hands and feet of Christ. God bless you for your love and support.

Thomas C Robey, MD
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THE TORCHBEARER

When Dr. Rasamimanana Sahalnirina Harison left Madagascar over 20 years ago to become a PAACS resident at Bongolo Hospital in Gabon, he and his family thought they were leaving their island home and going to "the big city." Instead they ended up in the middle of the jungle in one of the most remote areas in Africa! Little did he know that this small jungle hospital and the training he would receive under Dr. David Thompson would change his life. He would go on to become the first PAACS general surgery graduate and became the torchbearer for over eighty PAACS alumni surgeons today. He never doubted the Lord's plan for his life nor the capability of this infant surgical training program to provide him with the education he desired.

"Risks regarding the solidity of the program did not even come to my mind."
said Dr. Harison.

Dr. Harison grew up in Antananarivo, Madagascar in a Christian family. He went to medical school at the Malagasy University of Madagascar Medicine Faculty and then started working at the largest private hospital in Antananarivo. However, the Lord had other plans and called Dr. Harison to work for the Andranomadio Lutheran Hospital. Due to the lack of personnel at this hospital, Dr. Harison became the sole physician doing surgery even though he was not certified as a surgeon. In 1996, the government required that he must become certified. The general director of his hospital was Dr. Stanley Quaneck, a missionary physician and friend of PAACS founder, Dr. David Thompson. Dr. Quaneck asked Dr. Harison if he wanted to go to Gabon for his surgical training and because of the Christian influence he knew his training would have, Dr. Harison gladly accepted.

Dr. Thompson was a wonderful mentor and teacher to Dr. Harison. Reflecting on this relationship, Dr. Harison stated, "I admired his leadership and the way he managed the hospital which I still apply today. In addition to his role as a model, teacher and mentor, I also considered him to be a close friend. He gave me great insight on how to lead a life as a true Christian doctor." After graduation, Dr. Harison and his family went back to Madagascar and he has been working at the same hospital ever since. Today he is the Medical Director and Chief of Surgery at Andranomadio Lutheran Hospital. Dr. Harison and his team perform over 300 surgeries a month at the 200-bed hospital. He also trains medical students and nursing students and manages over 150 hospital employees.



He struggles running a hospital in a large city with such limited resources but stated, "the Lord always finds a way to provide the necessary supplies and equipment."

Dr. Harison and his wife, Domoina, have been married for over 28 years and have three grown children. His eldest, Miantsa, and his wife, Michella, live in Spokane, Washington while his second son, Midera returned to Madagascar after getting his education in the US and now works in the capital of Antananarivo. His daughter, Mihoby, is a nursing student at Concordia University in Wisconsin.

As he reflects on the past 20 years of PAACS, Dr. Harison notes the increase in surgical subspecialty training now available through PAACS, but he does not feel PAACS has drifted from its mission at all. It is still training Christian surgeons who are competent and willing to improve the mission hospitals they serve. His advice for the graduates of today is to not forget that they are Christian surgeons first and their duty is to continue to serve the underprivileged at mission hospitals throughout Africa despite the minimal or modest pay they often are given.

Please pray for Dr. Harison, his family and his work in Madagascar. He requests wisdom to better manage his hospital and hopes that the Lord will provide a young surgeon to be part of the next generation at his hospital. He also covets our prayers for his family as they try to pay for his daughter's education in the United States. May the Lord graciously provide these needs.

THE TANZANIAN SAINT

Dr. Catherine Mlelwa Mung'ong'o has devoted her entire life to improving the surgical healthcare of the children in Tanzania. Born and raised in Tanzania, she grew up one of 11 children in her family. She did all of her primary and secondary schooling in Tanzania and became a follower of Jesus Christ during her secondary years before leaving the country to attend medical school in Yugoslavia. Afterwards, she came back to Tanzania to do her postgraduate training. She did her internship at Muhimbili National Hospital (MNH) and then stayed on as staff. She got married and had four children before tragedy struck. She lost her husband in a motor vehicle accident. Despite this heartbreak, Dr. Mlelwa went on for her Master's degree in general surgery at Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Center before heading back to MNH to continue her practice. As she reflected on all that she has gone through, Catherine acknowledges that she got through these difficult years only because the Lord Jesus Christ was holding her up.

"Psalm 23 says 'The Lord is my shepherd and I lack nothing.' While in actual fact, you lack everything. God has been my refuge always. If you ask me today how I managed to be where I am today, I can only tell all that Jesus did for me."

