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PAACS Alumni Newsletter

VOL.5

Doing the Walk

*"Enoch walked with God."
- Genesis 5:22, 24*

by Rev. Stan Key

Nothing describes the essence of biblical religion more than the call to walk with God. And no one illustrates this better than Enoch. His life story is told in just four short verses, yet his example illuminates the entire biblical drama. Though Enoch's life was short compared to that of his contemporaries (living only 365 years!), his impact for good was infinitely greater. What made the difference? Not his education, abilities, good looks, family, wealth or connections. Only one thing distinguished Enoch from everyone else: he walked with God.

It was a distinctive walk. In a long genealogical list of names (Gen. 5), Enoch stands out from the rest. All lived a long time, had children and died. But Enoch was different. He walked with God. And like Noah and Abraham, this made his life impact human history!

It was a sanctifying walk. When we walk with God, we cannot walk with sin. The one walk nullifies the other. This explains why God said to Abraham, Walk before me and be blameless (Gen. 17:1).

It was an intimate walk. Can two walk together unless they are agreed? (Amos 3:3). The reason Jesus gave the all-encompassing invitation "Follow me" was so that he could establish friendship with those he came to save. Christianity is a relationship long before it is a religion. The only way to know God is to walk with him.

It was an adventurous walk. Doing the walk will lead you to places of mind-expanding discovery, heart-throbbing beauty, and white-knuckled adventure. No one suffers from boredom when they walk with God. No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no heart has even imagined the things God has prepared for those who love him (1 Cor 2:9).

It was a homeward walk. God has a destination in mind. You aren't walking in circles! He is leading you home. Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him (Gen 5:24). I imagine it this way: One day as they walked along God turned to Enoch and said, "Hey, we're closer to my house now than we are to yours. Why don't you just come on home with me?" And he did.

Over and over in the New Testament, we are invited to do the walk. "Follow me," Jesus said (Matthew 4:19). The joy of salvation is discovered only as we step out by faith and walk with God.

Welcome to the 5th edition of the PAACS Alumni Newsletter. As of the first of the year, PAACS now has 62 graduates serving throughout Africa in 19 countries. Praise the Lord! On a recent trip to Egypt, I had the distinct privilege of meeting our first graduate from the Egyptian PAACS program, Dr. Shady Fayik. Dr. Fayik is staying on as faculty at Harpur Memorial Hospital in Menouf - Congratulations Shady! This edition shares the stories of two of our graduates, Dr. Jean Faya Yaradouno, serving in Guinea, and Dr. Agneta Odera who is currently completing additional pediatric and cardiothoracic training in South Africa. Their inspiring stories are an encouragement to us all. Thank you to all our graduates for their kingdom work.

— Thomas C Robey, MD
Editor; trobey@mcw.edu

Bringing Hope Home to Guinea

— Jean Faya Yaradouno, MD

Dr. Jean Faya Yaradouno graduated from the PAACS program at Bongolo Hospital in 2010 and headed back to his home country of Guinea to fulfill his commitment to his church that had recommended him to PAACS. He served at Hope Clinic and has never left. Jean Faya is the only surgeon at Hope Clinic and also serves as its medical director. He has established and maintained the surgical services of the medical center over the last 7 years and coordinates and supervises all the medical activities that take place at the clinic.

Dr. Yaradouno's practice encompasses all surgical specialties with the most common surgical conditions being infections, tumors, hernias, trauma and congenital malformations. As most surgeons, Dr. Yaradouno has learned more from his patients in practice than he ever learned during his training. Consequently his surgical repertoire has greatly expanded and he has really blossomed as a maxillofacial surgeon performing cleft lip and palates and other complex facial surgeries. His day starts with devotions followed by teaching rounds and ward rounds. He then spends the rest of the day alternating between clinic and the operating room. He finishes the day with more rounds and administrative meetings. His job isn't any easier once he gets home since he is on call every night.

