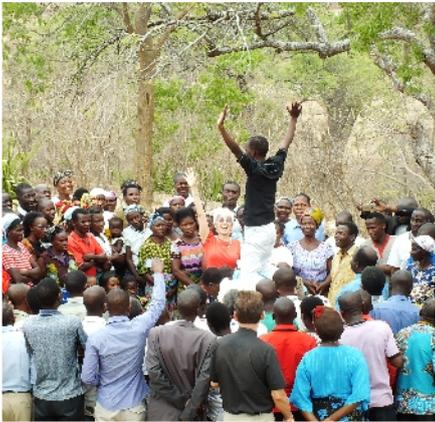


# ROOTED IN JESUS Annual report 2018

The Mathetes Trust  
Wells, Somerset  
[www.mathetestrust.org](http://www.mathetestrust.org)  
[www.rootedinjesus.net](http://www.rootedinjesus.net)



## Rooted in Jesus : a practical discipleship programme for Africa

**R**OOTED IN JESUS is a practical discipleship programme for Africa. It covers the basics of Christian faith and ministry from an African cultural perspective, and is designed for use by people of any educational background. There is a companion programme, *Rooted in Jesus Junior*, for use with children in Sunday Schools. *Rooted in Jesus* is published and supported by the Mathetes Trust.

**C**REATED IN 2002, *Rooted in Jesus* has now been running for 17 years. During that time it has been translated into 44 languages and introduced to some 86 dioceses, denominations and theological colleges in 16 African countries. *Rooted in Jesus Junior* was created in 2009, and has been introduced to 17 dioceses and denominations in 6 countries. Over 13,000 people have now been trained by us and our partners to lead *Rooted in Jesus* groups, with many more receiving locally run training in places where *Rooted in Jesus* is already established.

## Rooted in Jesus Conferences in 2018

2018 has been another encouraging year for *Rooted in Jesus*, with conferences taking place in seven Anglican dioceses and two denominational networks. Many of those who have adopted *Rooted in Jesus* now provide their own ongoing training and support, fulfilling our vision that the programme should become self-sustaining in each province or area. We invite each diocese or network to send us an annual report, and we have been delighted to receive many testimonies to the impact that *Rooted in Jesus* is having as a tool for church-planting, discipleship training and ministry to families. There's not room to include them all, but we hope this report offers a snapshot of the past year.

## The Diocese of Butere, Kenya

*Four hundred and ten groups, and growing...*

*Rooted in Jesus* was first introduced to the Diocese of Butere by a team from the US and Kenya in 2017. Initial training was offered to over 300 leaders, in what turned out to be the biggest conference in the history of RinJ. They have been supported by Benjamin Kibara, who oversees the department of mission and ministry training in the diocese, and we were delighted to be invited to return in 2018, this time with a UK team. Again two conferences were held, with a staggering 441 people attending. Benjamin has sent us many testimonies from the groups over the past year, and reports that there are now 410 groups meeting in 49 parishes, of which 107 have been planted in the course of the last year. *Rooted in Jesus* is used in the local language of Luhya as well as Swahili and English.



## Returning to the Diocese of Niassa in Mozambique

We were delighted to receive an invitation from Bishop Vicente Msosa to return to the Diocese of Niassa. Niassa first adopted *Rooted in Jesus* back in 2006, and under the leadership of Mark and Helen Van Koevering saw enormous growth. Vicente was elected in 2017 to succeed Mark, becoming the youngest bishop in the Anglican Communion. He faces a daunting task as he takes responsibility for a huge, rural diocese, and he is determined to keep discipleship at the heart of the church's ministry.

An astonishing 220 people travelled long distances to the remote, historic Messumba Cathedral, now 100 years old. As the rain dripped through the ancient roof, an international team from South Africa, the UK and Zambia provided practical training and encouragement to an attentive conference.

It was deeply encouraging to see the spiritual growth which has taken place in the people over the last 12 years, and a joy to hear Bishop Vicente reflect on his vision for discipleship some four months later: "Our diocese is growing numerically, but how are we growing spiritually? The mandate Jesus gave was to go and make disciples. When RinJ was implemented last year it really made an impact. You can see that from the clergy, even in the communities, because we have established small groups and people's lives have been changed. When you see that, it's a great joy to you as a servant of Jesus."

