



# Damaraland Special

FALL 1977

## **BISHOP COLIN WINTER SPEAKS OF HIS RECUPERATION FOLLOWING SEVERE ILLNESS SUFFERED IN MARCH WHILE ON TOUR IN UNITED STATES:**

May 26, 1977

My dear brothers in Christ:

Some news about us — some sad, mostly good. The good first, I continue to make good progress, am getting used (or trying to) to being a diabetic, with needle jabs and a stringent diet. I'm up to 158 lbs., which is an excellent weight as far as my heart is concerned, and this remains fairly constant. I find I sleep far less, and so I rise at 5:45 or 6:00 and go for a slow jog for half an hour or forty minutes. Sometimes this is repeated in the evenings too, depending on the day's work. I am doing a light work load, answering letters, composing articles, reading and seeing visitors.

When I came out of the hospital, it had been predicted (or feared) that I would be a permanent invalid for the rest of my life. I'm convinced that through the massive mountain of prayer that went up on my behalf, this will not be the case. It's still early days yet, and I find stress and tension the hardest to cope with, but nevertheless I have the strongest conviction that "all will be very well, and all manner of things shall be well" as the Lady Julian put it.

Spiritually speaking, and I can open my heart to you, my brothers, I have been marked by the experience, not in any bad way but in a profound sense. I have a far clearer grasp of my vocation. If God has called me to share in a people's struggle for liberation and dignity, then that is a privilege and to be reckoned as my life's destiny with whatever suffering accompanies it. That is to be my work, my witness: the results are all in His hands, His keeping. My task is simply to witness.

As I left the hospital, still physically very weak from my experience, I found myself just thanking God for my friends. Here were Mary and I with hardly a bean to our name, being loved, cared for and uplifted by so many people. With such support and concern, such as that shown within the Christian community, how could one possibly fail? Succeeding isn't what it's all about — loving and receiving love is. Praise God for the ocean of love that surrounded us and still does!

When I came home to the Abbey, my students were quiet and shocked. The newspapers in Namibia had practically written my obituary — none too appreciative either, they were just waiting to include the name of the undertakers! But one of them last night told me of their secret delight that I had been restored to them, but asked me please to get some flesh on my bones again! I'll do what I can to oblige. I can still hardly believe the ordeal is over, but it assuredly is.

The new situation has, of course, had to produce new planning. We shall close the Abbey and leave in July for smaller and more workable premises. I shall still be appealing

for and need urgently financial help for their scholarships, but they will, at their own request, move into student accommodation in the town where they go to college. My responsibilities towards them will still continue as before, except that they will now be leading the life of ordinary students within the student setting. This is right and is a step further in their all round development.

My work will be divided from my home — for the first time in five years. Doctors have urged me to do this both for the sake of Mary's health as well as my own. This has been a tough and costly decision in every sense. I am in process of trying to buy a small house in Abingdon which can be a home for my family. We have a place in mind and now just need to raise the money. It will ensure that Mary can have a complete break from running almost single-handed a home for 20-30 people and that I will be able to find a sanctuary away from my work and give my family the time they need. So it seems right from every angle. I'm sure the money will come in its own good time.

The Namibia Peace Center will be reopened in the East End of London at Bow. This is the heart of Cockney-land and is situated among the workers' tenements in Bishop Trevor Huddleston's diocese. He is as delighted as I am that I'm going there. The house we are being offered is slum property — at present it doesn't possess even a bath — but my heart is dancing because it places me with the poor in a multi-racial and highly colourful (and at times explosive) part of London. There is a group ministry of Anglicans and Methodists working there and my office is approached via a long corridor which is used by some very old Russian emigrés as their synagogue. So I shut up shop Friday evenings and Saturdays to let them do their thing! The old firm and the new coming together again.

Very near to us are sisters of Mother Theresa's Order from Calcutta doing something beautiful for God among the poor of London. I yearn to meet them. Then quite close to me is the priest who heads a movement of spiritual and social reform within the Church of England, named Fr. Kenneth Leach. An authority on the early Church fathers, he believes in a more radical commitment to the poor with a ministry that involves a deep commitment to liturgy and meditative prayer. Around the corner is the London house of the Community of the Resurrection Fathers, so as you can imagine, I am convinced "the finger of God" is behind this move.

