

Prior to its creation, Christians within the area that is now called Thika Diocese had a dream of one day having their own diocese. The reasons behind their ambition included:

Episcopal Services: It was realized that at that time, the Diocese of Mt. Kenya South had over one hundred parishes while the Diocese of Mt. Kenya Central had over eighty parishes. It was then common practice for the two bishops to do confirmation services on week days while some parishes would go for two or three years without a visit by the Diocesan Bishop. Other Episcopal services like consecrations of churches, opening of vicarages, enrollments into KAMA, Mothers' Unions, KAYO, Girls and Boys Brigades had to be performed on week days. Due to the heavy work load, the Bishop of the Diocese of Mt. Kenya Central had just appointed an Assistant Bishop.

Priestly Services: With the establishment of a diocese, more parishes would be created and more clergy would be engaged to serve Christians efficiently. Priestly services would therefore be more readily available to the Christians.

Evangelism: There were large areas to the east of the Nairobi/Thika/Murang'a main road which were newly settled, with the large scale farms being sub-divided into small holdings and also the Government establishing settlement schemes like Ithanga and Gatunyaga. These areas needed to be evangelized. There were also other areas where the presence of our Church was minimal and we needed to establish churches there.

Travel: Christians then were making long journeys, traveling from Kiarutara or Ithanga to Thika and then looking for transport to Murang'a while others would travel from Gakoe or Ngoliba to Thika and find their way to either Kiambu or Kabete. Besides being too expensive, these long journeys were tiresome and inconvenient to Christians.

District Development Committee:

Since Thika District had just been created, we realized the need for our church being represented in this very important forum that dealt with all manner of development in the District. We also required representation in the District Education Board.

Petitions: The petitions for the creation of ACK Thika Diocese were written on 10th August 1995. The petitions were addressed to the then bishops of Mt. Kenya Central and Mt. Kenya South, Rt. Rev. Dr. J.G. Gachuche and Rt. Rev. George M. Njuguna respectively. Copies of the petition were forwarded to the then Dean of the Province Rt. Rev. Dr. David M. Gitari and the

Provincial Chancellor. The petition to Mt. Kenya Central Diocese was supported by fourteen Christians from the parishes which were under the jurisdiction of the bishop. The group was led by: The late John Wesley Chege - Chairman, Mr. Davis Njoka - Secretary, Mr. Solomon M. Kimani–Treasurer The petition to the bishop of the diocese of Mt. Kenya South was assigned by 23 members led by: Mr. Wilfred M. Kamami – Chairman, Mr. Stephen Kimotho Gitau - Secretary, Mr. Joseph Kiragu Kinyua -Treasurer

Later, the two petition teams came together and formed ‘Diocesan Joint Working Committee’ under the leadership of:

Mr. Wilfred M. Kamami- Chairman, Mr. Davis N. Njoka- Secretary, Mr. Solomon M. Kimani – Treasurer.

Other members were: Mr. Joseph Kiragu Kinyua – Ititu, Mr. Stephen Kimotho Gitau - Gakoe, Mr. Joseph Kabiga Gichia - Kiamwangi, Mr. Samuel Mwangi - Gatunguru, Mr. James Kirika Njoroge – Kairi, Mr. Nelson Muchiri Njoroge - Ruiru, Mr. Naftali Kiroto Njoka – Munyu, Mr. Peterson Karanja - Makongeni, Mr. Joseph Karanja Wabuga - Kariara, Mr. Samuel Kibe Mwaura – Kiarutara,

Mr. John Muiyuro Kirumba - Ithanga, The Late John Wesley Chege –Thare, Mr. Solomon Gichina Mwangi -Thika Memorial,

Mr. Geoffrey Kibe Gitonga – Giachuki, Mr. Stephen Njiiri – Giachuki, Mr. Nahashon Waweru- Ndunyu Chege, Mrs. Salome Waigwe Mwangi - Thika Memorial, Mrs. Beth Nyambura Njuguna -St. Andrew’s Church, Thika.

During a meeting with the Archbishop, The Most Rev. Dr. David M. Gitari, three other members were added to the working committee.

These were: Ven. John Mutonga, Ven. John Kago, Ven. Nephath Gakuya.

A Diocese is Born

The Anglican Diocese of Thika was created on 1st July, 1998, from the larger Dioceses of Mt. Kenya Central and South respectively. The First Synod of the Diocese of Thika was convened by the Archbishop The Most Rev. Dr. David M. Gitari on 2nd July 1998. The Archbishop appointed Ven. John Mutonga as the Archbishop’s Commissary. On 1st September 1998 the Second Diocesan Synod meeting was held and the following were elected:

Rev. Dr. Gideon G. Githiga - Clerical

Secretary, Mr. Davis N. Njoka - Lay

Secretary, Mr. Wilfred M. Kamami -Vice Chairman

Other elected members of the Standing Committee of Synod were:

House of Clergy:

Rev. Patrick Mukuna

Rev. Joseph Mbogo Kaigua

Rev. John Karanja Mbuthia

Rev. Jacob Ngobia

Rev. Robert Muoho

Rev. Julius Wanyoike

Co-opted Clergy:

