



# Global Ministries

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PRAY WITH THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2018

## Pray with the Democratic Republic of the Congo on Sunday, October 14, 2018

BY [PAUL TURNER](#) ON OCTOBER 08, 2018

***Lectionary Selection: Mark 10:17-31***

***Prayers for the Democratic Republic of the Congo:***

Eternal Spirit,

Thank you for your enduring presence in DR Congo, where people know they pray to a living God who cares for his people. Thank you for dedicated men and women from around the world who came to the Equator Province to fight the deadly Ebola virus. The examples solidarity and generosity not only demonstrate compassion and empathy, but also an interdependence that is humanity's strength, not its vulnerability. We praise you for this glimpse of your kingdom, and will trust you till the day when it is fully realized.

Bless the Community of Disciples of Christ in Congo (CDCC) and all who work for peace and social change in DR Congo. Grant them wisdom and power; strengthen their resolve to be salt of the earth and light of the world. We stand on the word that says "righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne", so we put the outcome of this year's presidential election in your hands with renewed hopes for peace and reconciliation.

O Lord, bring about a peace that is not just the absence of conflict, but a peace accompanied by justice for the poor, for the people of DR Congo are some the poorest in the world. May this fact, convict the world toward selfless acts of solidarity and generosity as well.

In the Mighty Name of Jesus we pray, Amen.

## ***Mission Stewardship Moment from the Democratic Republic of the Congo:***

It's been a roller coaster year so far in DR Congo. This year has seen...

- an ecumenical call to action for political change met by crackdowns on pro- democracy protests
- the church demonstrating its importance to address outbreaks of the Ebola virus
- former Vice President, Jean Pierre Bemba, released from prison
- a new wave of migrants, or internally displaced persons (IDP), spurred by renewed conflicts
- guarded optimism for a presidential election in December

Through it all, the Community of Disciples of Christi in Congo (CDCC) has continued to support and uplift people making tremendous sacrifices to care for their family and community. Such people include the nurses in Bikoro who tended to the sick unaware they were carrying the Ebola virus, protesters in Kinshasa responding to the church's call for demonstrations and were met with bullets from soldiers and police, and migrants from Kasai and Ituri who protect their lives by leaving homes and communities behind.

Jesus knows something about sacrifice, and he knows the poor and folks like the healthcare worker, the pro-democracy protester and the migrant are often the ones who make sacrifices. In Mark 10:17-31, Jesus exposes a young rich man's inability to sacrifice his wealth to demonstrate his self-professed devotion to God and become a disciple. This encounter echoes Jesus' teaching in Luke 12:13-34, that ends with...

*Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

The young man's refusal to make a sacrificial offering prompted Jesus to say to his disciples, "it's hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God". Jesus acknowledges a temptation to serve wealth rather than God. Jesus calls on all of us to resist becoming possessive, and instead love mercy, do justice, walk humbly with God and engage in other ways that demonstrate riches toward God. In doing so, we should also carry forth the concern Jesus has with justice for the poor.

Today, there is a trend in philanthropy to give away all, or most, of one's wealth. For example, the billionaire founder of the 5-Hour Energy drink plans to give away 99% of his wealth to develop poverty reducing innovations that will increase access to clean water, electricity and healthcare. This is the kind of wealth redistribution Jesus seems to advocate; although, not all of it goes directly to the poor, only to help the poor over time. Still, the sentiment is extraordinary in this era of rampant income inequality and celebration of material wealth.

Calling for the return of 99% of the natural resource wealth extracted from DR Congo over the years to help the poor may be too much to ask. But even an investment of just 1% of the trillions of dollars earned from tungsten, gold, diamonds, magnesium, uranium, coltan, cobalt, rubber, copper, ivory and palm oil, just to name a few, could usher in a national prosperity greater than Saudi Arabia. Many people in DR Congo pray for the day when the country's natural resource wealth will be a source of development, rather than conflict.

With the possibility of the country's first peaceful transition of power since independence coming in December, it's also possible to envision a day in DR Congo when the first will be last and the last will be first. You may say it's impossible, and with man it is, but not with God; all things are possible with God (v. 27).

*(Footnote: Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s sermon "Why Jesus Called a Man a Fool" taken from Luke 12 is on YouTube.)*

(Prayer and Mission Moment by Paul Turner)

***Global Ministries Missionary in the Democratic Republic of the Congo:***

*Paul Turner serves with the Community of Disciples of Christ in Congo. His appointment is made possible by your gifts to Disciples Mission Fund, Our Church's Wider Mission, WOC, OGHS and your special gifts.*

***More information on the Democratic Republic of the Congo:***

[https://www.globalministries.org/democratic\\_republic\\_of\\_congo](https://www.globalministries.org/democratic_republic_of_congo)



# Global Ministries

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## Democratic Republic of Congo

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is the second largest country in Africa. It borders nine countries: Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Republic of Congo, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. The people of the DRC represent over 200 ethnic groups, with nearly 250 languages and dialects spoken throughout the country. Kinshasa, the capital, is the second largest French-speaking city in the world.

The economy of the Democratic Republic of the Congo – a nation endowed with vast natural resource wealth – is slowly recovering after decades of decline. Systemic corruption since independence in 1960, combined with countrywide instability and conflict that began in the mid-1990s has dramatically reduced national output and government revenue and increased external debt. It continues to have an extremely poor population.

Approximately 50% of the population is Roman Catholic, 20% is Protestant, 10% is Kimbanguist, 10% is Muslim, 10% is other (includes syncretic sects and indigenous beliefs).

Population (2015 est) – 79,375,136

Area – 905,568 mi

Capital – Kinshasa

Ethnic Background

Over 200 African ethnic groups – the majority are Bantu; the four largest tribes – Mongo, Luba, Kongo (all Bantu), and the Mangbetu-Azande (Hamitic) make up about 45% of the population

Exports – diamonds, copper, gold, cobalt, wood products, crude oil, coffee

Imports – foodstuffs, mining and other machinery, transport equipment, fuels

Life Expectancy (2015 est) – M 55 years F 59 years

Infant Mortality (2015 est) – 71.47 deaths/1,000 live births

Adult Illiteracy Rate – 36.2%

*Source: The World Factbook*