

Marc Nikkel

Marc Randal Nikkel was a missionary of the Episcopal Church who served in Sudan from 1981 until his death in 2000. He was born June 9, 1950 to a Mennonite family in Reedley, California, a farming community in the San Joaquin Valley. He was baptized in the Mennonite Brethren Church of Reedley, California in 1958 and confirmed in the Episcopal Church by Bishop Daniel Corrigan on November, 1979 at All Saints Episcopal Church in Pasadena, California.

He received a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree from the School of Visual Arts in New York City, with specializations that included graphic design and illustration as well as African religions and their art forms. After receiving his degree, he joined his sister and her husband who were serving as missionaries in Nigeria and Zaire. He assisted by developing graphic arts for books used to teach illiterate people.¹

In 1980 he began the study of Mission and Theology at the Fuller Seminary, an evangelical, multid denominational school in Pasadena, California. He received a Master of Divinity with particular emphasis in cross cultural communications, anthropology, and issues of contextualized theology.² Here he was visited by Bishop David Birney, former coordinator of overseas ministries for the Episcopal Church and a former missionary in Uganda. At the school Nikkel had close friends from Uganda. Asking for an opportunity in Uganda, Nikkel recalled:

I told him the history of my Mennonite background, about our peoples being refugees for generations. I told him I wanted to learn about the faith that someone is willing to die for.³

Birney responded that if he wanted a suffering church, then he should go to Sudan. Birney had been searching for someone to serve as a tutor at Bishop Gwynne Theological College, the only pastoral-training center in Sudan. Birney had not expected to find a westerner willing to live in such primitive conditions. The college was in Mundri, a rural area that had almost been destroyed by bombing in a civil war.

Sudan in 1981

When Nikkel arrived in Sudan in 1981, the country was divided between north and south. After Sudan had gained independence in 1956, the political situation was unstable with intermittent fighting and eventually a civil war that was ended in 1972 by a peace agreement giving autonomy to the south. The southerners were enjoying a relatively peaceful coexistence with the north, but the area was largely impoverished. According to Human Rights Watch,

It is difficult to overstate the historical differences and special distrust that divide the south from the northern or ruling elite. The south has been starved of development resources, its economy one of pastoral and agricultural subsistence, its children uneducated, and health clinics almost nonexistent. Without doubt it is one of the most underdeveloped regions in the entire world.⁴

A missionary movement had introduced Christianity into Sudan and established the Anglican Church. The Church in Sudan became an independent Diocese of the Anglican Communion in 1945. It was part

of the Province of Jerusalem, and was governed by English bishops, first by Bishop Morris Gelsthorpe and then by Bishop Oliver Allison. Fearing the influence of the church, the northern government expelled the missionaries from Southern Sudan in 1964 and they did not return until the signing of the 1972 peace agreement. The period from 1964 to 1972 marked an important phase in the history of the Sudan Church as it grew to selfhood with its own faith and with evangelists, teachers and pastors. In 1976 an independent Province of the Episcopal Church of the Sudan was inaugurated with Elinana Ngalamu becoming its first native Archbishop.

The Episcopal Church of the Sudan then experienced rapid growth. As Nikkel would later recall,

Across the worldwide Anglican Communion there are few Christian communities which have, during the decade 1983 to 1993, experienced more dramatic growth than the Episcopal Church of the Sudan (ECS). During a period dominated by famine, prolonged civil war and religious polarization, the social and religious institutions of many of Sudan's peoples are being irreversibly transformed. Massive displacement has undermined indigenous structures of society and shaken confidence in the ancestral divinities which mirror them. Among some peoples, like the Nilotic Jieng, largest of Sudan's ethnic groups, this trauma has revealed remarkable adaptability and resilience. Amidst large-scale population movement and loss of life, unprecedented numbers of rural Jieng have claimed allegiance to Jesus Christ and established new churches in regions previously untouched by Christian mission. These phenomena, occurring under indigenous initiative and largely in isolation, have received little recognition from the outside world.⁵

Partners in Mission

Nikkel's missionary work received support from the Episcopal Diocese of Southwestern Virginia. The support evolved from the diocese' participation in the Anglican Companions in Mission program, a missionary strategy articulated through the Anglican Communion by the Anglican Congress of 1963 that encouraged the "mutual responsibility and interdependence in the Body of Christ" in relations between developed and undeveloped areas of the Anglican Communion. The Diocese of Bradford in England and the Diocese of Southwestern Virginia formed a partnership, but recognizing that both dioceses were not "developing dioceses" in the sense of this missionary strategy, conversations were begun within the partnership to embrace and include a third partner.

