

Mission to Liberia

By Nancy Greenhaw

OUR SMALL TEAM, including Emmanuel Tamakloe and Samuel Aduse-Poke from Ghana made its way from Monrovia, Liberia to the Diocese of Cape Palmas. Although Monrovia and Cape Palmas are both on the coast, no roads exist between the two, so a two day trip deep into the interior of the country was required to reach our destination. The first day we drove 11 hours and spent the night at a parish in Zwedro; Sunday evening we gratefully reached Harper and the small compound of the Catholic Pastoral Center.

Although we were told things had improved in Liberia, it was obvious they still have some big problems. The former president of Liberia, who was convicted of war crimes, is suing Liberia for his retirement benefits and some think he will be successful. His wife was elected a senator from their district. Many of the former war lords are now members of parliament and corruption seems to be the norm. Other than in the center of Monrovia, there is no electricity. The basic infrastructure of the country is still in shambles, with empty bombed out buildings sitting as reminders of the violent past. Of the few roads in Liberia, 90% are unpaved.

For the next five days we taught the youth leaders from each parish in the diocese. Last year we worked with priests and catechists and this year the bishop wanted us to empower his youth leaders. Each day began with 7am Mass followed by breakfast and then three sessions. In the afternoon there were two more sessions. Each day we taught on the Year of Faith, the New Evangeliza-

tion, getting and staying free, apologetics, and developing a personal relationship with Christ. Each evening there was a revival in St. Theresa's Church, set on the hill overlooking the Atlantic. Monday evening we began with praise and worship and then Lloyd spoke on the Lordship of Christ, led the people in a re-commitment to Jesus, and then invited Jesus to come and heal. A large number of people gave testimonies of healing.

More people came to Tuesday's revival meeting and before the women started the music there was a solemn rosary and litany. Then the explosion of praise and worship began and it attracted those who chose to linger in the cool evening breeze. I spoke on removing blocks in order to get closer to Jesus and spiritual warfare.

Wednesday we went to a refugee camp for 20,000 who fled the horrible conflict in the Ivory Coast. We ministered to about 100 leaders of the Catholic community there. Lloyd reminded them that Jesus was also a refugee and had to flee for his life to Egypt, where they knew no one and didn't speak the language. I then preached on the necessity of forgiveness. Afterwards we opened up the meeting to questions and most centered on trying to find ways to avoid forgiveness.

That evening there was Eucharist Adoration, Mass, and a continuation of the revival. Emmanuel and Samuel spoke on the Year of Faith and led the people in asking for the faith to move mountains. Lloyd then led a healing prayer and many more people testified of healing and deliverance. The



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following evening Emmanuel and Samuel led the evening presentation on empowerment in the Holy Spirit and prayed for the release of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and zeal to enter into the New Evangelization. It was a powerful session!

On our final evening we had praise and worship and Lloyd taught on healing. He explained that Jesus would soon pass by them in the Monstrance and that they should look at Him and tell Him their needs. The church was totally filled on this last night and as the priest slowly went through the church with Jesus you could see God doing great things! Monsignor Gaye, the rector of the Cathedral, thanked Renewal Ministries and us for coming and expressed his belief that faith and hope had been given to the people.

Early the next morning we left for the 10 hour trip to Gbanga. Our vehicle didn't have the trunk closed properly and everything including our hair was caked with red dust! We attended Sunday morning Mass at the Cathedral and invited everyone to the revival that evening. The following morning our training sessions began. At Bishop Anthony Borwah's request I gave a talk on the 5 keys to freedom to a number of priests, seminarians, and other leaders in the church. The bishop closed the school so the children could attend as well. I was surprised that all the school kids really paid attention. The bishop asked Lloyd to go to the radio station with Samuel where they talked about our Catholic faith and the New Evangelization. Several people who listened to the broadcast said it was heard by many non-Catholics and should help dispel attacks on the Church.

Last year we prayed for Bishop Anthony and the Cathedral church. Since he had been bishop, on every Saturday night only, birds would cover the altar and communion stations with their droppings. They also turned the wooden icon of St. Joseph white with their droppings, but never touched the icon of Mary. After we prayed the following Sunday the altar and communion stations were untouched by the birds and since then there have been no more birds! Thank you Jesus!

In the evening Emmanuel shared a number of points on discipleship and Samuel led the



It's a joy and privilege to partner with our African brothers and sisters. Emmanuel Tamakloe from Ghana, a gifted musician, leads the people in a time of praise and worship.

