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Holy Trinity Peace Village
Kuron
Eastern Equatoria State
Kapoeta, South Sudan

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Greetings from Peace Village, Kuron.

It is really a Peace Village. I had my peaceful Christmas and a Prosperous New Year in Kuron.

God really blessed the area with Peace. You can walk from Kapoeta to Boma – nearly 300 kms without fear even trees are greeting Maata.

You can sleep in any village everybody welcomes you, all the night having good dreams.

Before Christmas the community destroyed all kind of alcohol except Merissa abiat (local drinks made out of sorghum), which can hardly make someone drunk unless one drinks 20 litres.

Now we hear no fighting and no shot of guns because of lack of alcohol. This was not an initiative from the government but from Toposa community because they found that alcohol was destroying their community. I wish God gives all south Sudanese such courage.

I was happy that I had this time stayed longer in Kuron. I actually decided to spend most of my time in Kuron after celebrating my priestly golden Jubilee.

I may occasionally travel to Juba because I want to make the Kuron Peace Village a true Peace Village, to make the community in the Peace Village self reliant and to own the Peace Village. Since I am now advancing in age, I do not want too much distraction.

I want to make peace village in Kuron to become a model for South Sudan. I am happy that the Toposa community are picking up and they began to work harder.

This year, I took a team to Kenya, Kisumu "*Dala Rieko*" a peace Village founded by a Norwegian Friend Mr Tor Steinar Rafoss, after the conflict in Kenya during the 2007 election. We are now trying to implement the experience of community Peace Building in Kuron.

I invite those who want to found Peace Village like Kuron to visit Kuron after one year, so friends if you do not see me in Juba or Torit, now you know where I am.

Anyway I was three times in Madi land due to the tragic situation, which is happening in the area. Once with two Bishops Archangelo from African Inland Church and Isaiah from Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS) and twice when I was traveling and returning from Kenya on 24th, 31st, January and 1st, of February 2015.

I met the chief of Pageri Payam and the community on the 24th, of January in the morning. After my finding from the chief and the community I went and met with the chief army commander and head of security in the area. I listen to them at Pageri.

In the afternoon I travelled to Nimule, I met the chief Administrator Mr Emilio Igga. I listened to him and with him drove to Military barracks to meet the over all commander and the security officers. The commander invited me to visit the Internally Displaced People's camp in Melijo. We prayed and addressed them. By listening to the community, I learnt that they have great fear. Too many armies in the area, many of their youth and intellectuals are arrested. The government do not care or listen to their cries. Number of IDP is above the population of the community.

Cows are destroying their crops. They are accused that they harbour rebels and that they do not want to tell the truth.

I told the IDPs to respect the crops of the locals. They have no cows; their crops are their cows. If they respect themselves "***I took a child in my hand***" this child will grow old in Madi land like me.

From the army and security they said that they found areas in the bush where the rebels cooked and places of training and defected youths.

I told the Madi community that they as a small tribe couldn't wage war. They are people of peace. They have no guns and they should not accept any gun in their area. From the colonial time, their guns were education and hoes "agriculture". They should live peacefully with IDPs. They are their brothers and sisters. The most important thing among them is respect and love. Time will come when the IDPs will return back to their land.

Let them tell the rebels if they are there to leave the area. It is a suicide for Madi to engage in war. Let them call God to assist them. General Joseph Lagu did not fight a tribal war but a National war by involving all southern Sudanese. Those who are strong should join the national army to protect the country against foreign invasion. Christians should not kill Christians or south Sudanese should not kill south Sudanese. Enough is enough.

I told the army to do their work justly; respect the lives of civil populations. I gave them the example of President Jafar Mohamed Nemeiri who told his army in 1967 that, if you kill an Anyanya give me his gun, if not you must be punished. For this reason south Sudanese especially in Torit, respected him. He could move among the people without bodyguards.

To the security I told them "let them do their work of security" let them not be like some of the security in Sudan of 1992 to 2004 who were feeding on the blood of their brothers and sisters. Do not employ lazy people or drunkards for security work because they will not be sincere. I learned this from Torit in 1967 where lazy drunkards accused me that, I was enrolling people for Anyanya and sending them at night. When I went to the army commander, I told him that Abubakar the governor was hunting for me and sending policemen to kill me.

The commander brought a file and said, Abuna! Father, this file is accusation from the Governor about you but I found no guilt against you for the good work you are doing for the people in Torit. It is easier for the soldiers and the police to kill the Governor and me than kill you. I remained in Torit from 1967 to 1972.

Respect the civilians, respect each other and God will bless you with a happy and a long life and a lasting peace will reign in south Sudan.

It is time of Lent let us fast and repent for our sins and God will unite us and give us lasting Peace.

God bless you all.

Bishop Emeritus Paride Taban
Founder and Chairman
HTPVK