

eNews August 2013



We devote this eNews to updates from two of our Langham Scholars living and working in Cairo, Egypt; and so will hold until early September reflections on Langham International Scholars Director, Riad Kassis' very short visit to Australia and my own trip to Indonesia for Langham Preaching.

Wendy Toulmin, Executive Officer, Langham Partnership Australia

Langham Scholars Stand Strong in Troubled Egypt

Serving Christ on the frontlines of the current crisis in Egypt are two Langham Scholars who are standing strong in the midst of mass persecution of Christians. Their influence and leadership is an example of why we call Langham Scholars "nation shapers".

As we hear from our two brothers on these critical events, let us pray for peace and reconciliation in Egypt, and for the safety and strength of Christians in that nation.

Rev Dr Atef Gendy – President of Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo (ETSC)

Recently, Atef sent a note of encouragement and prayer, reminding us that God uses the fire of trials and persecution to teach us, moulding us into the likeness of Christ.

"The last two and half years, since the revolution of January 2011, the Church in Egypt has grown in faith and experienced God in many new ways. In addition to the continuous experience of God's protection, the Church has experienced her Lord as the Lord of History, Lord of creation and Lord of all nations.

We experienced literally God's goodness as the one who 'causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and unrighteous' (Matthew 5:45). This well-known truth became a lively experience that is challenging the Egyptian Church to go beyond her needs, fears and problems and care for her nation and society in order to be like her Lord who is in heaven. This was just one of the lessons we are learning probably the hard way. Nevertheless, we enjoy seeing God remodelling our thoughts and theology.

Please pray for our students who are doing their summer field ministry now in difficult situations that sometimes includes threats and many intimidations from Islamic groups, especially in small villages in the south. We ask for your prayers for them, not only for protection, but also for bravery, wisdom and tender hearts that are willing to reflect the love, graciousness and care of our Heavenly Father."



Rev Dr Andrea Zaki Stephanous – General Director of the Coptic Evangelical Organisation for Social Services (CEOSS)

For more than 55 years, CEOSS has been dedicated to intercultural harmony, social justice and mutual respect while delivering a range of social support services to more than two million Egyptians in more than 100 rural and urban communities.

Andrea credits his doctoral studies in religion and politics, supported by Langham, for transforming his life and equipping him with the skills necessary to take on his role as a leader, not only at CEOSS, but in the Coptic Church, the Seminary where he teaches and politics as well. As a result, the impact of Andrea's training is being multiplied across Egyptian society.

Recently, in a statement released on behalf of CEOSS, Andrea appealed for the attention of Christians worldwide.



“With the escalation of violence and terrorism taking place in Egypt against state facilities, houses of worship as well as private property, we have immediately communicated with all our partners and friends in the various countries of the world including members of governments, international institutions and churches, and important figures of the international community, to clarify the truth of events – calling on them to convey the real picture to the media and governments in their countries.

CEOSS has also emphasised the need to stand by the people of Egypt in these circumstances they face, as the militias and armed extremist groups roam the country destroying private and public infrastructure with the aim of causing chaos – the first incident of its kind in the history of modern Egypt.”

In spite of Egypt's tumult, Andrea vows to stay steadfast in his service to the church. *“As we always promised, we will still be at the service of the nation through our continuous interaction with citizens, especially the most marginalised and particularly in such critical circumstances.”*

How to stand with Atef and Andrea

Pray

- For Egypt's crisis to come to a peaceful conclusion.
- For the safety, courage and wisdom of students of ETSC, workers of CEOSS and other Christian leaders serving on the frontline.

Learn

- Persecution of Christians: <http://news.yahoo.com/egypt-islamists-hit-christian-churches-235144103.html>
- Q & A on Egypt turmoil: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-23146910>
- Background of the constitutional crisis: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2012/12/06/egypt-constitutional-crisis-explained-as-a-simple-timeline/>

For your prayers

Upcoming Langham Preaching events

August 19–23	Bolivia	September 2–6	Romania
August 26–31	Nigeria	September 2–6	Nigeria
August 27–31	DR Congo	September 6–8	Brazil
September 2–6	Peru	September 7	Zimbabwe

Please pray for the Langham Preaching facilitators who will be involved in the training itself, and for Jonathan Lamb and Paul Windsor as they coordinate the Langham Preaching programme.

Thank you for your prayers and support
Wendy Toulmin, Executive Officer, Langham Partnership Australia

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