Ven. Canon David Njoroge

Ven. George Gitau

Ven. Nephath Gakuya

House of Laity:

The Late John Wesley

Mr. Solomon Mbuthia

Mr. Solomon Gichina

Mr. James Kirika

Mr. Joseph Kinyua

Mrs. Hellen Dadet

Co-opted members:

Mrs. Jane W. Gatumbi

Mrs. Beth Njuguna

Mr. Peterson Karanja

Mrs. Rahab Gichohi

The ACK Thika Diocese was launched by the Archbishop, The Most Rev. Dr. David M. Gitari on 29th November 1998. The first diocesan bishop, Rt. Rev. Dr. Gideon G. Githiga (PhD) was elected on 19th December 1998. He was consecrated and enthroned on 31st January 1999. The Diocese, whose headquarters is at the St. Andrew's Pro-Cathedral compound, started with 3 Archdeaconries, 23 parishes and 26 clergy serving a population of 9,488 Christians.

The Archdeaconries, parishes and clergy were as follows:

Kariara Archdeaconry

Kariara, Kiarutara, Thare, Ndunyu Chege, Kanunga, Giachuki and Thika Memorial

Cathedral Archdeaconry

Thika, Makongeni, Kirimiri, Mitubiri, Ithanga and Munyu

Mang'u Archdeaconry

Ititu, Gakoe, Ruiru, Gachege, Gathaiti, Kairi, Kiamwangi, Kamwangi, Gatunguru, Mang'u

The clergy who were serving the diocese at the time of its creation were:

The late Rev. Philip Mburu, The late Rev. Peter Kimani Kamande, Ven. Nephath Gakuya, Rev. Gad Karanja, Rev. Hillary Njoroge, Rev. John Gitau, Ven. John Kago, Rev. D.L. Karangi, Rev. Festus N. Njagiru, Rev. Peter Munania, Rev. Patrick Mukuna, Rev. Samuel Mwangi, Rev. Joseph Mbogo Kaigwa, Rev. Peter Njoroge Maina, Rev. Joseph Waweru, Rev. Henry Macharia, Rev. Samuel Gachugu, Rev. Joseph G. Gikwa, Rev. Robert Muoho, Rev. John Karanja Mbutia, Rev. Julius Wanyoike, Rev. Joshua Ngaruiya, Ven. John Mutonga, Rev. Beattah A. Kamau, Rev. George Gitau, Rev. Dr. Washington Chege Kamau.

To date, tremendous growth has been registered with the Diocese having 6 Archdeaconries, 54 parishes, and 66 clergy serving a population of 20,900 Christians. In addition, the Diocese has 6 missionary priests who are serving in the recently established mission parishes in the USA. This new development is as a result of the current crisis on human sexuality in the Episcopal Church of America.

The Diocese encompasses three (3) Administrative districts namely Gatundu, Thika and Ruiru in Central Province of the Republic of Kenya. The Greater Thika has a population of close to one million people, and covers approximately 1960 Sq. KM. The Diocese has many different faces ranging from its topography, climate, soils and economic occupation. The upper zone borders the Aberdare Ranges, and has a cool climate with rich volcanic soils. Coffee, tea, pineapples and dairy farming are the main agricultural activities. The Lower zone is however marginal land bordering the Yatta Plateau with low rainfall ranging between 500–1000 mm.

Thika forms part of the newly opened settlement schemes with land holdings measuring between two and five acres. The main occupation here is subsistence farming. In terms of development the Diocese started from scratch. Since its inception, it has been able to:

- Buy a Bishop's court which is the Bishop's official residence.
- Construct Diocesan Offices.
- Undertake construction of the Cathedral, now at its final stages to completion
- Embarked on investment projects. The 66 clergy in the Diocese are trained as follows:
2 with Doctorate Degrees, 6 with Masters Degrees, 10 with first Degrees, and 48 with Diplomas.

Future Projections

Thika town where the Diocese has its headquarters is about 26 miles North of Nairobi. Going by the Country's Vision 2030, the entire Thika Diocese will be within the Nairobi Metropolitan area. This is likely to boost growth of the churches and parishes in Thika especially those in urban and sub-urban areas. Presently, the area is experiencing a high rate of new settlements in almost all directions. The creation of new districts of Gatanga, Gatundu and Ruiru, all within Thika Diocese is a real cause for anticipated growth. Looking back, the Christians of ACK Thika Diocese have every reason to thank God for the immense growth. The institutions and departments in the diocese are as follows;

Mission & Evangelism, Stewardship, Mothers' Union, Kenya, Anglican Men Association, (K.A.M.A), Kenya Anglican Youth Organization (K.A.Y.O), Brigade, Sunday School, Development, Christian Community Services (C.C.S), Planting Faith Ministries, Initiation and Counseling, Justice, Peace & Reconciliation, Education, Institute of Leadership Counseling & Congregational Development (I.L.C.C.D) Daughters of the King. Theological Education by Extension (T.E.E), Christian Industrial Training Centre (C.I.T.C), St. Augustine High School, Bishop Njuguna Academy, Memorial Church School, St. Luke's Bookshop, Namrata Shah Children's Home

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