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Happy Christmas! . . . Happy New Year!! . . . Happy Epiphany-tide!!!

Dear Friends,

A big sense of guilt comes as I write that date, as I have begun this letter so many times in my head, and fully intended you to get it long ago. However, the greetings are the same!

This has been a remarkable year in many ways - filled with riots and troubles at first, but more recently, under a new Task Force Commander, we have enjoyed more peace, for which we thank God. In fact I fully intended to write a few weeks ago after the last Muslim festival. I was thinking how different life here is from life in UK. The Sallah fell on a Sunday, and tension was high as everyone wondered what would happen. However, security was very tight and their plans had been well laid, with the result that not one shot was fired in Jos. That really was a gift from God! That encourages us to hope and pray fervently for peace during the Christmas season, and that there will be no more bombs (there were three the other week).

Meanwhile life has had some high days and festivals. On Saturday 10th December at the Christian Institute we dedicated Dare Sila building (above) and laid the foundation stone for Ayo Kehinde House (right). The first building was one of the original ones, but had a fault and so could not be fully utilised. Now, however, all is set right, and it is a two storey hostel at the front and a single storey staff flat at the back. The hostel is completed (apart from furnishings) and the flat almost ready. The new Ayo Kehinde building is a huge project: a three storey L shaped structure with 9 duplex apartments (room, parlour and bathroom/toilet) for married couples and also one bigger staff flat on each floor, giving a total of 27 married apartments and 3 staff flats. We move in faith, and trust that having begun, step by step we shall continue!! It was a great day of joy and celebration.

Last Sunday was our Ordination: 4 deacons and 6 priests. Another big day, held in a new church building in the heart of Jos city. A packed house, a long service, joy and thanksgiving everywhere!

Having officially retired from CMS, I am in fact doing exactly the same work as before – and thoroughly enjoying and appreciating it. I truly thank God for the opportunity to serve, as I now celebrate 28 years in Jos. I would never have believed it all those years ago, but God has his ways! I much appreciated seeing many family and friends this summer, and look forward to meeting again whenever the time is right. Everyone here joins me in sending greetings, including the owners of 20 paws and 24 baby paws!! (6 jet black puppies who cannot be told one from the other).

My love and deep gratitude to you all for all you do and are in my life. May the Lord bless and keep you. *Susan/Sue*