In seeking a third partner, the Diocese of Bradford expressed a desire to look for a relationship with an Arab/Muslim partner because of the large number of Pakistani people working in the wool mills in Bradford. And Southwestern Virginia wanted a partner in Africa. At one time Southwestern Virginia had a considerable representation of Black Episcopalians, many of whom had disappeared as a result of the integration of congregations in the diocese. Consequently Southwestern Virginia expressed a concern to look for a third partner who would re-awaken an awareness of the African presence.

In 1981 Heath Light, Fourth Bishop of the Diocese of Southwestern Virginia, was asked to be part of a "Partners in Mission Consultation," under the sponsorship of the Mission Office of the Episcopal Church.

The consultation did not include representatives from the Diocese of Bradford, but representatives from the United States and Canada met in Juba with representatives from throughout the entire nation of Sudan and the three dioceses which constituted the Episcopal Church of the Sudan. Upon completion of the consultation, discussion continued between Southwestern Virginia and Bradford toward the end of negotiating for a third partner to the relationship. The relative stability of Bradford and Southwestern Virginia, their comparable geography, middle class constituencies, plus the expressed concern for expanded perspective racially, religiously, and economically, made the Sudan an attractive expansion for missionary activity and work, under the mandate of Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence, recognizing that each partner would have need of the gifts of the others, that each had things to give and things to receive.

Bradford and Southwestern Virginia agreed that the Sudan should become the third partner, if they chose. The Episcopal Church headquarters was asked to negotiate the relationship with the understanding that Bradford would concentrate especially on the northern diocese of Khartoum, essentially Arab and Muslim, while Southwestern Virginia would concentrate on the Black and largely Christian two Southern dioceses as “partners.” This arrangement was satisfactorily negotiated through the Province of the Sudan under the archbishopric of Elinana Ngalamu.

Ordination in the Episcopal Church

Bishop Light met Marc Nikkel while traveling in Sudan after the Juba consultation. Following the formation of the partnership with Sudan, Elinana Ngalamu requested help from Bishop Light toward Nikkel’s ordination. The strategy behind this inquiry and request was for Nikkel to have the opportunity to do priestly work among the Sudanese as well as have the benefits of resources afforded ordained people in the United States. Financial support would enable him to continue his work in the Sudan while protecting him with insurance and pension benefits not available through the Episcopal Church in the Sudan because of its utter poverty. The support would assist him to stay at Bishop Gwynn College for a longer period, greatly desired both by him and the Archbishop. The financial support was accomplished by the joint funding for salary, at a missionary level, from the Episcopal Church Overseas Department and the Church Missionary Society in London. This was one of the first such mutual and joint funding for a missionary. As it transpired, Marc’s later development of cancer made this arrangement even more fortunate for his health benefits and ongoing periodic treatment some years later.

At this point, Nikkel was not well known in southwestern Virginia. Normally aspirants for ordination are members of the diocese who enter into a process of discernment and meetings with their priest to discuss their call to the priesthood. The candidate is then referred to the diocesan Commission on Ministry for further examination. If the commission recommends the candidate, an application for admission as a postulant is submitted, this includes a letter of support by their congregation signed by members of the vestry and the rector. In Nikkel’s situation these procedures had to be expedited. Grace Memorial Church in Lynchburg, Virginia agreed to sponsor Nikkel for ordination, largely through the efforts of their rector Rev. Robert Thacker. Under the irregular circumstances, the Diocesan Commission on Ministry and the Standing Committee gave their uneasy consent.