Know that my love and greetings come with this letter. I am doing a study on St. Cyprian of Carthage for the clergy and catechists of my diocese. Every paragraph speaks to our martyrs in Namibia — it's a beautiful and humbling book.

God keep you strong and courageous in your ministry.

With blessings and prayers,

Your brother,  
+ Colin

## PERSONAL APPEAL FOR BISHOP COLIN WINTER

Dear Friends,

I am writing to you as a supporter of the Diocese of Damaraland and a friend of Bishop Colin Winter. Many of us have for a long time been attempting to support the Bishop in his work and in his stand for the brotherhood of man. Many of us have raised money to help Bishop Colin in his work, both in his Diocese and with his students, etc. in England and elsewhere. But what the Bishop has never asked for is personal help – the time has come for those of us who love him and support him to raise money to enable Bishop Winter to buy a house for himself and his family and which he can use for his Diocese at his discretion.

Bishop and Mrs. Winter have moved from house to house on a borrowed or rented basis, sharing their accommodation with students, exiles and many visitors; this they have done willingly and happily. The time has now come when the Bishop and his family should have a home of their own. This is even more important since his recent serious illness.

Will you help? Will you urgently appeal to your friends and contacts?

Just as Bishop Colin has been so generous in giving to others may we now give to him as a gesture of love and thanks to him and all he means to us.

Yours sincerely,

The Rev. John Wheeler,  
Commissary for the Diocese of Damaraland

(Checks may be sent either to Fr. Wheeler, 41 Tregolls Rd, Truro, Cornwall TR1 1LE, England, payable to Damaraland Support Group, or to S.A.C.A., 1603 North Blvd., Houston, Texas 77006, marked for Bishop Winter's home.)

### CLOSING OF ONE DOOR . . . . . . OPENING OF ANOTHER

For various reasons, principally the health of Bishop Colin Winter and his need for an altered life style, as well as the financial strain of the maintenance of the large Abbey and its many refugee occupants, it has been necessary to close the Namibian International Peace Centre at the Abbey in Sutton Courtenay. Bishop Winter and his family are currently residing in a small cottage in nearby Abingdon, where the younger children have been attending school, and the bishop is commuting between there and London as usual for his work.

Last September, 1976, Herman ja Toivo House (named after the Namibian patriot and freedom leader now serving sentence on Robben Island) was opened in London and has continued to operate under Bishop Winter's guidance and leadership. It is on short term lease via a Roman Catholic organization, and can be considered an international peace center, not because of size or grandiose composition, but because of its function. It is there to provide a home/social center/reception center for all Namibian students studying in Britain, those visiting, and anyone else in need of a place to stay. It is Bishop Winter's home and headquarters while in London, and he says of it,

"Already we have had here priests from America and Hawaii, and these mix with those whose concerns reach out to Chile, Argentina and Australia. We're going, and I love it. The house is a very rundown tenement in the slums of the East End. The people

around us are considered to be among the more depressed of London's population. Crime is high here, but so is friendliness. . . When we moved in, we had every stick of furniture pinched. The house was cleaned out – God's way of telling us we have too much!"

## EVENTS IN NAMIBIA:

### A LETTER TO THE CLERGY AND PEOPLE

From Fr. Ed Morrow, Vicar General      6th June 1977  
Pentacost 1977

Dear Friends,

#### Nathaniel Nakwatumbah

The ordination of Tate Nathaniel to the priesthood was presided over by Bishop Richard James Wood, assisted by Bishop Fortescue Maketha and a number of clergy including Archdeacon Phillip Shilongo and myself. The service took place on Sunday morning the 24th April in the lovely stone Cathedral Church of St. Mary and St. James in Maseru.

It was a very joyous occasion with beautiful singing by the choir and the natural friendliness and warmth of the Sethoto people embraced us all.

Our party was received as guests of the Diocese and stayed at the Diocesan Training Centre. We managed to squeeze in visits to Leribe where we were the guests of the Sisters of the Holy Name, and to Roma University where we addressed the students and staff. We found Bishop Wood to be well and confident of his ministry as an assistant bishop to Bishop Winter. He was looking forward to visiting Lusaka and Maputo before returning to England.

We give thanks to God for our new priest and pray that his ministry will be long and fruitful.

#### Rauna Shimbode

Miss Rauna Shimbode is the daughter of one of our priests. She has recently graduated as an auxiliary nurse.

