

Easter Conventions

Dear friends,

In the last article I described my experience with the inter-denominational evangelistic outreach (Easter Conventions) that took place in Ghana. Please check out the May article, online, if you missed it. This was an experience, though not the first time I have participated in one, yet was a profound experience for me because of the timing and the location. It was held in a place called Senchi, which is near Peki, home of the deceased Dr. Takyi, who helped to begin FLC's mission in Ghana. And it is held at EASTER TIME, an occasion when mankind is reunited with God in the Cross of Christ. As Paul says, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Colossians 1:27).

It was a very poignant way of restating the NEW LIFE in Christ, both physically and spiritually. That physically, because of their financial constraints, free medical care was made available to the masses that attended like is done in the Dominicans (Dr. Denis Radefeld's passion, till his death); and spiritually, to encounter the Risen Christ who came to give His life that as many as would receive Him, become children of God by faith.

The location is also very significant, in that Senchi is one place like Akrampa, where poverty and social amenities, particularly health, are severely lacking. The population is mainly elderly, who have been left behind by the youth and young ones who have gone into the cities to look for the almost non-existent jobs because they are untrained and unskilled. There are also a lot of them who are pregnant and sick, especially teenagers, whose fiancés, or those responsible for their predicament have fled or deserted them, and do not have the means to access healthcare. It was therefore not surprising to see many people coming to the clinic, even though some wouldn't come to the night crusades (evangelism night). It was obvious that the temporal concern of good health and care supersedes everything else. The opportunity to preach and share the Gospel during the clinic, as the long queue waited, was not lost on the 'crusaders' who made some converts. All this made me realize how important and true the saying that we are given the Gospel to help the poor, heal the broken hearted, and set the captives free.

I was only there on Saturday, the day of the medical outreach. I participated because it was in the public domain, inviting people to join in the crusade to bring the Gospel to their community. I wasn't the only Pastor. There were Pastors from 4 different churches, and about 3 Evangelists. It is a non-denominational Crusade. My role was mainly to be part of the counseling team to speak to those who had responded to the call to receive Christ as their Lord and personal Savior. I was not there for any personal medical care. I just wanted to be a part of the Crusade and help people in their relationship with Christ. Even though the Crusade provided medical care to meet the most basic needs of the people, the main objective is to bring the Gospel to that community.

By the time this edition of the *Lectern* gets to you, our new pastor, Pastor Rosy, would be celebrating a month in Lorain as the Pastor of First Lutheran Church. Her installation service now a month old by this time, is not enough a time for anyone to know a people, and for that matter, its community. However, if my experience with the people of First Lutheran Church, is anything to go by, I want to believe that she is beginning to already feel and know the warmth of their fellowship, and the sincerity and genuineness of their interest and affection. I know this for a fact, because I continue to enjoy them.

I'm taking this opportunity, again, to welcome PASTOR ROSY (Reverend Rosalina Rivera). On behalf of the mission, it is my prayer that the Lord will bless your ministry, and bless the new building, yet to be dedicated, to the Glory of God.

The Lord bless and keep you.

Pastor Ben