Nikkel received a sabbatical leave, came to the United States for studies at the General Theological Seminary in New York, and began his pursuit of ordination through the Diocese of Southwestern Virginia. Early in January 1985 he took the General Ordination Examinations, being given at the General Seminary, and passed them. The Commission on Ministry and the Standing Committee gave their consent and he was ordained a deacon by Bishop Light at Grace Memorial Church, Lynchburg, on September 20, 1985. He returned shortly thereafter to his teaching duties at Bishop Gwynn College. Later Archbishop Ngalamu ordained him as a priest in Mundri at the College, capping a rapid and surprising transition on behalf of the Episcopal Church of the Sudan.⁶

Teacher at Bishop Gwynne College, 1985 To 1987

After returning to Sudan, Nikkel wrote to Heath Light

I am indeed back in Sudan. In some ways it has been easier to settle in this time. No supplies and furnishing to collect in the way it was when I began my first term. However, perhaps I am more realistic about the difficult and painful sides of life here. There is less romance, more hard struggle for life. It has been the most difficult year Bishop Gwynne College has known of the past eight. Occasionally there was thought of closing down, what with Beniah's (Benaiah Poggo, Principal of Bishop Gwynne College) severe six months of illness, shortage of staff, and the "disturbances" in the air. Now it is third term. With my return and that of another family, staffing seems stable. All are working hard. Still, there is a startling amount of death around us in these weeks. I arrived a month ago to find that a student had just died; 3 days later one of our cooks. The army has killed civilian Dinkas who are travelling, condemning them as spies. People are taken to the forest and shot, and we are fearful for the safety of some of our students. In the past week there have been at least four funeral for people related to the College community. There is a heaviness in the air.⁷

He developed a strong relationship with the Dinka, the largest ethnic group in Sudan with a population between one and two million. He wrote:

While more than 24 tribal groupings may be distinguished among them, they are more striking for their widespread cultural and linguistic homogeneity. They ... supplement pastoral pursuits with seasonal cultivation. Cattle are integral to the economic, social and religious life of the Dinka, providing the basic metaphors of self-understanding. Their stature, among the tallest peoples in the world, is complemented by a proud and fiercely independent spirit expressed in their self-designation as *Monyjien*, 'the man of men'.⁸

Nikkel sent a series of letters to friends and supporters that gave a picture of his daily life with colleagues and students struggling to create a learning environment in an impoverished and war torn country. Some of the letters have been collected and published by Grant LeMarquand.* In his letters he describes trips to visit Dinka cattle camps where he was "adopted into a Dinka clan's *gol*, the dung fire

* Grant LeMarquand, "Why Haven't You Left", Church Publishing, New York, 2006.

around which people gather in cattle camp that designates the agnatic descent group and the cattle its members possess".⁹ Later Nikkel related:

The Dinka have ways of forming you in their image [in a way] that says: "You are our person and you will do well to us." The Dinka formed me through every part of my person.¹⁰

In describing this period at the college, a fellow teacher Andrew Wheeler wrote of Nikkel:

His teaching brought a special depth and creativity to the activities of a small, struggling and rather traditional Protestant bible school. Students were introduced to anthropology and psychology; they began to explore how creative worship could nurture both the adoration of God and a trusting and caring community. The contextualization of theological thought and practice in Sudanese realities became a constant challenge for staff and students. Nikkel was not alone, of course, in shaping the creative, caring and enquiring community that developed at Bishop Gwynne College in the 1980s. Principal Benaiah Poggo's vision of the college as "The Village of God" gave us all a direction and a mandate. They were heady days.¹¹

Later, when reflecting upon his experience in Sudan, Nikkel wrote:

In northern cities, southern towns and in our college, I encountered Dinka who were receptive and enthusiastic Christians, profoundly committed to the Church. Their public prayers and vernacular songs revealed a resonant, creative and often introspective spirituality. Many were spontaneous evangelists who gathered their scattered people for worship, beginning self-perpetuating congregations. At our college Dinka relations with students of other ethnic groups were generally constructive, the latter sometimes remarking that 'these are not like ordinary Dinka'.¹²

