

March 15, 2007 Lodja, Democratic Republic of Congo

Our very dear Friends-

Greetings from the Lodja 'Internet" I am writing on a French keyboard so this is a challenge. It took me about 30 minutes to get on this A.M. This is my first time on e-mail since we have arrived at Lodja. It takes us about 25 minutes travel time to get here.

Many missionaries have the privilege of moving into nice furnished homes or apartments but we do not have that privilege. Our dear Pastor friend, Kitambala allowed us to stay in his home for 8 nights. We sincerely appreciated his hospitality but with 17 grandchildren, baaaaahhng sheep and ducks we could hardly wait to move into our own house even if we were camping.

Our second full day here Paul tore out the bathroom that had not functioned in years and as a result he came down with giardia. We do not have a Lowe's here so he had to have some piping sent from Kinshasa via air. He has had to 'make do' on many things from the sewage system which had to be rebuilt for both the bath and kitchen.

We have had some things in storage for 8 years so things are covered in dirt and dust. The house we have moved into has been abused and we are having to scarp the walls and in some places re-plaster so that the little paint we have will stick. Chickens and guinea were being raised in our kitchen pantry which are 'domesticated' pets but we also are rat and roach infested as well. As a result of all of the dust from all of the above, I have come down with a bad sinus infection and cold. I have been pretty miserable at night especially.

We are thrilled to have moved into our house on Sat. even though the kitchen was not set up. We have been somewhat camping out but we are in 'our home' such as it is at present!

One of the pastors on Sunday said that we have come to Lodja and do without all of the niceties of the US because we 'know' God. That is true. We know God and though it is dirty where we are (and certainly my patience with the dirt has been tested) we know we are where we are supposed to be.

Paul said he knows that I love him because I am willing to come and live where almost no other women are willing to live.

Each day we continue to make progress on our home. This is our first priority-making the house livable and clean and comfortable. Then we will begin our 'ministries' so to speak.

We sincerely appreciate all of your prayers for us. Daily we are being tested as far as the house is concerned. We love challenges and we have them here!

We have about 23 men working for us, cleaning out the forest behind the house and having to redo the whole yard. We are glad that we are able to enhance the local economy!

Please pray for us as the Lord brings us to mind. We do love being here and having our faith tested. Blessings on each of you.

PS. Right now, our main mode of transportation is via motorbike!

Marty and for Paul, too

March 23, 2007

Dear Friends and Prayer Partners,

It seems so much like "same as same as". The word from Kinshasa last evening and again this morning is that there is fighting between the government troops and Bemba's militia.

Jean Pierre Bemba is the man who was the runner-up in the recent presidential election. His troops have refused to put down their arms or leave the capital city in accordance with the agreements that allowed the election to take place. News is sketchy, but we hear that intense fighting took place yesterday afternoon in the capital and then again this morning. There have been numerous deaths

The latest word is that Bemba has taken refuge in the South African embassy and his militia is being overpowered by the national army. Nothing is for sure yet and we would appreciate your prayers for this land, for peace and for righteous government.

Some good news, day after tomorrow, on Sunday the 24th, we will be re-opening a church that has been overgrown with weeds and inactive for a number of years. Our personal initiative has been received joyously by the village people and they have come out in force to clear and prepare the dilapidated building for worship.

As soon as we can produce some lumber we are going to re-do the roof, rebuild the brick walls and make benches in order to give the people of Esenge a place to meet and worship the Lord Jesus. It is amazing to us how little it takes to encourage the believers here and re-birth hope in their hearts.

Please pray for us as we encourage the believers here and try to build the Kingdom of God in their hearts.

In His Grace, Paul and Marty