

Revival & REFORMATION

The Official "United in Prayer" Weekly Blog and Prayer Requests
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The Mysterious Guards in White Robes

By Andrew McChesney

Thirty Pathfinders and their adult friends piled into two rented trucks for a Sabbath afternoon drive from East Timor's capital, Dili.

The Pathfinders were going on a serious trip. They wanted to find three girls whose parents had forbidden them from attending church on Sabbath.

An hour later, the Pathfinders arrived at the village of Remexiu, where the girls lived. The Pathfinders marched and did several drills. They passed out tracts about Jesus to the villagers. They found the three girls and prayed with them. Pastor Inaciu da Kosta, who organized the trip, prayed last.

"Please, God, bless these girls and help them always to be faithful to You," he said.

The girls were happy to see their friends, the Pathfinders. The girls also were Pathfinders and had been baptized while studying in Dili. But when they returned home, their parents had been furious about their decision to follow Jesus and told them that they could not worship on Sabbath.

Soon it was evening, and Pastor Inaciu called for the trucks to take the Pathfinders back to Dili. The group waited and waited, but the trucks didn't come. "Where are the trucks?" Pastor Inaciu asked the young man responsible for the trucks. "The owner doesn't want to take you to Dili," the man replied. "Why not? We need to take the Pathfinders back to Dili. Their parents are waiting."

Pastor Inaciu learned that the truck owner was scared to take the Pathfinders back to Dili. Several parents were angry that the Pathfinders had come to the village and had threatened to beat up the truck owner. So, he didn't want to help anymore.

Pastor Inaciu gathered the Pathfinders around him. "Let's pray and go back by foot," he said. "It will take us about seven hours."

As he spoke, a group of scowling villagers carrying sticks approached the Pathfinders. Hearing that they planned to walk to Dili, a villager snarled, "No, you cannot go!" Another villager pointed his stick at Pastor Inaciu. "Let your leader come and meet with us," he said. Pastor Inaciu said he was ready to meet with the villagers. But he gestured toward the Pathfinders and asked, "If I go, who will be responsible for my 30 people? If something happens to them, who will be responsible?" The villagers only insisted with greater determination that he go with them.

"Wait here," Pastor Inaciu told the Pathfinders. "I need to go talk with these people."

As he left, the Pathfinders sat down in the middle of the street. Huddling together, they closed their eyes reverently to pray. As they took turns praying, they heard a crowd of people coming toward them. The

voices were angry and threatening, but the Pathfinders kept their eyes closed and prayed. Suddenly, the tone of the voices changed from anger to dismay. The sound of pounding feet indicated that the crowd was running away.

A while later, Pastor Inaciu returned to the Pathfinders with food and two trucks. The villagers had prepared a big meal for the hungry Pathfinders and had rented two trucks at their own expense to send them home.

Pastor Inaciu only learned later what had changed the villagers' hearts.

The crowd of villagers had planned to badly beat the Pathfinders and perhaps even kill them as they sat praying on the road. But as the villagers had approached the praying children with their sticks, they had suddenly seen a group of strong men in long white robes standing around the Pathfinders. The unexpected appearance of the powerful protectors had shocked the villagers.

"We were afraid," one villager later told the pastor. "We saw the white-robed people protecting the Pathfinders, and we were afraid and ran away."

The faith of the Pathfinders, including the three girls in the village, grew stronger after that day in 2009. Many of the Pathfinders are now church leaders in East Timor.

"The young people became more faithful because of what God did," said Pastor Inaciu, currently the executive secretary of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in East Timor. "God protected them with angels while they prayed."

Andrew McChesney is the editor of Adventist Mission. This story was originally shared in Adventist Mission and is being reprinted with permission.

World Church Prayer Requests

May 27 – June 3, 2018

- **PRAYER REQUEST:** This week, please pray for the West-Central Africa Division (WAD) which is comprised of 22 countries. WAD has a population of 250 million, with church membership at 700,000. There are four main languages spoken in this region: French, English, Portuguese and Spanish.
- **PRAYER REQUEST:** Pray for Elie D. Weick-Dido, division president; Kingsley C. Anonaba, secretary; and Emmanuel S. D. Manu, treasurer. Pray for the Union leaders, as well as local missions and pastors.
- **PRAYER REQUEST:** Please pray for the WAD evangelism efforts as they hope to double their membership by 2020. To do that, their special mission focus in 2018 is to have 20,000 evangelism sites division-wide with preachers from all over the world. The biggest challenge in this region is trying to reach the countries that are in the 10/40 window.
- **PRAYER REQUEST:** This week, please pray for the East-Central Africa Division (ECD), which is comprised of 11 countries and has a population of approximately 400 million people. Seventh-day Adventist church membership in this region is approximately 3.3 million.
- **PRAYER REQUEST:** Pray for wisdom and the Holy Spirit's blessing on ECD leadership, Blasious M. Ruguri, division president; Alain G. Coralie, executive secretary; and Jerome

Habimana, executive treasurer. Please pray also for all the Union and Conference leaders in the ECD.

- **PRAYER REQUEST:** Please pray for the seven Adventist universities in this territory as well as for the Adventist University of Africa Graduate School, which serves the African continent. Remember Maxwell Adventist Academy in your prayers. It has been a blessing to many young people. Quality Adventist education and dedicated teachers are urgently needed in Africa.
- **PRAYER REQUEST:** Please pray for the Total Member Involvement event scheduled in Zambia (June 8-23, 2018). Pray that the Holy Spirit would be felt in a mighty way and many more would come to a knowledge and acceptance of the truth.