When asked how the Lord is using him in Guinea, Jean Faya explains, "God uses me as his working instrument in his hands to demonstrate his love and compassion to the patients and through the medical and surgical care that I and my team offer to all these patients. I take advantage of this strategic position to proclaim the gospel of Christ Jesus. This is why we treat, but it is Jesus who heals our patients." Dr. Yaradouno is also committed to his local church teaching Sunday School each week before the main service, as well as leading a prayer group and a bible study in his home every Sunday night.

The Lord has blessed Dr. Yaradouno with a beautiful wife, Jacqueline, and three healthy children: Cecile Sia (9 years old), Grace Koumba (6 years old) and Godwin Saa Paul (3 years old). Jacqueline is studying at midwifery school and will be graduating this summer. For the past two years, she and the kids have been living in another city, 800 km away, while she completes her studies. Living away also enables the children to get a better education. The biggest challenge the Yaradouno family faces serving the Lord in the remote areas of Guinea is how to ensure a proper education for their children. There are no good schools where Jean Faya



practices. These educational demands often can force a PAACS graduate to take a position where the resources available to their family are better. Another challenge that Dr. Yaradouno describes is "the weight of the African family". "One must always help financially parents, brothers, sisters, uncles, nephews and nieces even when the means are not." A third challenge the Yaradounos face is the lack of adequate means of travel for their family. They live in such a remote part of Guinea and the roads are so bad, that it is virtually impossible to travel during the rainy season.

Personally, Jean Faya describes his biggest challenge is loneliness. He is the only surgeon at his medical center and he is on call 24/7, every week of the year. He lacks a colleague to run difficult cases by and he lacks diagnostic adjuvants such as CT scans or a pathologist to review tumor cases. Furthermore, many of the clinic staff have left because of low salaries. However, despite all these inadequacies, Dr. Yaradouno continues to marvel at God's grace, healing his patients each day, helping him with major surgeries each day without complications and sustaining him with good health despite his demanding schedule. He also points out that many PAACS graduates are in similar roles as his; facing a demanding schedule with no other surgical help in remote areas of Africa. His encouragement to all of them is, "Take courage in this work which God has entrusted to us. God is the only support, the only protector and the only one who should be glorified in our lives."

Thank you Dr. Yaradouno for all you do for the people of Guinea and may your words be an encouragement to all PAACS alumni serving the Lord throughout Africa.

Trail Blazer for Christ

– Agneta Odera, MD

Dr. Agneta Odera describes her journey to become a female pediatric surgeon in Kenya as “a guinea pig and trail blazer for Christ.” She has always sensed a calling from God to tread in these uncharted waters. Agneta graduated from the PAACS general surgery program at Tenwek Hospital in 2013. She grew up in the highlands of tea country in Kericho, Kenya. She is the oldest of six children. Agneta’s parents have always supported her dream of becoming a surgeon. She attended medical school at the University of Nairobi and then did her internship at Tenwek in 2005. During her time there, she fell in love with both pediatrics and surgery. After her internship she spent two years working as a medical officer in



Kenya. During these years, God opened her eyes to the many medical needs in Africa. She states, “I was heavily burdened by the severe extent of pathology I saw as well as the wide spectrum of congenital pediatric cases. What broke my heart was how many parents for reasons of financial constraints, cultural barriers and poor access to early health care would present with very sick children that could not afford trips to the capital for much needed specialized care. Many opted to just take their children home to die.”

Dr. Odera yearned to bring the much-needed specialized surgical care to her own country but she also desired to train in a reputable program. She did not see this possibility in her native Kenya. However, God did open the door when PAACS started a general surgery program at Tenwek Hospital in 2008. In 2013, Agneta along with Dr. Arega Leta, were the first graduates of Tenwek’s program. PAACS was the answer to God’s call on Agneta’s life. Through a variety of rotations, she was able to work with some of the most talented and yet humble surgeons from all disciplines in surgery. She also appreciated all the early hands on experience she got with PAACS. “I had mentors who challenged not only the growth of my professional career as a surgeon and leader, but also my spiritual growth, keeping me accountable to truly

what our overall goal and purpose is – to be the hands and feet of Jesus and to bring hope and healing to a very needing and lost world to the glory of God our Father.”