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*Open air workshops in the Diocese of Butere*

A year after they launched their groups, leaders in Butere were asked to share their experiences. This is what they said:

**Changes in the life of the leader**

- “I have known Christ deeper as I lead, especially through the memory verses”
- “My life has changed by knowing who Jesus is and by being rooted in him”
- “After the prayer lesson, I have seen God answering my prayers”
- “I have been able to repent and experience God’s forgiveness”
- “The infilling of the Holy Spirit in the group has made me very prayerful”
- “Much energy has been pumped into my spiritual life”
- “I am now active in the church”
- “My life has completely changed due to breakthrough in my prayer life”
- “The lessons have made me to endure challenges and remain firm as a leader”
- “I experienced God’s healing”
- “My preaching and prayer life has improved tremendously”

**Changes in the lives of the group**

- “The fellowship, sharing and love among the group members has grown deeply”
- “Group members’ lives have changed. They are humble, kind and loving to each other”
- “Relationships that were broken in the group were restored”
- “I have witnessed transformation especially with two men who were drug addicts and have now surrendered their lives to Christ”

**Changes in the life of the church**

- “The church has become very active with members who have a desire to pray, fellowship and study the Bible”
- “There is peace and love in church due to the Rooted in Jesus groups”
- “The number of people in church has increased”
- “The giving in church has increased”
- “There is demonstration of gifts of the Holy Spirit in the church”



*Rooted in Jesus includes many practical demonstrations. This one is about resisting temptation*

## The brand new Diocese of Nampula

*In October 2018 the Province of Southern Africa announced the creation of the new Missionary Diocese of Nampula...*

... and just 12 days later Bishop Manuel hosted its first conference, providing *Rooted in Jesus* training to 31 clergy and lay leaders! The new diocese has been created from the Diocese of Niassa in Mozambique, where Bishop Manuel has seen *Rooted in Jesus* groups at first hand over many years now. Speaking with Bishop Martin Breytenbach a few months later, he explained:

“The programme of *Rooted in Jesus* opens up many opportunities. As a new diocese we face the problem of how to get going. We have identified three priorities. The first priority is to transform our congregations. Then we must train leaders, and then we must plant new churches. And so we ask ourselves, how are we going to do all this?”

“There was a risk of starting as an institution rather than growing people. So *Rooted in Jesus* is a critical tool for all our plans. We have seen that those who are trained have formed their own groups, about 45 now, and people are coming. In these groups we have discovered that leaders are emerging, parishes are being transformed. And from these groups new congregations are about to emerge. *Rooted in Jesus* is a programme which is simple, practical and very profound. People are able to deepen their faith, their spirituality. So we are excited about the programme; as soon as we inaugurate the diocese I will call all the team leaders and continue the training.”

## Rooted in Jesus in South Africa

### *The Diocese of the Free State*

In South Africa *Rooted in Jesus* is overseen by Growing the Church, based in Cape Town, and in May a team from GtC provided training for both *Rooted in Jesus* and *The God Who is There*.

A couple of months later Canon Itumeleng Pooe wrote: “My own ministry has changed remarkably. I am so much more at rest in His presence, as I learn to rely more and more on the guidance of the Holy Spirit. I am experiencing such peace, a peace as I’ve never known before. ”

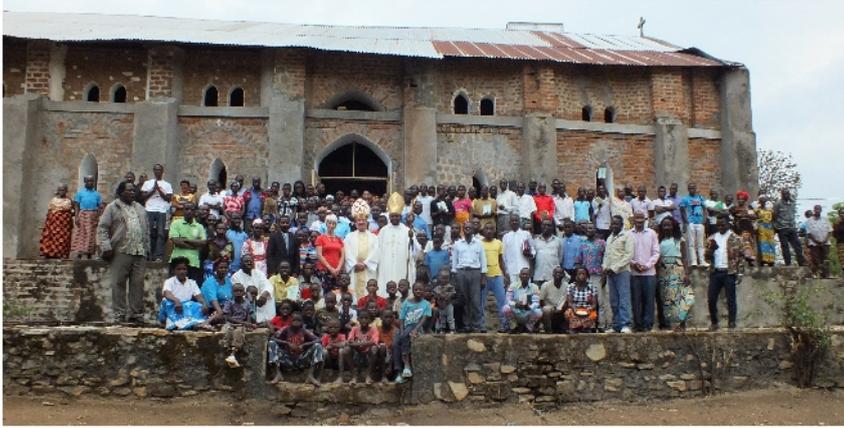
Bishop Dintoe has established a group in the Diocesan Office, resulting in new faith commitments among the staff. And he reports “we have a priest in Eastern Free State who has really taken the local church by storm through bringing them to RinJ. We have visibly seen how it has affected the local people, and how people have given their commitment and their life to the Lord. We notice men who never really thought that they could give their services volunteer to work in the church, to paint the roof of the church, to do maintenance at the local church.

