

HOLY WEEK WITH THE NUBA, PART TWO

Nuba pastors at Yida Refugee Camp
(Photo credit: Faith McDonnell)



The expression “drinking from the fire hose” may be over-used and cliché, but when it comes to learning about the global persecution of Christians, it is quite appropriate.

Most of us in Western nations need to know more about the Global South. Many of us need to know more about Africa. Thank God for GAFCON, for how the Lord has used it to bring us together as one Body of faithful Anglicans. Because of it, we *know* our brothers and sisters in the Global South. We know that they are heroes of the faith. But . . . for the most part, most of us don’t know *about* them. We don’t know their culture and the history of their countries.

It has been my privilege, walking for some 25 years with the Christians of Sudan, to know some about that fascinating country, including about the Nuba Mountains. And what little I know is **still** a firehose!

I could talk about the [three ancient Christian kingdoms in Nubia](#) and how they probably rose up when the [court official from the palace](#) of the [Candaka of Nubia](#) returned from his baptism by the Apostle Philip on the road to Gaza. (Yes, I know I mentioned that before in the devotions, but did I mention that I’m obsessed with that?) Or I could talk about [the relationship between the Nubians and the Nuba](#).

I could tell you about [years of war](#), [declaration of jihad](#) against the Nuba by the Islamists in Khartoum, and [instruments of war](#) such as scorched earth, strafe bombing, starvation, enslavement, displacement to such places as Yida Refugee Camp, and many others. You would explore Nuba hill caves (they really are more hills than mountains), and see where people would huddle in terror when Khartoum sent its bombers over. And how mothers would have to feed leaves and roots to their children because they could not farm their land for fear of bombs – even if the land had not been burned by Khartoum’s Arab militias on horseback.

You would understand why the Nuba, and other marginalized people groups [don't trust Khartoum](#) and [still desire decentralization](#), more representation and equality in power and economy, end to Sharia, and more self-determination, based on confederation.

Or I could talk about great Nuba heroes of the past – like [Father Philip Gaboush](#), Episcopal priest who became a human rights activist; [Bishop Butrus Tia Shokaj](#), first indigenous bishop in Sudan; and [Yusuf Kuwa Mekki](#), Muslim commander of the Nuba forces who united Christians and Muslims against the Sudan regime. Then there are today's great heroes: Commander of the SPLA-N, [Abdelaziz Adam Alhilu](#); our own dear [Bishop Andudu Adam Elnail](#), Anglican bishop of Kadugli and Nuba Mountains; [Dr. Tom Catena](#), American doctor [pouring out his life](#) at Mother of Mercy Hospital, the only full hospital in Nuba Mountains and Dr. Zakaria, the Nuba doctor working with him; the staff from [Samaritan's Purse](#) caring for people in Yida Refugee Camp, and so many others. But the firehose would have drowned you before I finished.

So instead of trying to give you the history and politics and people that I love and admire, we're going to pray through one today's Daily Office Bible readings with the Nuba in mind.

First, a couple of **suggested actions**, good for social isolation during pandemic. Two great films about the Nuba Mountains you can watch, encourage your friends and family to watch:

- [The Heart of Nuba](#) – the story of Dr. Tom Catena, an American medical doctor living with the Nuba people, saving lives every day. Dr. Tom says, "The lives of the people here matter as much as anywhere in the world. We can't lose sight of that, or we will lose our humanity." Website is <https://theheartofnuba.com/>.
- Another film, focusing on the effect of war on children's lives is [Madina's Dream](#).

Scripture and Prayer:

Psalm 90:

- *Lord, You have been the refuge of the Nuba from one generation to another. Before the Nuba mountains were brought forth, or the earth and the world were made, You are GOD from everlasting, and world without end. (v. 1)*
- *Turn again to the Nuba, O Lord, and tarry not; be gracious unto Your servants – the Suffering Church in Nuba Mountains. O satisfy them with Your mercy in the morning, as You have done with the cessation of bombing and conditions of peace that have come with regime change; so shall they rejoice and be glad all the days of their lives, and share the Good News of Your Kingdom with all the people who do not know You. (v. 13-14)*
- *Comfort them again, according to the measure of the days that You have afflicted them, and for the years of genocide and jihad in which they have suffered adversity as refugees, as slaves, as second-class citizens in their own country, and as soldiers, fighting to defend their families. Show Your servants, the Church in the Nuba Mountains, particularly our brother Bishop Andudu and the Body in the Episcopal Diocese of Kadugli and Nuba Mountains, Your work. Show them Your mighty hand to do wonders in their*

midst. Bring healing to those who are ill, bless the land with produce again, and provide all the schools that they need. And show their children Your glory, O GOD, especially the children who have not succeeded their fathers and mothers in following You. Give them encounters with our Lord Jesus Christ. Let the Holy Spirit come on the Nuba Mountains and let Your reign be felt there and throughout Sudan. (v. 15-16).

Be glorified in the Nuba Mountains, GOD. In Jesus' Name, Amen.