

## United Parish Sermon Outline 5.3.23

### Theme: **God Sends His Spirit: 3 Encouragements from Kenya**

Bible Reading: John 16:1-15 – see v. 7 “Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, **I will send him to you.**”

#### **1 The Spirit SUPPORTS us**

“I will ask the Father, and he will give you another **advocate** to help you and be with you forever – the Spirit of truth” John 14:16-17

Context – “Paraclete” (v.16) = “One called alongside to help” = Council for Defence during persecution

This actually happened when the disciples were arraigned before the Sanhedrin, Gamaliel was the Advocate – Acts 5:33-40

The same happened in 1991 in Nairobi - Story of Tujisaidie origins, slum demolition, Provost Peter Njenga was the Advocate, President Moi was shamed into providing land for 350 homeless families.

**Question: How has the Holy Spirit supported you in your life? Have you ever been helped by an Advocate – someone used by God to give you support when you needed it?**

Tujisaidie Community Self-help group advocated for each other!

Leaders – **Kathleen, Louise, Antony, Lucy & Isabelle** - Advocacy from All Saints' Cathedral/CMSI

Things improved - Nursery > Tujisaidie Community Centre School founded by local residents

Free school meals provided (with continuous support from St Mark's Dundela via CMSI for 32 years)

Sewers & Electricity installed 2018

Question: Are there ways the Christians in our fellowship are advocating for each other, for those in the local community or globally?

#### **2) The Spirit SENDS us**

John 20:19-23 “Jesus said to them, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I send you.’ Then he breathed on them and said, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’”

Christianity is not a Monument, it's a Movement! Jesus sends us on a Mission, and the Holy Spirit is like the wind in our sails!

This can be disturbing – some of us would prefer to stay inside our comfort zone.

In the King James Bible “Advocate” is translated “Comforter” – but in those days “to comfort” meant “to strengthen”, not mollycoddle!

Bayeux tapestry panel depicts a scene from the 1066 Battle of Hastings

Features Bishop Odo: at one stage the Norman cavalry were retreating, but Odo charged in on horseback and turned them back with his episcopal mace!

Latin text reads “Hic Odo Eps (Episcopus) Baculu(m) Tenens Confortat Pueros”, – which translates “Here Odo the Bishop holding a mace **comforts** the boys (ie cavalrymen).” The Holy Spirit can be like Bishop Odo, prodding & provoking us out of our comfort zones into Mission, changing retreat into advance!

**Question: Have you ever sensed that the Holy Spirit was disturbing you and sending you out of your comfort zone?**

Story: Morethanjustameal – Antony Njoroge & team from Tumaini provide meals for 300+ children every Saturday in Kayole. But it’s “more” than just food – he makes a point of making contact with individuals. Story of 13 yr old girl who was a newcomer, whom Antony spoke to. He discovered she was not going to school as she was caring for her sick mother. Antony and colleagues visited her home the next day and found the mother lying on the bare earth covered with a single blanket, and the rain pouring in through the leaky roof and walls of her shanty dwelling. The Tumaini group then acted to find the family better accommodation, provide regular food and enrol the girl in school.

**Question: What can we learn from this story? Can it be an encouragement to us in the United parish?**

### **3) The Spirit UNITES Us**

“Do your best to preserve the unity which the Spirit gives by means of the peace that binds you together. There is one body and one Spirit.... there is one God and Father of all people, who is Lord of all, works through all, and is in all.” Ephesians 4:3-6

What happened after the Spirit came on the disciples at Pentecost? They spoke in other languages – all the languages of the known world at that time, including “Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene” (Acts 2:10). The Holy Spirit was reaching out in Mission to North Africans. In Acts 8:26-40 the first African convert to Christ is recorded – the Ethiopian eunuch.

Through our Mission link with Kenya we in the United Parish have experienced that sense of unity in the faith with Christians in Kenya.

Antony at Clive and Leigh’s house in 2019 - Fellowship and Prayer!

Frances & Hilary with Louise at “Baby Basics” - Cross fertilisation of ideas – “Baby Buckets” Antony brought back the idea to Kayole and gave it a local twist!

Lorraine & Arlene with Louise at School Uniforms - Exactly the same issue in Kenya!

**Question: Have you ever experienced a unity with someone from another culture or background through faith?**

Partnership Plan – a means of strengthening and deepening that unity, inspired by the Holy Spirit.

**Question: Have a look at the Partnership Plan – is there something I can do to help?**