

## FRIENDS OF MARSABIT

(Written by Rob and Sue)

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Dear Friends,

**Bishop Daniel Qampicha**

**Greetings.** I pray you were encouraged by the latest **Voice of Hope** magazine. It has been exciting to hear about how the Christian community is growing. The extension to St. John's church in Sololo was completed and dedicated, much needed because the congregation has outgrown its church building; churches were full over Christmas; a new church being built in Leparua; a brilliant Youth conference, iMarika, for over 400 youngsters, joined by 13 clergy. Mind you, being chased by an elephant isn't the normal hazard of going on mission! On the Northern border, there is increased persecution, and Mr. Lee and his mother-in-law have still not been found.

**Please pray for their safe return and for the growing church, facing hunger, drought and persecution**



Bible study at the iMarika Youth Conference

Since Norm Gorrie retired, Jomo, the **Diocesan Youth worker**, has taken over the mission department. Much of the mission is done by youngsters on fire for the Lord, so it is a natural fit for Jomo. But it is draining for him, and he needs to hand over to someone else. In April and August, he is planning a Youth and Children's leaders' summit, and in August, he will be planning the major Diocesan mission. Given the natural enthusiasm for mission by our Kenyan brothers and sisters, this is a heavy responsibility, but a joyful one! He is also responsible for a small Rendile church at Ula Ula, 4 miles outside Marsabit town, whose youngsters are more educated than their parents' generation, and beginning to stretch their wings.

Two youngsters mentored by both Norm and Jomo have gone for further training at Church Army College in Nairobi, Guyo from Sagante and Hirkena from Kargi – very exciting! Norm and Janelle are planning to go back in June for 3 months, which will be greatly appreciated by Jomo and the team

**Please pray for Jomo (and Ann his wife), for a new Diocesan Mission Coordinator and for the April Youth Leaders' summit**



Mission at Lomungi, Daaba Parish



**Sad news for those who have prayed for Marsabit for many years:**

**Peter Ekai**, one of the clergy and a pillar of the Turkana community, who was based in Ngaremara and has ministered for over 30 years, died in early February. He left the army and trained for ordination in the early 1990s and served in the Isle Archdeaconry at Archers Post and Ngaremara over the years. Some of you may remember that Sue and I did a sponsored climb with him and members of his congregations, up the imposing Mt. Ololokwe, and we looked down from the summit over the arid plains, while vultures flew beneath us! We were raising funds to build the parish church for Ngaremara. We had a huge celebration when we all held hands standing around the demarcated perimeter of the new church and then everyone dug a small bit for the future foundations! We still remember him jumping high in a Turkana dance! We'll miss him. It is exciting that four young Turkana men are being mentored and trained for gospel ministry. **Please pray for Ekai's family and the Turkana community as they mourn their loss**





**Rain or drought? It's the perennial question for the North, because life is so utterly dependent on water, and hence rain. Sadly, drought has come again.** I had been hearing reports of reasonable rains in Kenya, but when speaking with Bishop Qampicha on February 4<sup>th</sup>, he told me that the "short" rains of October to December had failed in Northern Kenya, and people would not be harvesting anytime soon. This is always such a challenge for people – it affects their wellbeing, their livestock, their prospects, food is scarce and prices go up and it puts strain on everyone's finances. So, the Bishop is very worried about the Diocesan finances and the people currently in financial difficulties. **Please pray for rain, rain, rain and for future pasture and crops, and for stable finances**

**Our new Secondary schools are doing well.** The Government changed the system a few years ago and schools have been adapting ever since. The final adjustment is this year, when Junior Highs will be grafted into the old Secondary schools. As a result, there was no new intake for secondary education in January 2025, and St. Andrew's High school for boys remains with 170 pupils and Elazar for Girls at 55. Next year, in 2026, the new High school for Girls is due to open near Sololo. Things continue to move forward! But, with the drought, parents may face challenges finding school fees. Norm writes that this schools ministry is so strategic and needs encouragement and support, especially as there has been some opposition recently.

**Pray for the ongoing education of these youngsters in such challenging circumstance**

**What news of security? Along the Northern border with Ethiopia,** there is a rebel group, the Oromo Liberation Front, the OLF. We used to see signs of their presence, when climbing up through the forest to Qicha, a little church high in the hills on the very edge of Kenya. We might see a notch on a tree or a spent cartridge, and occasionally leopard pawprints! The OLF is a perpetual source of insecurity and tension between the Kenyan and Ethiopian governments. The Kenyans are currently on an operation to bomb OLF camps, when identified, which means everyone needs to be careful not to be in the wrong place. Otherwise, security is reasonable for everyone not associated with the OLF... as long as neither government suspects you! Again, remember Mr. Lee and his Mum-in-law still not released and their whereabouts remain unknown. People don't suspect the OLF, but an Al Shabab unit. **Please pray for the peacemakers, and that the worsening drought doesn't stir up ethnic conflict**

Bishop, Clergy and Youth



**Finally, Bishop asks prayer for the Diocesan Synod,** scheduled for early June: preparations are under way  
**Thank you all so much for your prayer and support – it means so much and I pray encourages you too!**

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