Capture by Southern Sudanese Soldiers

A mutiny by troops in Bor led to the formation of the Sudan People's Liberation Army and a gradual spread of guerrilla activity. With life at the college becoming precarious, students and teachers were inspired by a passage from Daniel that told the story of the Fiery Furnace into which King Nebuchadnezzar threw three friends of Daniel. Members of the college clung to the vision of a sturdy faith that believed God could deliver them out of their terrible circumstances, and the idea that God was present with those suffering in the furnace. Nikkel was inspired by the story to design a contemporary version of the story that used young men with Southern Sudanese features. As of 2006, the picture survived through the turmoil and various uses of the chapel.¹³

In 1987 he and three colleagues were abducted from the college by the Southern Peoples Liberation Army. During a forced march of several hundred miles toward the Ethiopian border, he gained a firsthand knowledge of the Dinka's mobilization for a war of resistance against northern armies and the movement of Christian conversion. Although missionaries had been warned to leave, Nikkel decided to stay. In a letter he explained his decision,

Throughout our wilderness wanderings with the SPLA, both of these dimensions seemed to encompass us, the battle that has left 2 million corpses in its wake... and awareness of a compassionate God who knows all and is concerned with each life's demise. It is this ministry that held me, this enigma that transfixed me. God is intimately present even amid what appears to be his utter abandonment. Transfixed, I could not leave. This is why I stayed.¹⁴

Marc, and three other westerners, were captured in the middle of the night. The soldiers looted their belongings and made them walk 150 miles in 13 days with little more than the clothes on their backs and a Good News Bible. After the 13-day trek, the group made it to a camp, where they waited more than a month to be rescued. To gain relief from their desperate situation, the group made Communion.

There was no bread or wine. What we did have was *kissera*, ground sorghum made into paper thin, brown crepes, made by the hands of rebel wives. And we had our small daily ration of fresh milk. In a land of hunger and destitution this somehow seemed an appropriate image of the suckling of God. These became for us the Body and Blood of Christ, body and blood in the ruthless carnage of war. In those moments, as we sat around our altar, a battered ammunition box with Russian lettering across its sides, we tried to open our hearts to the suffering around us.¹⁵

In reflection, Nikkel wrote

Though I might be awkwardly labeled a “missionary” as if I were *taking* something to Sudan or *doing something to or for* it is people, I knew that in reality my primary purpose was going to be in encountering facets of the spiritual, the Divine, hitherto very rare in my experience. Soon after my arrival in Sudan this was amply confirmed. While I knew I had things to offer as a teacher, an artist, a pastor, the real benefit would be in the shared venture, the chemistry that would transform both student and teacher together. While there is no question that some refraction of the Christ is to be met in every human community, every society, every culture, it seemed as if these “small incarnations” were an almost daily occurrence during my years in Sudan. There was no encounter, no event, that did not possess its spiritual dimension, revealing something of the presence and nature of God.

For all its bland uncertainty, all the raw emotions and abrasive encounters, our experience as “hostages” brought these experience to their culmination.¹⁶

Doctoral Study

After release from capture by the SPLA, Nikkel began work on a doctoral dissertation entitled “Dinka Christianity”. He was drawn to the subject by a challenging statement he heard during a conversation with the Vatican’s Pro-Nuncio to Sudan. After expressing his interest in Dinka culture and language, Nikkel was told “We have tried for over one hundred years among the Dinka with very little success. They are a very difficult people. I wish you good luck.”¹⁷

In his foreword to the published dissertation, Andrew Wheeler wrote:

Mark went to Britain and began doctoral studies under Prof. Andrew Walls at the Center for the study of Christianity in the Non-Western World at Edinburgh University. This became a major ecumenical and historical study of the emergence of the Christian church amongst the Dinka with a particular emphasis on its hymns and spiritual songs. Mark received his doctorate in 1993 and his work was acclaimed as a major contribution to our understanding of African Christianity.¹⁸

The thesis documents the expansion of Christianity among the Dinka during the missionary era. While initially resistant to evangelization, the Dinka joined the church in large numbers. He analyzed vernacular hymns to show the distinctive vocabulary, metaphor and theology that developed. He wrote:

