

Holy Trinity Peace Village Kuron

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Dear Rev Father/Mother General

Subject: APPEAL FOR RELIGIOUS PERSONNEL FOR HTPV KURON

I am writing to you appealing for religious personnel to provide a stable spiritual presence in the Holy Trinity Peace Village Kuron (HTPVK), South Sudan, of which I am the Founder and Patron.

Holy Trinity Peace Village has now been in existence for over fifteen (15) years. It had long been my dream to create a community bringing together different tribes and modelling ways of peace and reconciliation based on personal transformation in a setting of human development. Pope St John Paul II personally allowed me to retire early from my role as diocesan bishop in order to create this dream, and that is what I have devoted the last few years of my life to.

HTPVK is now a thriving community comprising more than 20 tribes and nationalities and touching thousands of families. Development activities include agriculture, education, health, vocational training, Community mediation, youth work, and provision of clean water, two bridges, road maintenance and even an Internet cafe, all in an extremely remote and marginalised area of South Sudan. Participants in the village include the local people, professional staff, volunteers and many visitors. Although it is a Catholic project, the village is ecumenical and interfaith, and has a close relationship with the South Sudan Council of Churches. I have been the co-founder of New Sudan Council of Churches in 1990.

After South Sudan descended back into civil conflict in 2013, the area around Holy Trinity Peace Village remained peaceful, largely as a result of the efforts of the peace village. However, we reflected on this and discerned that we could not sit back in an oasis of peace while the nation burned, so we decided to open a "Peace Academy" where we invite individuals and groups to spend time in the village to experience the atmosphere of peace, to see how it works, and hopefully to undergo personal transformation. This work has already begun, assisted by some of our international donor partners. We are particularly grateful to Catholic Relief Services, Norwegian Church Aid, PAX Netherlands, the Friends of Sister Emmanuelle, the European Union, the Swiss government, Diocese of Mainz and others.

I have tried to provide a spiritual foundation to the village, but I am often called away for peace and reconciliation activities elsewhere in the country and the world; I have humbly accepted a number of international peace awards for my work and the work of Holy Trinity Peace Village. I have now passed my 80th year and I am aware that I will not always be able to fulfil this role. We have had a number of generous young diocesan priests who carry out pastoral work with great zeal, but we have lacked a stable mature spiritual presence, and it is for this reason that I dare to contact and ask you whether you could assign us a small community of two or three religious men and women who could provide that stable presence to assist me. It could be a fully contemplative community, or it could be religious who

are prepared to mix the contemplative and active ministries. I had Religious Sisters from Missionary Sisters of Mary Mother of the Church (MSMMC) but they were withdrawn because I was many times out for Peace negotiations. Holy Trinity Peace Village is in the County of Kauto with a population of fifty two (52) thousand without spiritual care at this moment.

I should warn you that Holy Trinity Peace Village Kuron is in a very isolated and underdeveloped location, around 330 km from the State capital town of Kapoeta and 600 km from the capital city, Juba. Roads are poor and during the long rainy season access is only by light aircraft operated by UN, Mission Aviation Fellowship and Africa Inland Mission (AIM) Air. There is no mobile phone network. Accommodation and facilities are basic, but nevertheless we have brick houses, solar power, clean taped water from boreholes, Internet and satellite phones, a clinic and the beauty of the rural area and people. Personnel need to be prepared for some hardship and to be committed to spending periods of several months in the village without a break. It might suit experienced religious or elders looking for a fresh challenge in their autumn years, as long as they are relatively fit and healthy (although we can usually arrange medical evacuations by road or air to Kenya in an emergency). This does not exclude young religious full of zeal and adventures. We have over 80 staff with their families and some Norwegian Volunteers and others.

In case you are worried that you are being asked to run the village, let me set your mind at rest. We have a Director and his professional staff, assisted by the local community, volunteers and staff from our Christian aid agencies who handle that. There is a Board of Directors who oversees the work. What I am asking you to do is to contribute to the spiritual life and vision of the village, to provide pastoral care and guidance to the staff and to ensure that our village remains rooted in the spirit of the Risen Lord, bringing peace and reconciliation through personal transformation.

As a first step, let me invite you with the words of Jesus, "Come and see!" (John1: 39). You would be most welcome to come and visit Holy Trinity Peace Village Kuron, to spend a few days amidst the peace and beauty of our community and to assess whether you have courageous religious personnel who would be willing and able to devote themselves to this ministry. I am ready to facilitate your visit to Holy Trinity Peace Village Kuron. The ordinary of the Diocese of Torit is responsible for the pastoral work in the County of a population of 52,000, there are so far two vacant parishes, and the ordinary is looking for some missionaries to fill those vacant parishes.

I look forward to hearing from you.

May God bless you and bring you peacefully to Holy Trinity Peace Village Kuron.

Yours sincerely in Christ,



Rt. Rev. Paride Taban Abraham Kenyi
Bishop Emeritus of Catholic Diocese of Torit
Founder of Holy Trinity Peace Village Kuron



Cc: The Ordinary of Catholic Diocese of Torit
Cc: President of SS/SCBC
Cc: Secretary General SSCC