After working for a while at MNH, Dr. Mlelwa decided to go on for pediatric surgery training in Kenya. She felt there was a huge need for pediatric surgeons in Tanzania. "Since we did not have any pediatric surgeons in Tanzania, most of the children born with congenital malformations were left to die." Dr. Mlelwa acknowledges that, **"the route was tough, but God inside me heard my cry."**

It was while she was in Kenya, that Catherine became aware of PAACS, and she decided to pursue her pediatric surgery fellowship at BethanyKids Hospital where she graduated in 2011. Her mentors at BethanyKids were Dr. Dan Poenaru and Dr. Richard Bransford. She was also deeply influenced by Professor Lakhoo Kokila from Radcliffe Children's Hospital in Oxford, England and a team of pediatric surgeons from Montreal Children's Hospital. Dr. Mlelwa appreciated all of her mentors because they treated her as a colleague.

After completing her pediatric surgery training, she returned once again to MNH. However, the last six years she has been a faculty surgeon for PAACS at the Arusha Lutheran Medical Centre PAACS training site in Tanzania. She has now come full circle teaching and mentoring her own PAACS residents.



"I am enjoying giving to others what I know and my experience working with Jesus beside me."

Dr. Mlelwa's work as a pediatric surgeon in Tanzania is challenging with many sleepless nights but "Jesus is with me all the time" helping the poor children of Tanzania. She loves teaching the surgeons of tomorrow all that she has learned. Catherine will be retiring soon, but wants us all to know that she is not tired yet!! Even though she has been without her husband for all these years, Jesus Christ is with her! Her children are all on their own pursuing their education and careers. She has one child who followed in her footsteps and is a pediatrician today.

Catherine would appreciate the PAACS family to pray for wisdom for her children in each of their separate locations.

Thank you, Dr. Mlelwa, for your dedication to the children of Tanzania. May the Lord continue to bless all of your endeavors.



Please Pray for Our PAACS Graduates

ANGOLA

Paulo Baltazar Buaki

GABON

Anatole Nzanzu
Simplice Tchoba

BURUNDI

Nkeshia Gisita
Alliance Niyukuri

GHANA

Ighohwo Etuh

CAMEROON

Gerald Ekwen
Domain Fuka
Steve Kyota
Benjamin Malikidogo
Henry Ndasi
Anthony Nesoah
George Ngock
Evaristus Njume

GUINEA

Jean Faya Bomde Yaradouno
Ruffin Loua

DEM. REP. of CONGO

Jean Claude Bataneni
Hubert Kakalo
Juvenal Musavuli Maghuta
Samuel Lemery Nigo

KENYA

Jack Barasa
Elijah Mwaura Chege
John Kanyi
Arega Leta Fekadu
Justus Lando
Amos Chege Macharia
Beryl Akinyi Mawe
Damaris Mbalu
Valentine Mbithi
Yves Mpongo
Ken Muma
Elizabeth Mwachiro
Michael Mwachiro
Mark Mwangi
Elsie Kamene Mwanzia
Tony Mwenyemali
Jack Okumu
Mark Oolo
Philip Blasto Ooko
Victor Sowayi Alubokho
Yali Bin Ramazani
Ivan Seno
Yvonne Wairimu
Shelmith Wangari Muthee
Fasto Ladu Yugusuk

EGYPT

Amgad Amir
Shady Fayik
Nayer Naiem Wahba

ETHIOPIA

Frehun Ayele
Segni Bekele
Mesele Bogale
Dejene Desalegn
Solomon Endrias
Ebenezer Gezahegn
Daniel Gidabo
Surafel Mulatu
Haileyesus Tesfaye
Efeson Thomas
Gezahegn Tilahun

LESOTHO

Mifila Degaulle

LIBERIA

Jerry Brown

MADAGASCAR

Marco Faniriko
Heuric Rakotomalala
Fabruce Ramaherimamonjy
Elson Randrianantenaina
Harison Rasamimanana
Roseline Razanamampionona

MALAWI

Jacques Ebhele
Kasumba Moses Kaggya

MALI

Philadelphie Dembele

NIGERIA

Chukwudi Okorie

RWANDA

Edmond Ntaganda
Ronald Tubasiime

SIERRA LEONE

Aiah Lebbie
Juana Kabba

TANZANIA

Emmanuel Dawson Lema
Catherine Mung'ong'o
Henry Rotimi Ine
Tewodros Tamiru

UGANDA

Martin Situma

UK - Training

Agneta Odera

PAACS Graduates Locations

Map updated as of
December 2018



±Martin Salia - deceased