

Rooted In Jesus Conference in the Diocese of Zanzibar

6th-18th June 2013, with the conference itself 10th -14th June – Fr Mund Cargill-Thompson, Team Leader

14 people attended from 5 of the 7 parishes in the diocese. The biggest parish in the diocese (the Cathedral) was not represented. But those who did come seemed to really grasp the vision of Rooted in Jesus. Of those who attended 5 were priests (all male) 9 were lay (2 female the rest male).

There had been communication difficulties in the lead up to the conference, which meant that attendance was much lower than expected. In terms of putting Rooted into Jesus into practice.

- The Vicar General, Canon Jerry Kramer, was very keen for the programme to be fully owned. Jerry has said that when he gets back from his furlong in the USA, he will chase each priest to see how RinJ is getting along in their diocese. His wife Stacy has agreed to act as diocesan coordinator.
- We had a good, detailed and lengthy session of getting participants to plan for the way ahead. We broke into parish groups, and most of the parishes identified actual people they were going to invite to be parts of their group, when they were going to meet and where. It looks like almost all groups will meet on church premises because of the local Christians' remarkable cultural reluctance to have people within their homes.
- The most detailed planning was done by Fr Matthew Mhagama and his colleagues from St Barnabas Mahonda. Whilst some of the parishes had been cautious, planning a single initial group with all three of their delegates who had come leading the same group, Mahonda parish had planned 5 different groups and had gone into a lot of detail of preparation.



Vicar General Jerry Kramer awarding certificates at the end of the conference

The team were Fr Mund Cargill-Thompson (TL), Mthr Bev Mason, and Fr Nicholas Anderson. The three of us seemed to be a good team and to have worked very well together. Bev and I are both extroverts ; Nicholas is of a more quiet and reflective personality type which meant he balanced Bev and me out very well.

Nicholas wrote: "My impressions were that this is a beleaguered church, who know that they are but second class citizens in a community that is overwhelming Islamic. This appeared to impact on every facet of life, with the result that among the young that was a degree of hemorrhaging as they converted to Islam as a means of improving both marital and employment prospects. The recent murder of one RC priest and the injuring of another, and the realization that justice was unlikely to be done, hung like a cloud."



The team (Fr Nicholas Anderson, Mthr Bev Mason and Fr Mund Cargill Thompson) with conference organiser Canon Stanley Lichinga

Vicar General Jerry Kramer wrote: "We LOVED the team and, again, the week of training was absolutely excellent. Home based discipleship is exactly what we need on Zanzibar. . . and precisely how God is moving here right now. Perfect for working with "cousins" -- as there is no possibility of growing the visible church here in this climate."



Worship at St Barnabas Mahonda; Zanzibar cathedral, built on the site of the old slave market; The slave monument outside