



The Belgium Congo, Zaire, The Democratic Republic of Congo are all synonymous with the third largest country in geographic area on the continent of Africa. It has an estimated population of 62,660,551 (2006) people of which it is said; that 50% are Roman Catholic, 20% are Protestant, 10% Kimbanguist, 10% Muslim and 10% other sects and indigenous beliefs.

It's surrounded by 9 other countries and is divided into 10 provinces (under the new constitution this will change to 25 provinces and the city of Kinshasa), and has five official languages: Lingala, Tshiluba, Swahili, Kikongo and French being the official languages (it's estimated that there are as many as 700 dialects and languages spoken in this vast country).

Congo gained its' independence on the 30th of June 1960. This country was once governed by a Belgium prince, a dictator, a liberator and a transitional government, but now it is preparing to elect its' own president, a country that is facing extreme poverty, ravished by wars, with thousands of displaced people, political and economical turmoil, and in spiritual chaos.

On 30 July 2006 there was a landmark election held with over 32 candidates vying for the votes of the people. 20 August the results from the election were announced. The 50% majority needed to win was not obtained by any of the candidates, and sad to say there was fighting between the two main groups. Many were killed in the city before peace was restored. There will be a run-off held between the two top candidates on 29 October 2006.

Kinshasa is only 0.4 % of the land area of Congo, and is home to 12% of Congo's population.

We have been back in Kinshasa for the past three months after spending time in South for the birth of the twins, who are, by the way, are very mobile now, nearing their 1st birthday on Nov. 7th.

Esther and I celebrated our 13th wedding anniversary the 28th August. We are so grateful to the Lord for his grace and mercy toward us. We love our children and pray that the Lord will give us wisdom everyday to teach and raise them up in the fear of the Lord.

September the 2nd, was graduation for 10 students from the Bible School – 2 with diplomas the other with certificates. I will be resuming the role of "Director" of the Bible school and look forward to a new school year starting 14 October 2006.

Mentoring three past graduates in church planning ministries is one of my goals for this term. These men being, Christophe Bosange, Batshingi and Tambwe Richard.

In Christ,

Robert & Esther, Joshua, Cherith, Jordan, Jeremy, Chelsea & Chaylee Marsh

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