



PAN-AFRICAN ACADEMY OF CHRISTIAN SURGEONS
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CROSS EXAMINATION

*“And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left”
– Luke 23:33*

by Rev. Stan Key

Three crosses stood on Calvary’s hill. Of course, it is appropriate that we focus our attention on that middle cross where the Lamb of God gave his life for the sins of the world. But the Gospel story reminds us of the important message in those other two crosses as well. Beaten, bloody, writhing in pain and gasping for air, the three men talk with one another. It would be difficult to imagine a more dramatic setting for conversation.

The first criminal is angry and caustic. As with many, his pain causes him to be totally self-absorbed. Gathering strength for what may be his final words, he cries out to Jesus in cynical unbelief, Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us! (Luke 23:39)

The criminal dying on the other side responds to his pain in a way that is the polar opposite of the first. His tragic situation, far from making him callous, angry and self-focused, makes him reflective, humble, and prayerful. His initial response is to rebuke the other felon. Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong. Then turning to Jesus, he manages to gasp out a final prayer: Remember me when you come into your kingdom (Luke 23:40-42).

Think about it. Two men with identical fates, identical pain.... And yet their responses are so very different! There is a message here for you and for me when we face hardship and suffering. Whether our pain is the consequence of our own poor choices (as was the case for these two criminals), or whether it is the result of tragic circumstances in life, these two other crosses teach us that:

1. I have a choice. The two criminal’s crosses are an eternal reminder that when suffering comes, I have a decision to make. I can choose to become cynical, caustic and angry or I can allow these circumstances to soften my heart and make me prayerful, humble and receptive to grace.

2. I have a companion. Though the one on that middle cross is innocent and pure, he is suffering the very same fate as the most hardened criminals! God became a man so he could fully experience the human condition.

3. I have a hope. Jesus’ words to the dying thief continue to speak hope to millions who struggle with life’s afflictions: Today you will be with me in Paradise (Luke 23:43).

As you reflect on the meaning of Jesus’ death on the cross, remember that a message for us hangs in the other two crosses as well.

PAACS Alumni Newsletter

Dear PAACS Family

Welcome to the latest edition of the PAACS Alumni Newsletter. In this issue, we share the heartwarming stories of two of PAACS graduates currently practicing in Cameroon and in Malawi. Dr. Henry Ndasi is bringing extraordinary orthopedic care to the people of Cameroon while Dr. Arega Fekadu is training and discipling the next generation of PAACS residents in Malawi. Enjoy their stories of courage and devotion.

We now have 69 PAACS graduates serving in 19 countries throughout Africa. Praise the Lord! We encourage you to join our PAACS family in supporting our current residents and graduates throughout Africa. I can’t think of a better way to celebrate the birth of our Lord, then to join Him in the work He is doing in Africa through PAACS. In addition to any financial gift you can give, please remember to pray for all of our graduates and their families.

May this upcoming Christmas season be a joyous and blessed time for our entire PAACS family.



Merry Christmas,— Thomas C Robey, MD
Editor; trobey@mcw.edu

A Change of Plans



Dr. Henry Ndasi grew up in a small village in the rural northwest region of Cameroon where he was the second youngest of eight siblings. His father was a school teacher and his mom kept the eight kids in line! School was important and home time was spent doing farm work and domestic chores. Although raised in a Christian household, Henry didn’t really commit his life to the Lord until his university years in Nigeria. Initially, he studied mechanical engineering but when the opportunity came to attend medical school in Kano, Nigeria, he jumped at the chance. He found his true love when he did his orthopedic surgery rotation.

After graduating from medical school in 2002, he eventually migrated back to Cameroon and, at the urging of his father, took a job with the Cameroon Baptist Convention. He thought that he would eventually secure a residency position at the University of Cape Town in South Africa. However, God had other plans. Henry was placed at the Baptist Hospital in Banzo where he met Dr. Heuric Rokatomala, the first PAACS resident training at the Banzo program at the time. Dr. Rokatomala became a close friend and big brother to Henry and encouraged him to apply to the PAACS program at Banzo. Six months later he became the first Cameroonian in PAACS. At Banzo, Henry was surrounded by wonderful, senior residents who mentored him both surgically and spiritually. “Dr. Rokatomala, Dr. Okorie, Dr. Salia and Dr. Elson all had a profound impact on me,” states Henry.