In each expression we find the Dinka creating a fresh synthesis of spiritual resources, ancestral and Christian, as they meet the challenges of a changing world. As these initiatives were underway, quite distinct creative impulses were arising among Dinka in the sphere of the CMS [Church Missionary Society].¹⁹

The thesis presents a translation and analysis of many Dinka songs. A song by Mary Alueel Ngongdit, composed during the massive displacement caused by government military advances, became the most popular hymn among Dinka Bor Christians and was sung frequently during the visit of the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1993. The first verse states:

Let us give thanks.
Let us give thanks to the Lord in the day of devastation,
And in the day of contentment.
Jesus has bound the world round with the pure light of the word of his Father.
When we beseech the Lord and unite our hearts and have hope,
Then the *jok*[†] has no power.
God has not forsaken us.
Evil is departing and holiness is advancing,
these are things that shake the earth.²⁰

Nikkel's doctorate was completed in 1993. A lecture in which he presented his insights into Dinka Christianity has been preserved in a DVD video, *The Crosses of Dinka Christians*, which describes the symbolic Dinka crosses and their hymnody.²¹

Theological Education

Bishop Nathaniel Garang invited Nikkel to return to Sudan to serve as 'Adviser for Theological Education' in the Dinka Diocese of Bor. With ECS leaders Nikkel established centers for intensive annual courses for

[†] A spiritual being influencing humans for good or evil.

pastoral and theological education. In 1996 he had trained some 300 ordained clergy, teachers and women's leaders at the Kakuma Refugee Camp, New Cush Displacement Camp and the Malek Bible School.²²

The Kakuma refugee camp was a home to many young Sudanese men who had left their homes to move to Ethiopia during the 1987-1988 civil war. These boys became known as the "unaccompanied minors" or "lost boys of Sudan". Some eight thousand of these boys settled in the Kakuma refugee camp.²³ Of these boys, Nikkel wrote,

The vast majority of the "minors" embraced Christian faith soon after they arrived in Ethiopia, finding in the biblical narratives not only paradigms through which to interpret their traumatic experiences but also a hope for the future. ...the "minors" have developed youth groups within the Episcopal Church of Sudan. The composition of vernacular songs is a major industry in these groups. Over five years, they have composed around a thousand new songs in traditional idioms, many of which are finely choreographed with vigorous dance. With few resources they have forged their own theology replacing the ebony club[‡] with the cross of Christ as their symbol of identity.²⁴

Stomach Cancer

In July 1998 Nikkel complained of health problems. He was first treated for an infection, but further tests indicated that he had stomach cancer. He went to London for care at Royal Marsden Hospital where doctors said that he could have as little as two weeks to live. However the cancer went into remission and he was able to travel to California to visit family and to Africa.²⁵ In June 1999, he wrote:

For years we lived amid the vulnerability of exotic diseases, the uncertainty of ground attacks; repeatedly we have been bombed from the air. When I was first told that my body was laden with cancer it seemed a natural progression: all that had gone before us was a piece with my illness and what then appeared my imminent death. Our suffering is one. Our death is one. And in Christ our suffering and death, whatever form they take, are laden with meaning. As I sought to embrace and confirm the significance of my condition, it all seemed a fabric with the life and ministry that preceded it. On hearing of my illness, several Sudan colleagues observed that "anyone who draws near our people, seeking to help them, will in himself experience our suffering and death."²⁶

In February 1999 he participated in a peace conference which brought Dinka and Nuer tribal leaders together in an attempt to end decades of war between the two groups. His transcript of their conversations formed the documentation for the development of the peace accord that was signed.²⁷

Nikkel died September 3, 2000 at the home of his sister in Reedley, California. His concern for the theological education of the Sudanese was expressed in one of his last email messages sent to friends on August 23, 2000. He asked that all of his bank accounts and remaining funds be combined into an

[‡] As they entered manhood, Jieng boys are given ebony clubs as an emblem of their new status.

account to provide educational scholarships for leaders, men or women, from six dioceses in the Episcopal Church of Sudan. The dioceses he selected were Bor (alternating between North and South Bor), Cueibet, Rumbek, Way, Yirol and Mundri. The scholarships would give priority to theological education, but could also include training for skills essential to the Church, such as administration and accountancy, music, youth programs, etc. For continued funding of these scholarships, he established the Marc Nikkel Scholarship Fund for individuals or churches to contribute in an ongoing basis.