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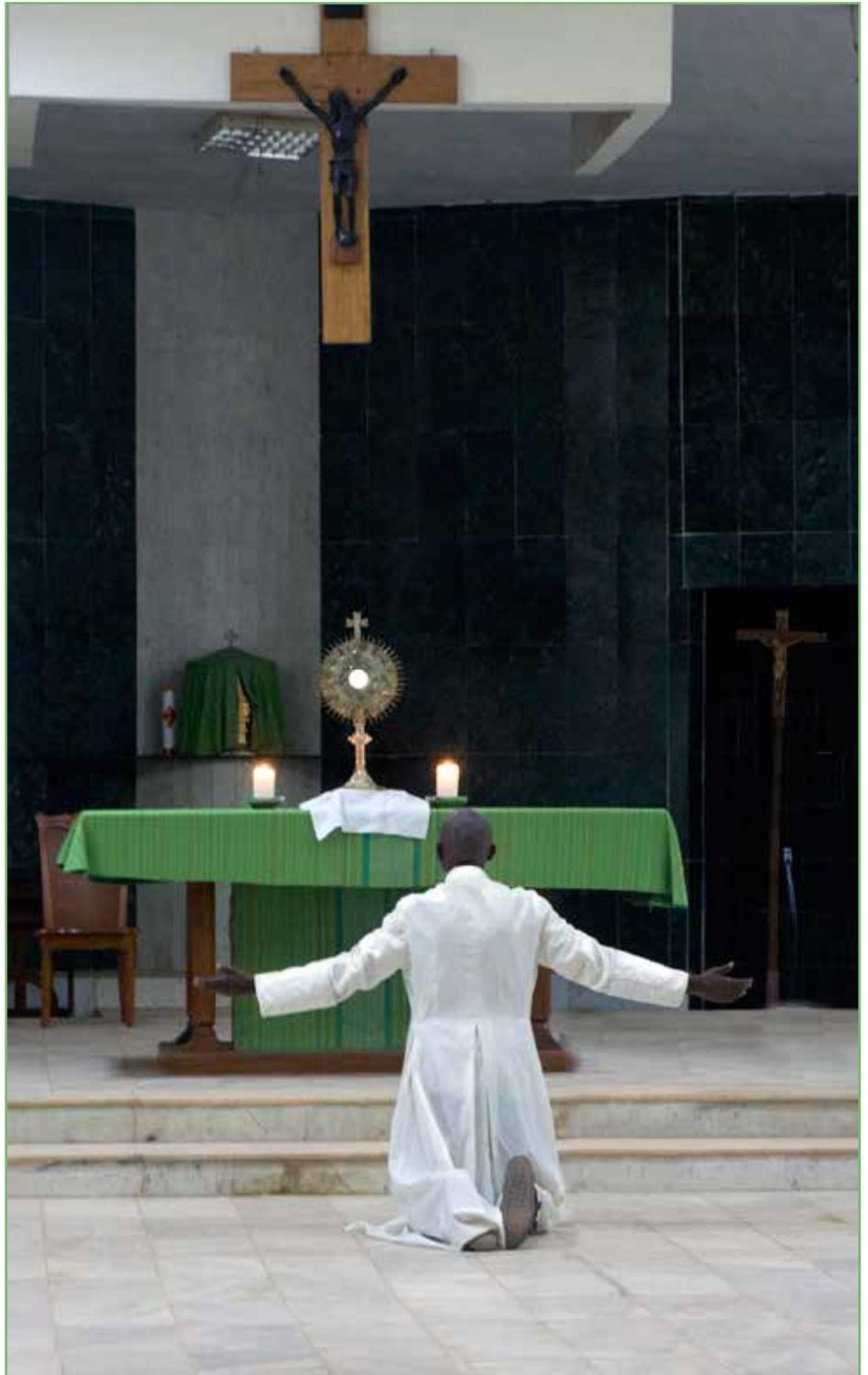
ministry. At the end Fr. Lee Walker, the Diocesan Administrator and chaplain for the Charismatic Renewal brought out the Blessed Sacrament and processed through the Church in a healing session. It was once again very powerful. Fr. Lee later shared with us that since we were there last year and taught on evangelization, he regularly takes teams to remote parishes throughout the diocese, and that much fruit had been borne not only in the parishes, but with his team as well as they really feel a part of the Church's mission. Bishop Anthony asked us to come next year and do revivals in Nimba county where the Church has a very low profile. He wants to run radio spots and put out flyers and he is confident we can give the Church there a real boost.

The next morning we left for Monrovia and the following day we met with leaders from the charismatic renewal in the area. Fr. Bobby Washington is the Chaplain for the Renewal and wanted us to help the leaders with structuring their prayer meetings and promoting unity. We returned around 5:00 pm for a revival meeting. The revival was open to everyone and the church was full. After a wonderful time of praise and worship Lloyd gave a talk on walking with the Lord

and challenged them to get fully involved with the mission of the Church to evangelize. Then Fr. Clement exposed the Blessed Sacrament and brought Jesus around the church. The people responded with great enthusiasm! One lady shared that last year when we were in Monrovia she had been healed of cancer at the Eucharist healing service. It was a powerful testimony of God's love and the power of the Eucharist!

On our last night at the revival Emmanuel gave a great talk on forgiveness and then led a powerful prayer time as we interceded for families and all the children. By the intensity of the prayer in the church you could tell that Emmanuel's teaching had struck close to home! Many people came up to thank us and shared how the teaching and ministry had helped them in their lives.

We came away convinced that we are making a real difference in Liberia. The Church there has so many problems and so few resources that it is easy to get discouraged, but God has some good shepherds in place. Our visits provide the focus and the funds to bring people together and give them a sense of purpose and mission. +



At the end of an evening session in Gbanga, Fr. Lee Walker led a powerful time of Eucharistic Adoration.