

### Visit of Simon Keobakile Seteso from Matlosane



Steve Deall a recently installed Curate in Abbots Bromley writes about a visit from **Simon Keobakile Seteso** from Matlosane ...In 2014 I was part of a mission trip over to South Africa aimed at those who were in the final stages of discernment or had just been recommended for ordination training. The first part was meeting and staying with people from our partner diocese of Matlosane. The second part was to move into Swaziland and walk alongside volunteers from the Charity 'Hands at Work' whilst they visited child headed families who had been hit hard by the aids epidemic which had left 40% of the adult population dead.

I first met Simon when we were sent to visit Fr Leslie in Khuma, south west of Johannesburg. Simon grew up in Khuma and acted as our guide and we both happened to be on the verge of submitting to seminary for training priests. Simon was our constant companion for our time in the township and showed us round the area, both the good bits and some of the rougher parts of town.

In the past two years we have stayed in touch and have done the same training, just half the world apart. My ordination is imminent whilst his is going to be in December this year. I have found the chance to get to know someone who is at the same stage in their journey into ministry, albeit in a completely different setting very rewarding.

Simon was able to obtain a scholarship to come to this country to attend a two week international seminarians conference at Canterbury and I took the chance to invite him to come to Lichfield to stay with us to allow me to show him the context in which I will be ministering in before he returned to South Africa. We had a good time of fellowship and I was able to take him to Lichfield, where we met with Bishop Michael and were able to look around both the city and stay for the Eucharist within the cathedral.

Whilst he was with us it was good to talk about our faith and the impact our trip to South Africa had on both of us. The trip opened my eyes to the sovereignty of God in a way I hadn't thought of before. Sometimes we get caught up in having a vision of God which is quite small, but to travel half way around the world and see other Anglicans who were worshipping the same God, the same way, really opened my eyes. Personally the trip gave me the confidence to finally step out in faith and to commit to the ministry, and it was so heartening that the trip had the same effect of Simon, following our visit he did the same.

Our friendship is somewhat unusual, we couldn't be more different in our outlooks, our race, our age, or our geographical position, but what is so encouraging is that we have one thing in common, the knowledge that we have both been saved by our Lord Jesus Christ....and that is enough!