Rauna was a vital, attractive and brave young woman. On the 15th April she was arrested by the Security Branch in Windhoek, taken to Oshkati and held in detention under the Terrorism Act.

During her detention she was brutally tortured and humiliated beyond human endurance. She was blindfolded, gagged and suspended by the wrists. Water was poured over her and electric current applied to her body. She said that the pain was so severe that her body convulsed uncontrollably and she screamed – she screamed Yes! Yes! to every question put to her.

Rauna was released last week-end and feeling has not yet returned to her fingers, her body aches, concentration is difficult, her memory impaired and whilst in detention suffered a severe hemorrhage – apparently a common side effect for women who have undergone electric shock torture.

Ruana is still attractive but she is no longer vital, her eyes are expressionless and she is desperately afraid of further interrogation and torture. (Since her release she has been "picked up" once for questioning.)

I ask you for your prayers for Rauna that she may fully recover from her ordeal; and for those who brutalised her that they may turn from their wicked ways.

**Namibia Council of Churches** A new era in ecumenical co-operation dawned on the 10th June with an inaugural meeting of the member churches of the Christian Centre and interested persons.

The intention of the meeting was to produce a draft constitution for a future Namibia Council of Churches which will co-ordinate many aspects of the churches' mission. We were represented by Fr. Gaya, Fr. Nakwatumbah and Mr. Hopkins.

Pray for the success of this important development.

#### **Church leaders meet with representatives of the five western powers**

On the 10th May representatives of the following churches, Anglican, Roman Catholic, E.L.K., E.L.O.C., D.R.C., and D.E.L.K. met with the representatives of the five western powers (commonly known as the "contact group") in a suite at the Kalahari Sands Hotel. The meeting was scheduled to last one hour but went on for three. The Roman, Anglican and Lutheran churches presented a memorandum setting out our concerns and our thoughts for a peaceful settlement to the political problems of Namibia.

My personal assessment is that we can look forward to the release of political prisoners and the return of exiles in the not too distant future. Pray that before the sun sets on 1977 our beloved Bishops, friends, sons and daughters will feel free to return and take part in peaceful elections.

#### **S.A.B.C. Owanbo broadcast**

Most of you will know that on 28th March a Radio Owanbo broadcast made certain assertions which I believed were defamatory in so far as Bishop Winter was concerned. We instituted a civil action on his behalf to recover monetary compensation and to solicit an apology. At the time of writing the S.A.B.C. have offered an apology which will have been broadcast by the time you read this letter. I believe that they will also settle an amount for damages with us before the matter comes to court.

We have taken this extreme measure of civil action in order to restrain the S.A.B.C. from any further irresponsible reporting in the future.

The Anglican Church has nothing to hide and will continue to work and witness for a better society in this part of God's world.

#### **Oshandi and the "troubles" in the north**

Meetings with army generals and chaplains, letters and telephone calls have not improved the dangerous and unhappy situation in the north. Oshandi stands deserted and pillaged, compensation which was promised to us by the army for damage to the Holy Spirit Rectory is still forthcoming.

St. Mary's is constantly being raided and our school girls molested by drunken soldiers. People are dying almost every day — people are still fleeing to Angola, Zambia and Botswana.

"When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne; they cried out with a loud voice, 'O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before thou wilt judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell upon the earth?'"

May the power of the Holy Spirit hold you obedient and faithful to him who suffered and died for us all, our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Ed Morrow

#### **FR. SIPO MZIMELA OF SOUTH AFRICA TO BE BISHOP WINTER'S COMMISSARY IN NEW YORK**



The Rev. Sipo Mzimela, Bishop Colin Winter and wife Mary

Thanks to a special grant from Trinity Church in New York City, Fr. Sipo Mzimela of South Africa will be able to serve as assistant in the United States to Bishop Colin Winter, who writes the following account of his background:\*

"Sipo Mzimela is an African priest, on the roll of clergy of the Diocese of Damaraland and ordained deacon and priest by permission of the Bishop of New York on Bishop Winter's behalf. He is presently working on the staff of St. Luke's Church, the Bronx — a church Bishop Moore says is the most rapidly growing in his entire diocese.