These are the effects of *Rooted in Jesus*. We have seen women with spades and forks doing gardening and making vegetable gardens for themselves and also to feed the community and the people around them. But it’s really about bringing people to the Lord Jesus Christ, who feeds us, who quenches our thirst, who heals us, who has given the promise that he will walk with us each and every step of our lives. We are very excited about *Rooted in Jesus*.”



### *The Diocese of Natal*

Also in May, the Growing the Church team offered a discipleship conference for lay leaders in the Diocese of Natal, focussing first on developing a strategy for discipleship and then providing training in the use of *Rooted in Jesus* and its companion course *The God Who is There*, generally used in urban or professional contexts.



*Conference participants outside the cathedral of Messumba, Mozambique*



*Our aim is that Rooted in Jesus should become self sustaining within each diocese. This has been achieved in the **Diocese of Eastern Zambia**, where books are locally printed and further training organised annually by the coordinators. Fr Kapomba Sekeleti explains how it works:*

*“We struggled with how to train our leaders. We had no materials, no consistency; we were not helping our children. Now we have **Rooted in Jesus Junior**. After seeing good results our bishop endorsed RinJ at our diocesan Synod. And wherever you go in the diocese you see a Sunday school group using RinJ. People standing for any form of leadership in the diocese are expected to have completed a course, and **Rooted in Jesus** is the main one. And you have to show a certificate as evidence.*

*“People are now rooted in Jesus. Division in the church comes because people are not rooted in Jesus. Things have changed in the lives of our ministers and lay leaders. We use RinJ Junior for child baptism preparation, and RinJ adult for adults.*

*“The Rooted in Jesus material is simple and easily understood. We have seen people returning to faith, deepening their prayer life, increasing their commitment to church. We have seen growing interest in the Bible. And people are becoming grounded in the word of God, they love the church more, they are growing the church. Some have the confidence to preach the word of God, some to pray for others. These are some of the fruits we have seen because people are rooted in Jesus.”*

## *Dignity: ‘Amazing lives, everyday miracles’*

*Ten years ago we licensed UK charity Dignity to use Rooted in Jesus in Zambia...*

**Dignity** is a small charity with a big vision and an impressive track record of planting cross-denominational ‘Life’ groups in rural areas, initially in Zambia but now also in Tanzania, Angola, Kenya and Namibia. They use *Rooted in Jesus* alongside their own materials, and to date have planted over 700 groups, supported by a growing number of local trainers and village missionaries. Focussing not on the church but on the community, group members support one another and those in need regardless of church affiliation, social status or lifestyle, motivated by their growing faith in Jesus - and the result is a trail of stories of what they refer to as ‘amazing lives, everyday miracles’. It is a huge privilege to be able to make a small contribution to this remarkable story.

## *Uganda and the Diocese of Soroti*

**The last *Rooted in Jesus* training of 2018 took place in the Diocese of Soroti**, where 175 existing and 70 new leaders came together in two conferences, led by a joint UK-Ugandan team. Already available in Ateso, *Rooted in Jesus* is in the process of being translated into Kumam, which will enable more people to join groups. Groups began straight away, with a record number of 24 in a single parish!

**Meanwhile in the Diocese of Mityana**, Coordinator John Musaasizi reports that he and his colleagues visited 32 churches in the course of the year, encouraging entire congregations to commit to *Rooted in Jesus* and supporting the group leader in each place. They have seen many come to faith, and many changed lives.

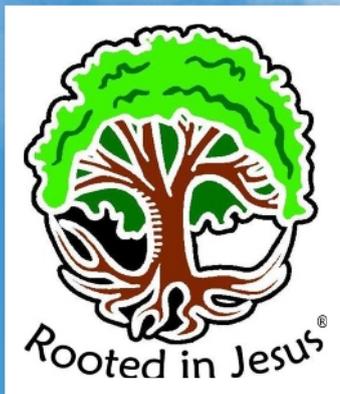
## **In the Diocese of Bunyoro Kitara**

Coordinator Joyce Asaba reports that the *Rooted in Jesus* groups have reached book 4 of the course, and that new groups have been planted. “Group members say that they have really benefited from the course; some have become leaders and formed other groups. They also say that scripture memory has helped them in ministry and in their daily lives. Others say their lives have changed completely.”



## *Ministering with the FECA-Bu network in Burundi*

We are keen to make *Rooted in Jesus* available as widely as we can. One of the ways of doing this is to partner with those who have connections with denominational networks. So far we have supported Brian Keel, working in the Bungoma region of Kenya, and in November 2018 Brian agreed to help Peter Kay offer a conference in Burundi for a growing Pentecostal network with some 700 churches. 50 pastors were invited, representing all the different districts, and all came. Peter writes that most of the pastors were used to a very traditional, classroom style, teaching approach, and comments: “for many it was a light bulb experience”. We look forward to hearing more.