In 2008, Dr. Ndasi got introduced to the COSECSA orthopedic residency at Kijabe Hospital when he traveled to Kenya for his pediatric surgery rotation. He decided to expand his training and accepted a three year fellowship in orthopedic surgery after completing his PAACS general surgery training at Banzo. After completing his orthopedic fellowship, Dr. Ndasi returned to Cameroon to the Baptist Hospital in Mutengene. Initially, he was the only surgeon and he had only one operating room. However, since then, the hospital has grown to three orthopedic surgeons, two general surgeons, a gynecologist and an ophthalmologist with a total of seven operating rooms. Currently, there are also a total of three PAACS graduates working at this hospital.

Henry has expanded his orthopedic training through additional fellowships and courses both in Africa and the USA. His orthopedic practice runs the full gamut from hip and knee arthroplasty to pelvic and spine trauma and plastic reconstruction. With the increase in staff, Henry is hoping he can spend more time with his wife and three children (Alan 11, Ethan 7 and Jason 5). His family continues to be active at their local church where Henry is a deacon. Dr. Ndasi is also the chief medical officer at his hospital.

PAACS taught Henry to be flexible in his patient management skills and how to manage his time with so many demands on him. “I don’t get overwhelmed with work because my PAACS residency was very vigorous and demanding.” Outside of work, Henry spends time with his family and wife and is active in politics. Over the next 10 years, Dr. Ndasi hopes to assist his hospital in developing and establishing a trauma referral center providing holistic care to his countrymen. By God’s grace, Henry hopes that he and his fellow PAACS graduates at Mutengene will continue to exemplify the spirit and philosophy of PAACS to the Cameroonian people.

Hearing God's Voice

Dr. Arega Fekadu could not believe his ears! "Do not bother me for non-ObGyn patients. You must refer the patient to the nearest hospital." Dr. Fekadu was working as a general medical practitioner at one of the local district hospitals in Ethiopia soon after his graduation from medical school in December of 2004. The only general surgeon at the hospital was away when Dr. Fekadu was on call in the emergency room one night when an elderly male presented with an acute bowel obstruction. After working up the patient and preparing the operating room theater for an emergency laparotomy, he called the ObGyn physician who was on call and covering the general surgeon in his absence. The nearest hospital was 200 km away and the patient's family had no money to transport him. He died 10 hours later before reaching the other hospital. That night, Dr. Fekadu clearly heard the Lord's voice whispering to him that he should go into general surgery. Meanwhile, he continued to work as a general practitioner, all the while praying for God to open doors for him to go into general surgery. Two years later, God answered the call when Dr. Richard Hart, President of Loma Linda University, communicated to the hospital administrator where Arega was working and introduced him to PAACS. When Arega went to the PAACS website and read about PAACS, he exclaimed, "God has answered my prayers!"

Dr. Fekadu was born into a large, poor and non-Christian family in Marache, Gimbie, West Wollega, Ethiopia. He had seven siblings and their entire family worshiped a traditional fortune teller. He was first introduced to Christianity at his elementary school which was a 30-minute walk from his village. He strongly resisted and opposed any discussion about Christ and said, "I argued with them, hated them and even insulted them." However, despite his refusal to accept their beliefs, he noticed the Christian students were always happier and had smiling faces compared to his other classmates. "Contrary to this, I had a miserable life – there was always

quarreling within my family." Arega's father was an alcoholic and there was no peace in his family life. His Christian classmates continued to share Christ with him. "I continued to see love, peace and joy in their lives." At night, Arega began to experience bad dreams and he realized that he was under "the hand of an evil and cruel master". Finally, one day in 1993, he borrowed a New Testament from one of his classmates and began to read it in hiding away from his family. After encountering the gospel message, he decided to surrender his life to Jesus Christ. He then started attending a local Seventh Day Adventist church on his own nearly an hour away from his home. Soon after, he started facing persecution from his family and friends – they even chased him away from home for three days and refused to share any food with him. His parents told him to stop mentioning the name of Christ. However, Arega could not keep quiet as Christ was living in him and was changing his life. He started to study Scripture, was baptized and became a member of his Seventh Day Adventist Church. His family began to notice the change in his life and six months later, his older brother accepted Christ. Within a year of his conversion, his entire family had given their lives to Christ! Dr. Fekadu eventually started his own church in his village which has grown to over 1500 members today! He went on to medical school at Jimma University in Ethiopia in 1998 and continued to advance the work of Christ by sharing Christ with other university students and establishing a campus ministry.