"Fr. Sipo was a protégé of the famous Bishop Alphaeus Zulu, who spotted the young man's talents at an early age and marked him out for the priesthood. When the South African police shot the 67 Africans dead in the streets of Sharpeville and initiated nationwide arrests of all articulate and educated Africans, Fr. Sipo, like thousands of others, had to flee the country of his birth to prevent being put in prison in the wave of violence and torture that followed. He first moved to Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) where he met and married his beautiful wife Esther, who now works as a nurse in New York. They have two lovely daughters.

"From Zimbabwe they had to move again, constantly harassed by South African secret agents who could have smuggled them back home to South Africa. After more travels in Africa, Fr. Sipo settled with his young family in Germany, where he worked as a businessman in order to earn enough money to obtain an education as well as support his family.

"His whole lifetime's ambition was to become a priest and he was helped to achieve this, not through the official channels of the church, but initially by Bill Johnston, the president of the ECSA (Episcopal Churchmen for South Africa). He needed a bishop to accept him as a candidate for Holy Orders; I was approached and was honoured and delighted to accept him for Damaraland.

"Now that it seems uncertain when I can resume my duties again, I have made Fr. Sipo one of my commissaries to encourage groups to work for and love my people. We hope he will do this full time. He will be ably assisted by the Rev. James Kauluma (who is working on PhD at Union), Fr. Robert Brooks of All Saints', Baytown, Texas, and Fr. Brian Grieves, Church of the Holy Nativity, Honolulu, Hawaii. Also Fr. George Pierce of St. Barnabas, Glenwood Springs, Colorado, has agreed to get things moving again for me in the Denver area. You see, we're never licked in Namibia. With men and women like this, we shall overcome. I leave with hope, full of courage, knowing that things will be well. In Dolores Goble we

have a stalwart campaigner who will still be coordinating the work in Houston as ever. God bless you all for caring!"

\* Fr. Sipo may be contacted at General Theological Seminary, NYC and would appreciate additional assistance from any interested persons.

**MEMORANDUM TO THE CLERGY FROM THE VICAR GENERAL**

1st September, 1977

My dear Brother in Christ,

I enclose copies of Bishop Colin's letter to the Diocese entitled "St. Peter's Chains" and endorse his wish that this be read in all Churches, that the Church of God in Namibia be asked to do what the Church in Jerusalem was asked to do on behalf of Peter.

My Petition to the newly appointed Administrator General whom I met personally on the day of his arrival in Windhoek is, I believe, my own prayers and those of my colleagues who supported this petition, being put into action. I enclose a copy for you.

I was greatly encouraged by the motion passed at the recent Synod of the Diocese of Grahamstown, advice of which I received in August and am pleased to convey it to you at this time:

"Synod sends fraternal greetings and assurance of our prayers to our brothers and sisters in Christ of the Diocese of Damaraland and joins with them in praying that their Bishop may be returned to them from exile."

I ask you and your congregations to add your prayer at each Mass that together we pray to God for +Colin unremittingly that he may return in safety, so that the prayer-chain already working may be strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit and be in Glory to Almighty God and His Son Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Sincerely,  
Revd. Ed Morrow

**PROGRAM NOTES:**

Have you read Bishop Winter's book **NAMIBIA**, published in February, 1977?

"**NAMIBIA** is an Anglican bishop's searing account of racial oppression in South West Africa and of his struggle to minister to the needs of his diocese there in the face of apartheid."

Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

"Everyone concerned about peace on the African Continent must have an intelligent appreciation of the vital significance of Namibia. This book is written by one who knows and understands every aspect of the struggle for human rights, for political freedom, symbolised by that country."

The Rt. Rev. Trevor Huddleston, C.F. Bishop of Stepney

"It is perfectly clear that this book represents a *cri du coeur* of a true shepherd of the flock and that its readers will never again be able to say, 'I didn't know, I wasn't aware.'"

Johannes Verkuyl, Free University of Amsterdam

If not available at your local bookstore, contact Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 255 Jefferson Ave. S.E., Grand Rapids, Mi. 49503, \$4.95 plus postage.

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Would you like to show a 60-min. video tape of Bishop Colin Winter in interview on TV talk show this past March? Informal, powerful and moving commentary, and excellent means of providing springboard for discussion groups. Please contact Dolores Goble, S.A.C.A., 1603 North Blvd., Houston, Tx 77006 for more information. \$5.00 rental fee, plus postage.

Cassette tapes of Bishop Winter's talks and discussion at Autry House, Rice University in March, 1977, also available on free loan.

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