

# The Chronicles of a Chaplain

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“Conflict & Revolution”



Dear Friends,

The first two months of 2011 have seen drastic changes around the world, but especially in the Middle East. From the protests in Tunis, to the Revolution of 25 January in Egypt and the ensuing 18 days of mayhem, to the recent demonstrations and violence in Algeria, Bahrain, Jordan, Libya, Iraq, and other countries in the Middle East. The last two months have been very emotional as we have seen fellow country men take up arms and fight. Hundreds have been killed and thousands injured in Egypt and throughout other countries.

There was a time when all day, every day, images were strewn on television sets and bombarding the internet with real time updates. Now much has gone quiet as the world could not cope with the events. They just keep going on and on. Our attention spans cannot take the constant attention. However, while the Western world has mostly stopped showing these scenes, the situation here in the Middle

East is not yet better. Demonstrations continue and people are injured or killed on a daily basis. One of the most difficult realities is that we do not know when this will be over. The situation is very, very unstable and this makes our lives difficult.

I would ask that you continue to pray for Egypt and the Middle East because this is exactly the time when we need your prayers the most. This is a time of change—for the better or for the worse. The Muslim Brotherhood is pressuring the people and the government to create a stronger Islamic State, similar to Saudi Arabia; while Christians are pushing for laws not based on the Islamic Sharia, and freedoms of religious expression. Christians are pushing for rights as Egyptian citizens based on citizenship, rather than religious affiliation. Please continue to pray for us.

Drew+





## Democracy or Dictatorship

As the revolution continues on, President Mubarak resigned and the Vice President's reign was shortened by the Military of Egypt who took control of Egypt. Riots and demonstrations continued and people were afraid. Curfews reigned from three o'clock in the afternoon until around seven or eight in the morning, yet people continued to break these. Men with clubs, sticks, and any object that could be used a weapon were on the streets guarding homes and taking the law into their own hands—in the absence of the police or any law enforcement. In fact, most police stations were burned to the ground and destroyed. The Governor of Alexandria's government building was destroyed. A place where only a few weeks earlier, hosted a meeting between Bishop Mouneer and the Governor. Then the military took the streets. Tanks and armored vehicles were on street corners and blocked off major intersections. The people cheered and welcomed them. It was a proud moment for the Egyptian Military. Yet, many people (foreign and some domestic) fled to either cities far away from Cairo or out of the country. Wealthy families chartered private planes, companies chartered commercial airlines, and most embassies (including the American and British) were encouraging all non-essential personnel to leave Egypt. These were days of the unknown. Not a day would go by without hearing gunfire or seeing fires on the streets, or seeing mobs of men patrolling the streets (or breaking into shops or homes) late into the night. Darkness fell upon the face of the earth.



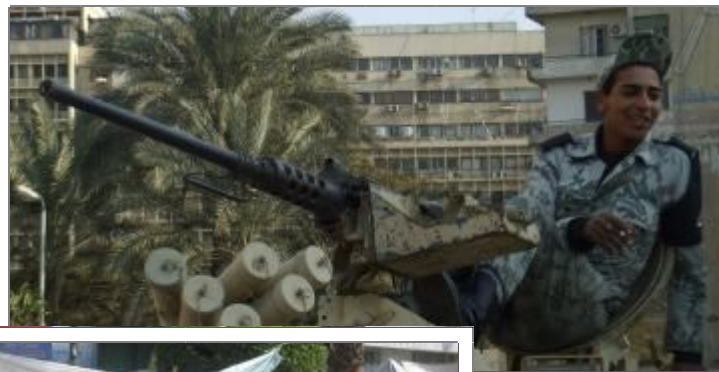


At Tahrir Square (known as Liberation Square) the people continued to gather. It was a city within a city. One million people within a city of 20 million people. These people were camped in the city centre and demonstrating day and night. Throughout the daytime, people traveled from near and far to go to the square

that started the Youth Revolution of 25 January 2011. The 18 days that downed a dictator. The Revolution that joined Christians and Muslims together as citizens of a united Egypt. Most seemed to be rather happy. Soon the red, white and black of the Egyptian flag were seen around Egypt. Cars, homes, trees, statues, flats, and every conservable object had these colors on them. The only thing I can compare it to is the 4th of July celebrations in the USA or the World Cup celebrations in Brazil in 2002 when Brazil won the World Cup for the 5th time and the nation erupted in national pride, sporting the green, blue and gold of the Brazilian flag. Even the military were happy—perhaps because their training was actually being used, and in such a positive way. I went twice to Tahrir Square—although I did not go at night time and I did not go there on my own. I am cautious and not crazy! It was a sight to be seen. The Revolution opened people’s eyes, but to what is the lasting and important questions. What is going to happen next???????



As daily life tried to continue on, and as people tried to return to some type of stability, it was impossible to escape the sight of tanks, automated weapons, and soldiers on the streets. Gradually the curfew was shortened from 3pm-6am to 6pm to 6am, and finally to 12 midnight to 6am (which is the current curfew). This does limit what one can do in a day, especially as shopping needs to be done regularly as fresh fruit and vegetables (when they are to be found during a Revolution!) are not long-lasting. Seen on the right is a photograph of a boy on a bicycle carrying bread on his head. I've been wanting a photo of this for a long time. But while he is normally dodging traffic, many of the streets were completely empty and blocked off by the military who were rather cheerful in nature, and didn't mind posing for photographs or allowing their vehicle to be autographed!