Dr. Fekadu started his PAACS residency in 2007 at Banso Baptist Hospital in Cameroon. When the Banso program was shut down, he transferred and completed his residency at Tenwek Hospital in Kenya. Dr. Fekadu describes his PAACS residency as "exceptional, where I grew both spiritually and professionally. I fully integrated my Christianity and profession very well, and my life continued to model after Christ through the impact of the lives of extraordinary Christ centered professional men and women mentors and



both long-term and short-term PAACS faculty members."

After graduation, Dr. Fekadu returned to Gimbie Adventist Hospital in Ethiopia and then spent some time filling in as a faculty member in the PAACS program at Soddo Christian Hospital. In May of 2014, he moved to Malawi to join Dr. Ryan Hayton to start the first PAACS program at Malamulo Adventist Hospital. Currently they are training four PAACS residents. Arega serves as the Assistant Program Director. His wife, Bikiltu, serves with him at the hospital as an accountant. They have one daughter, Keron. Dr. Fekadu is actively involved each day running clinic, operating and teaching the residents. His surgical skills have greatly increased and he covers a wide spectrum of cases from thoracic surgeries to complex orthopedic procedures. Outside the hospital, he is actively involved with his local church, leading a college Bible study and preaching at surrounding churches. His biggest challenge is providing for the basic needs of his family while juggling all of his parental/spousal responsibilities with his heavy academic responsibilities. Yet, he continues to trust in the Lord for all of his needs. His future plans include a cardiothoracic fellowship and to continue to train the next generation of surgeons through PAACS. Dr. Fekadu has overcome many challenges in his commitment to Jesus Christ in his life so far – how exciting to know that the Lord will continue to use him to further his kingdom work in Africa.

Latest News

- The PAACS Commission announced at its 2017 Spring meeting the formation of the Alumni Liaison Committee to serve as a link between our PAACS graduates and the PAACS Commissioners.
- The second annual PAACS Alumni survey was recently sent out to all of our PAACS graduates - look for results in our next Alumni Newsletter.
- Don't forget the PAACS Alumni Email List-serve - a great way to share with your colleagues interesting cases and to pray for one another.

Please Pray for Our PAACS Graduates

MALI
Philadelphie Dembele

GUINEA
Faya Bomde Yaradouno
Ruffin Loua

SIERRA LEONE
Aiah Lebbie

LIBERIA
Jerry Brown

NIGERIA
Chukwudi Okorie

CAMEROON
Jacques Ebhele
Gerald Ekwen
Domain Fuka

*Marco Faniriko
*Steve Kyota
Benjamin Malikidogo
Evaristus Njume
Anthony Nesoah
Henry Ndasi
Yali Bin Ramazani

MALAWI
Arega Leta

*Kasumba Moses Kaggya
GABON
Anatole Nzanu
Simplice Tchoba

DRC
Jean Bataneni
Hubert Kakalo
*Yves Mpongo

ANGOLA
Paulo Baltazar



SOUTH AFRICA
Mifila Degaille
Agneta Odera

EGYPT
Shady Fayik

UGANDA
Martin Situma
Ighohwo Etuh

ETHIOPIA
Frehun Ayele
Segni Bekele
Dejene Desalegn
Thomas Efeson
Solomon Endrias
Daniel Gidabo
*Surafel Mulatu
Tewodros Tamiru
*Efeson Thomas
Haileyesus Tesfaye

KENYA
Beryl Akinyi
Elijah Mwaura Chege
John Kanyi
Amos Chege Macharia
Damaris Mbalu
Ken Muma
Tony Mwenyemali
Elizabeth Mwachiro
Michael Mwachiro
Mark Mwangi
Kamene Mwanzia
George Ngock
Jack Okumu
Philip Blasto Ooko
Ivan Seno

BURUNDI
Nkesha Gisita

RWANDA
Edmond Ntaganda
Ronald Tubasiime

TANZANIA
Catherine Mung'ongo
Henry Ine

MADAGASCAR
Heuric Rakotomalala
Fabruce Ramaherimamonjy
Elson Randrianantenaina
Harison Rasamimanana
Roseline Razanamampionona

*Congratulations to our newest graduates!