Influence of Archibald Shaw

Nikkel had great respect for Archibald Shaw (1879-1956), one of the early Anglican missionaries in Sudan. When a delegation from the diocese of Southwestern Virginia met him in Nairobi for a visit to refugee camps at Kakuma and in Sudan, he began the tour with a trip to Shaw's burial site in Nairobi.²⁸ Regarding Shaw's influence among the Jieng⁵, he wrote:

Forty years after his death Shaw's Jieng' ox name', Machuor (Macuor), is invoked with warm affection by Jieng, traditionalist and Christian, across war torn Southern Sudan, in refugee and displacement camps, and in the shanty towns of Northern Sudan. Oral narratives of his bravery and irrepressible dynamism are retold, as they have been for decades. Through years of war when ancestral ties and traditions have been eroded, Jieng Episcopalians embrace this, their ancestor, ever more firmly as the founding father of their Christian faith. His example is invoked in prayers, that god will today raise up Christian leaders of equal single-mindedness and devotion.²⁹

Nikkel and Shaw were both single men who developed a strong bond with the Jieng. Both worked to develop vernacular songs among members of the church. Nikkel remarked:

Amidst dispersion and upheaval song provides cultural continuity, social solidarity, and affirms Christian faith in a manner still more urgent now than in Shaw's day. Themes of exile and return, of messianic deliverance, and lamentation, previously unknown, reveal the tensions, aspirations and theological vision of the moment. As fresh lyrics, musical idioms, and biblical imagery evolve, they bear tribute to the affirmation of indigenous composers given by Archibald Shaw over half a century earlier.³⁰

Nikkel took a great interest in the education of Sudanese. He established scholarships for youth at the Kakuma refugee camp in northern Kenya, and he organized short courses in theological education for groups in Sudan that required the arrangement of air transport for food to feed the students. Similarly, Shaw was concerned with the care and training of young people,

In terms of human relationship, Archibald Shaw's most profound influence was upon the boys, later men, whom he adopted, educated and employed. In his adoptive sons, he must, by turns, have been both delighted and grieved, for each was, in his maturity, forced to create his

⁵ Jieng is the preferred name by those known as Dinka

own perplexing synthesis between the well defined social, cultural and religious expectations of his kinfolk, and the ethical mandates of the Christian faith he had imbibed.³¹

Summing up Shaw's ministry, Nikkel wrote:

Among pioneer missionaries on the Upper Nile only the indomitable Shaw succeeded in winning the confidence of the Jieng. Meeting them on their terms of competitiveness and prestige, he gained a unique place in their affection. More than any other missionary he engaged in life on their terms, whether in debate, wrestling, haggling over cattle, or as fireside raconteur. ... In the 1980's and 90's the Episcopal Church among the Jieng has become one of the most rapidly growing, dynamic and culturally creative churches in the Anglican Communion. However, these vibrant expressions have arisen in the face of tragedy and loss that neither Shaw nor his colleagues could have imagined or desired. In the midst of massive upheaval, often struggling for the survival of human life as well as their beloved livestock, the Jieng are redefining their identity, frequently drawing upon the resource of the biblical narratives Shaw once labored to translate. Amidst unprecedented culture change Jieng men and women, children and elders, seek formal education on the very models Shaw established nearly a century ago.³²

According to Nikkel, Shaw was declared "the only white man with the heart of the Jieng".³³

Tributes

His obituary in Episcopal New Service included interviews with several people who had known him³⁴

"Hard work, isolation, physical suffering--challenges which mission candidates find daunting and debilitating--were integral to Nikkel's sense of call," said the Rev. Canon Patrick Mauney, director of Anglican and global relations at the Episcopal Church Center. "Nikkel served the church as teacher and poet, translator, scholar and theologian."