### *Rooted in Jesus in Tanzania*

By the end of 2018, *Rooted in Jesus* had been introduced to 18 of the 28 dioceses of Tanzania. Of the 18 which have adopted *Rooted in Jesus*, most are still using it, and from some the news is very encouraging.

Perhaps the biggest surprise comes from the Diocese of Masasi, where there has been an explosion in the numbers of children enrolled in *Rooted in Jesus Junior* classes - up from 3500 to 5500 in a single year. News is encouraging too from Mpwapwa, where there are 163 adult and 131 junior groups; Dustan Mtoro explains that new people have come to faith, church attendance has increased, and group members are offering their time, talents and resources to the church.

In the Diocese of Mara there are 200 adult and 135 junior groups, and missionary Gaspar Kassanda has been steadily planting churches, using RinJ to disciple the new Christians.

### *Planting a diocese with Rooted in Jesus*

In 2018 **Bishop Elisha Tendwa** completed six years as a missionary bishop in the Diocese of Katanga, DR Congo. The Diocese covers an area more than twice as big as the UK, and is home to six million people. Elisha's task was to grow the church in the eastern region of Kalémie in order to form a new diocese.

When he arrived there were just three pastors and four catechists. Elisha, who knew of *Rooted in Jesus* in his home country of Tanzania, began by holding a *Rooted in Jesus* conference. "For me it was a time of blessing. *Rooted in Jesus* is a discipleship course; it plants groups. We invited people through the evangelists and pastors, and 270 participants came, from far away areas. These were lay people from the different parishes, youth leaders, Mothers Union leaders, church councils.

"After two years we saw the fruits. People were coming to worship under the tree, and they began to build churches from mud and trees, with a grass roof. Small groups who learned through *Rooted in Jesus* changed the

Coordinator Jacob Robert explains that through *Rooted in Jesus* the diocese has grown so much that they have already divided once, and plan to do so again. And in the Diocese of Mount Kilimanjaro, which first commissioned RinJ back in 2002, it's now a key part of the life of the diocese, with Bishop Stanley Hotay as national Director.

### *Making disciples in Madagascar*

*Rooted in Jesus* is used in the dioceses of Fianarantsoa and Toliara.

In **Fianarantsoa** every parish uses the adult programme, and Coordinator Jean Flobert reports that the Junior programme is bringing many new children to baptism, and their families to church.

In **Toliara** discipleship is a diocesan priority, and missionaries Derek and Jane Waller are running RinJ training in every parish. Those trained are keen to start groups, often with non churchgoers. RinJ Junior is particularly strong in the parish of Fort Dauphin, where Bishop Todd tells us that the teachers have all made themselves RinJ T shirts!



surrounding community. After five years of my ministry in Kalémie, working together with *Rooted in Jesus*, the number of Christians increased. Many parishes opened, and the number of ministers as pastors, catechists and evangelists increased. The Synod of Katanga came to see the situation, and they said now it's time for Kalémie to become a new diocese. This was the end of my mission."

Bishop Elisha has now returned to Tanzania, where he has joined the national *Rooted in Jesus* team.



*The first diocese in South Africa to adopt Rooted in Jesus was St Mark the Evangelist, back in 2009, with the Junior programme following in 2014. The diocesan vision is for 'making disciples in vibrant, self-sufficient congregations', and Rooted in Jesus has been used at every level of diocesan life. Bishop Martin (above, with Colleen) encouraged conference participants in Niassa with the following words:*

"When I first became a bishop it was mainly girls who came to be confirmed. I don't know where the boys were! But now it's mostly boys who come. Perhaps this is because boys and men respond to a challenge. We use *Rooted in Jesus* and it gives a challenge.

"Another difference I have noticed is that when we met for Synod and debated different things, I found the standard of the debate was increasing, because people came with their Bibles, and they said that scripture says this, so why is it that you want to do that? People began to be confident to use the Bible.

"I have also noticed that many people are offering themselves for ministry. I have a problem - I have too many people who want to become priests! But it is a good problem to have.

"We now have 26 parishes with 200 congregations. We are training 2 youth leaders for every congregation, and we are starting by teaching them to be rooted in Jesus."

To find out more about The Mathetes Trust and Rooted in Jesus visit our websites or read the blog

[www.rootedinjesus.net](http://www.rootedinjesus.net)  
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