

Rooted in Jesus, Diocese of Butere, Kenya

27th June – 6th July 2017

HOSTS: Rt Revd Timothy Wambunya, Revd Capt Benjamin Kibara

TEAM : Revd Richard Morgan (Good Samaritan, Philadelphia - TL),
Revd Capt Joshua Opondo (Diocese of Maseno South, Kenya),
Revd John Eldridge (Wickham Market, Suffolk)



This is a summary of the team's Facebook posts. To view a full video report click [here](#).

FIRST CONFERENCE DAY ONE

We began our conference this morning with 85 priests and lay people from the Diocese.

For those new to the Rooted in Jesus format - we began the day in worship, and then followed with the main teaching session for the day. This covered an overview of Rooted in Jesus both practically and in terms of ethos. We talked about the need for disciples not just converts and the way that Jesus did this with a small group. Then we covered the spiritual principles of Rooted in Jesus - that the church is a body - everyone has a part to play; and that the church grows by multiplication, not addition - so we need to make disciples who can themselves make disciples. After coffee, we broke into groups where Joshua, John and I each led the first session of the Rooted in Jesus book 1 module 1 - 'God knows you'. This was followed by three workshops, which will rotate each day on prayer, pastoral care, and leading a Rooted in Jesus group. After a good lunch we had a ministry session, with Joshua teaching on 'Knowing God's love' and then leading people in prayer. Finally, the local coordinator, Benjamin Kibara, led a local planning session for the Diocese here where they began to talk about strategy for implementing this course in the Diocese.

The diocese has worked on equipping people to lead small groups, but as of now, nothing has actually got off the ground. So, there is great opportunity for this to be the thing that provides the necessary structure to help facilitate groups starting and running well. The fact that no one has been able to get a group running yet would seem to indicate that small groups are not currently something that seems easy to implement. I'm reminded of the joke - where a shoe salesman is sent to the US frontier to sell shoes. He cables back, 'This is terrible. No-one wears shoes.' The company recalled him and sent another salesman. He too sent a cable: 'This is wonderful. No-one wears shoes. Send every pair that you have.' Pray that the leaders here will see the opportunity for discipleship that this ministry provides and that God will use it to strengthen his church here and help these leaders in their ministry.



There was a mission just before we came. Benjamin says that some hundreds of people made a profession of faith. John was speaking to one lady, Grace, who has thirty new christians in her parish. She is just about to walk 10 kilometers back home from the conference. Some of her new christians that she is hoping to follow up with are 8 kilometers from her - so it seems very hard for her to be able to meet with them all. There's certainly a need for a method of distributing the task of disciple-making and equipping disciples to make disciples. If the principles of Rooted in Jesus take hold here, it will be powerful in helping the church to grow as a body.

DAY TWO

We had a little over 90 participants today. The day began with a devotional on 'See I am doing a new thing' before our main teaching on the work of the Holy Spirit. Then the real training work began as we split them into groups of 10 each with local leaders given the task of leading each group; we observed them for the level of participation and engagement; for their use of the practical demonstrations; and for their learning of memory verses. We were able to encourage them with some positive reinforcement of the good things that we saw in the groups before splitting into the workshop. After lunch, John led the ministry session - on repentance and renewal; many (I think more than half the participants) came forward for prayer - and the Holy Spirit seemed very present in our prayers. Benjamin then finished out the day with another local planning session.

FINAL DAY

We finished the first conference today. Everyone received a certificate, a leader's guide, and the first book of the course. 101 students graduated.



SECOND CONFERENCE DAY ONE

The Diocese had invited 150 people each week. We registered 175 today! With three leaders and 175 participants the example small group we led was going to be a challenge... we did as well as we could, and I think people have a good flavour of what a session of *Rooted in Jesus* should look like. Tomorrow we will break them into 20 groups, with 20 leaders appointed today to go and prepare tomorrow's lesson.

Bishop Tim was here this morning and gave a great introduction. He encouraged people that they must not leave this conference and not do something with the resources and training they have been given. He was telling these leaders that this is a key part of their strategy to form disciples as a diocese - so we are very encouraged by his leadership.

DAY TWO

We registered 217 by the end of today. This made for all sorts of logistic issues - food, chairs, praying for people; but altogether a good day! Bishop Tim once again was able to join us at the beginning of the day and was very encouraging in his remarks to his people in the Diocese. He reiterated how important it was for them to put into practice the things that they learn this week and leave here to run a small discipleship group.



Today was the first time this group got to practice a lesson in small group. We had 11 groups of women, 8 of men and one of the youth. Bishop Tim is keen to create groups that work within the Men's Ministry and Women's Ministry structure that are strong within the Diocese as a whole.

DAY THREE

The groups did their second practice lesson today. They were doing Module 2, Lesson 4 - on the assurance of forgiveness. This seemed to resonate very well with them as a group last week and went well today. Our ministry session in the afternoon seemed good. Many came forward for prayer with many different needs.

FINAL DAY

We finished our second conference at lunchtime today. We shook hands and gave certificates and books to a vast sea of people which was a great celebration of the end of the course. Very positive and warm comments from participants who felt that they were really growing through the course and that this would be useful for them in ministry.

Bishop Tim said that they were going to gather the participants from both conferences together in two weeks time and that he wanted people to bring him lists of those they would be inviting to join a group with them when they came. He's certainly making it very clear to the Diocese that this is the key priority for them in their mission together.

Good tools are only useful when you use them! *Rooted in Jesus* is one of those tools. When used, it is capable of being quite useful... if left on the shelf it will have little or no lasting impact. I'm confident that with the leadership of Bishop Tim, and the leadership of the coordinator, Benjamin Kibara, that they will make use of this tool in this Diocese. But, at the end of the day, it relies on the Holy Spirit moving and working in the hearts and lives of many leaders in this Diocese. Do pray that the lives and ministries of many in this Diocese would be empowered and strengthened.



Richard Morgan

www.rootedinjesus.net