After she graduated in 2013, Dr. Odera continued to work on the faculty at Tenwek for three years, training and mentoring surgical residents. Commenting on the impact of PAACS in Kenya, Agneta stated, “It has been an amazing ripple effect with the waves of change growing wider and wider each year. The sense of family at Tenwek is palpable and I am proud to continue to be associated with them.”

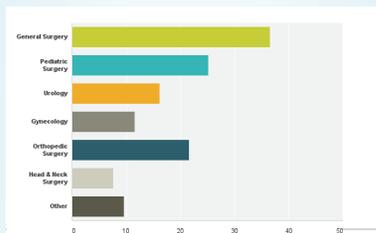
In 2016, Dr. Odera finally had the opportunity to fulfill her lifelong dream of becoming a pediatric surgeon when she started the pediatric surgery masters program in Durban, South Africa. She is currently in her second year of training. She is hoping to gain further exposure in pediatric cardiothoracic surgery during her time in South Africa. Her long-term professional goals are to have outreach ministries in pediatric general and cardiothoracic surgery in rural based hospitals across Africa. Agneta has a special place in her heart for the parents of pediatric surgery patients. “They are often vulnerable and hurting I’m reminded of God our Father who is constantly agonizing over we His children and to the extent that he spared nothing, not even His only son to restore us to Him, that we may have life in abundance.”

Please pray for Dr. Odera – that God will keep her accountable to these things that God has placed on her heart and help her to continue to offer herself to the children of Africa through her pediatric surgery practice.



Fun Fact from the PAACS Alumni Survey

For each surgical specialty, please tell us the percentage of cases you perform.



Latest News

We have started a PAACS Alumni email list-serve using Google Groups. This forum exists to share experience and advice among hard-working PAACS alumni surgeons relating to medical, administrative, and spiritual challenges. Search for PAACS alumni on Google groups and start posting!

Please Pray for Our PAACS Graduates

MALI
Philadelphie Dembele

GUINEA
Faya Bomde Yaradouno
Ruffin Loua

SIERRA LEONE
Aiah Lebbie

LIBERIA
Jerry Brown

NIGERIA
Chukwudi Okorie

CAMEROON
Jacques Ebhele
Gerald Ekwen
Domain Fuka
Benjamin Malikidogo
Evaristus Njume
Anthony Nesoah
Henry Ndasi
Yali bin Ramazani

GABON
Anatole Nzanzu
Simplice Tchoba

UGANDA
Martin Situma
Ighohwo Etuh

MALAWI
Arega Leta

DRC
Jean Bataneni
Hubert Kakalo

ANGOLA
Paulo Baltazar

SOUTH AFRICA
Mifila Degaulle
Agneta Odera



EGYPT
Shady Fayik

ETHIOPIA
Frehun Ayele
Segni Bekele
Dejene Desalegn
Solomon Endrias
Daniel Gidabo
Tewodros Tamiru
Haileyesus Tesfaye

KENYA
Beryl Akinyi
Elijah Mwaura Chege
John Kanyo
Amos Chege Macharia
Damaris Mbalu
Ken Muma
Tony Mwenyemali
Elizabeth Mwachiro
Michael Mwachiro
Mark Mwangi
Kamene Mwanzia
George Ngock
Jack Okumu
Philip Blasto Ooko
Ivan Seno

TANZANIA
Catherine Mung'ongo
Henry Ine

BURUNDI
Nkesha Gista

RWANDA
Edmond Ntaganda
Ronald Tubasiime

MADAGASCAR
Heuric Rakotomalala
Fabruce Ramaherimamonjy
Elsou Randrianantenaina
Harison Rasamimanana
Roseline Razanamampionona

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