

Grand Opening of the EMS Focus 2009 – 2010

“Giving Account of our Hope – Christian Witness in a Pluralistic World” (I Pet. 3, 8-17)

Sunday Worship in Adenta Victory Church in Accra/Ghana, 21 June 2009

Reflection from Asia

by Rev. Fientje Sopamena

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Sisters and Brothers in Jesus Christ,

I bring you warm greetings from sisters and brothers in Indonesia. We have the same duty; we live in one world as one community which should live in harmony with each other and respecting each other.

How blessed we are
How happy we are
And how great one Lord
Who has mercy on us
And grants us his
Merciful blessings

But how pitiable we are
All human beings who still hate,
Who are of angry will and do not
Do God's will in their/our daily lives

How pitiable we are when we see
The people of other faiths
As enemies and not as our neighbours

We in Indonesia had to deal with that kind of problem. Some years ago several places in Indonesia were shaken by violence because of “interreligious conflicts”.

As the situation became worse, a group of fundamentalist Muslims took particular steps, for example they stopped cars in certain areas and controlled the identity cards of the people. When they found Christians among the passengers, they let these persons get out of the car and beat them.

One day there was once again a raid on the public transportation. A group of Muslim fundamentalists stopped a bus. In the bus was a Christian girl on the way home from her high school. They asked in a loud frightening voice, who among the passengers was a Christian. They should raise their hands. This young girl was afraid, but she knew that she had to declare that she was Christian and she raised her hand hesitantly.

She was immediately ordered to get off the bus and follow those people. When the girl got off, many of the passengers tried to hold her back but this girl remained quiet and followed the people.

While leaving the bus she prayed with her humble heart to God and asked God to help her and not to deny her, but to give her courage and to strengthen her in her testimony to those people. She did not question whether God would protect her and stayed amazingly calm. After a while those people came to her and ordered her in a loud voice to leave that place, without touching or harassing her. They did nothing to that girl.

The news spread among the Christians that the girl was so courageous as to mention her faith in front of people who absolutely wanted to harm her.

The girl has kept the faith for Jesus Christ.

In this moment I plead to you all my sisters and brothers to keep us, the Christian people in Indonesia, in your prayers,. Pray for us that we, your Indonesian sisters and brothers can continue to live in faith and trust. We are happy that through the EMS family we can meet each other, that we can share and enable each other to bear witness to our faith in our various contexts.

Amen.