Mauney credited photographs of murals painted by Nikkel at Bishop Gwynne College in Mundri for bringing to life the rich traditions and spirituality of Sudanese believers for many Episcopalians in the U.S. Throughout his ministry, Nikkel held up the hymnody, poetry, and visual arts of the people to whom he had dedicated his life.

In addition,

Marc was an apostle to the oppressed and persecuted church," said Patrick Augustine, chair of the diocesan Companions for World Mission. "He understood his mission to Sudan through the eyes of Jesus. The theme of God's liberation of the poor and oppressed was always heard in his messages."

George Carey, the Archbishop of Canterbury, noted the significance of ministry, stating

At great personal cost [Marc] exemplified the immense importance of cross-cultural mission in the contemporary world—becoming the personal sinews that bring together the Body of Christ through sensitive sharing and interpretation.³⁵

The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion are heavily oriented toward incarnational theology. Marc Nikkel embodied that reality in his own life and ministry. He immersed himself as fully as anyone could in the Dinka life and practice, even to the extent of being referred to among the Dinka as “The Great White Elephant”. He totally gave his life to that part of God’s people, finding his meaning and mission among them, “emptying himself” in the words of Philippians 2:7-9 out of devotion and commitment.

¹ Jerry Hanes, “Sudan’s bull elephant’ leaves for home”, *Episcopal Life*, November 1998.

² Letter to Heath Light seeking Postulancy for Holy Orders, August 1, 1984.

³ *Ibid.* 1

⁴ Human Rights Watch, *Sudan, Oil and Human Rights*, 2003.

⁵ Marc Nikkel, *Jieng “Songs of Suffering” and the Nature of God*, in *Anglican and Episcopal History*, Vol. 71, p. 223.

⁶ Heath Light, *A Brief History of the Relationship Between the Diocese of Southwestern Virginia and the Province of the Episcopal Church of Sudan*, July, 2009.

⁷ Letter to Heath Light, October 26, 1985

⁸ Marc Nikkel, *Dinka Christianity*, Paulines Publications Africa, 2001, p. 23.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p23.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 1.

¹¹ Andrew Wheeler, in foreword to *Dinka Christianity* by Marc Nikkel, Paulines Publications Africa, 2001, p. 11.

¹² *Ibid.* 7 at 22.

¹³ Andrew Wheeler, *Bombs, Ruins and Honey*, Paulines Publications Africa, 2006,

¹⁴ Marc Nikkel, *Why Haven’t You Left? Letters from the Sudan*, edited by Grant Lemarquand

¹⁵ Marc Nikkel, *Hostages of the Situation in Sudan*, in *Anglican and Episcopal History*, 2002, Vol. 71, p. 217.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* p. 220.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* 8 at 21.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* 8 at 12.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* 8 at 282.

²⁰ Translated by Marc Nikkel, *Ibid.* 8 at p. 314.

²¹ “The Crosses of Dinka Christians” with Marc Nikkel, DVD video (1996), Fox Video Production Group, phone: 866-383-9703, web address: <http://www.foxvp.com/>

²² Obituary, “The Reverend Marc Nikkel”, *Telegraph*, Sep. 28, 2000.

²³ Marc Nikkel, “Songs of Hope and Lamentation from Sudan’s ‘Unaccompanied Minors’”, in *Sewanee Theological Review*, 1997, Vol. 40, p. 486.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Grant LeMarquand, “Why Haven’t You Left”, Church Publishing, New York, 2006.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p 172.

²⁷ James Hanes, *Episcopal News Service*, September 15, 2000.

²⁸ Visit by David Bernard and David Jenkins representing the Episcopal Diocese of Southwestern Virginia, 1995

²⁹ Marc Nikkel, *Archibald Shaw ‘Machuor*

”, in *Gateway to the Heart of Africa*, edited by F. Pierli, M. T. Ratti and A. C. Wheeler, Paulines Publications Africa.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 124.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 22.

³⁵ Archbishop of Canterbury, Press Release 000903, 2000.

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