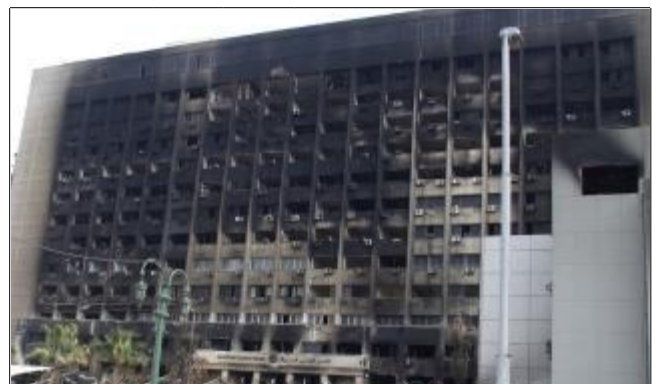
People wanted change (as seen on the banner above). They demanded the removal of the old regime. They burned the Democratic National Party building (see photos on right). This building burned for days and could be seen for miles. They burned police stations (virtually all of the police stations in Alexandria and in many other parts of Egypt). They ransacked Carrefour and other shops and businesses. Car chases happened in Alexandria.

But the people while realizing the need for change of the authorities, need to be reminded from the lectionary readings for Sundays (the Sermon on the Mount) that we are all guilty. The people must realize that while President Mubarak stole billions of dollars and cheated people, so does every Egyptian who cheats one another in their shops, who bribes a police officer to look the other way when illegally parking or doing worse violations, etc... I don't think that the people are ready to see the plank in their own eye, with the speck in another's eye. This is human nature!!!

A lot will need to change, but change in order to be effective must not be top-down (enforced) but bottom-up (a desire of the people). I pray that this is true.

Speaking of prayer, Christians often guarded Muslims while praying, especially on Friday's (as seen in Tahrir Square) and there were times when Muslims guarded the Christians while Sunday prayers. There was a unity as Egyptians. But, this unity will only last as long as they are fighting a common enemy. Once the enemy is gone, it will revert back to 90% Muslims fighting 10% Christians.

Do continue to pray for the peace here in Egypt and throughout the Middle East. This is an important area and God has done and will do amazing things here!





In the absence of real leadership, the question of power has arisen. Will the Muslim Brotherhood succeed in making Egypt a nation based fully on Sharia Law and a leading Islamic Nation (like Saudi Arabia) or will the Egyptian people continue to strive for democracy and a civil nation based on laws from a Constitution guaranteeing the rights of every citizen? Only time will tell. And Christians have the most to gain and to lose from this.

As a recap, this is what happened: Since January 25th 2011, millions of Egyptians have demonstrated and manifested on the streets. President Hosni Mubarak appointed a Vice-President, Mr. Omar Suliman, for the first time since 1981. On the 29th of January, President Mubarak dissolved the Cabinet. On the 1st of February, while everyone expected the resignation of the President, he defied the people and only said that his son, Gamal, wouldn't run. Other countries in the Middle East followed. On the 5th of February the National Democratic Party (whose central Cairo headquarters burned down) was replaced. On the 9th of February there were strikes by the railways, public employees, electrical workers, etc... On the 11th of February the Vice President announced the President's resignation and that power had been given to the Supreme Council of Armed Forces.

In 18 days of terror, there were 365 civilian deaths (making one martyr for each day of the year), 32 police killed, 5,500 civilians injured, 1,000 police injured and thousands others not reported. Almost all of the police stations in Alexandria were burned down. The Military imposed a curfew for the 1st time since 1985. On the 26th of February, the Constitutional Commission announced that upcoming Presidential elections in September 2011 would include a two-term limit for a total of eight possible years in office.

What is the situation now?



I have seen young people on the streets cleaning it, painting it, picking up trash, painting trees in National colors (red, white, black) and doing other acts of charity. These are Christians and Muslims together.

However, in the past few days, I have seen monasteries attacked, a church burned down, mini-bus drivers shot by police because they won't pay the "protection money," etc...

It is still unsafe, but it is still safe.

## Unexpected Blessings

During the last few weeks, I have not slept well. Sometimes it has been from some gun fire I have heard. Sometimes it has been from shouts in the streets and gangs running. Sometimes it has been from cheering crowds demonstrating and marching up and down the streets. Sometimes it has been from my emotions or physical tiredness. Sometimes it has been because of the stress of work and what is needed to be accomplished. Life isn't easy. But, I am reminded that my life is still better than so many people who face difficulties like this daily. I am still blessed to be a son of God and a beloved brother of Jesus! I am still blessed to be living.



One evening when I wasn't sleeping, and God put it on my heart to text someone. So, I texted a friend in a different time zone (knowing that the person might still be up, even though it would be late). It was a short text of encouragement and appreciation for our friendship. This is what the person replied by email a day later...

*The timing of your text last night was so amazing. I have been struggling with severe laryngitis coupled with a cracked rib. Feeling worn down by one virus after another since September, I had fallen into a pit of despair. Crying out to the Lord as every cough was agony, I heard my mobile phone and there, in the dark, was your hand, reaching all the way from Egypt to touch & bless me. How the tears flowed!!!*

*That was not all - your blessing was multiplied. At 6am this morning another text came thru from a friend in great distress, in hospital with her 4-day old baby. Thanks to your blessing I was strong enough to ring her (in spite of sleepless night) & comfort & pray with her. I think its Henri Nouwen who gives a beautiful description of Jesus stilling the storm not by shouting commands but by reaching out his arms to touch & still the storm clouds with his love. May this be the experience of all of you in Egypt in the days ahead.*

*God bless you with a double blessing dear friend & may you be refreshed as you refresh others.*

I was so touched by this email. I thought I would share it with you to encourage you all to listen to God's love and voice. Even the smallest encouragement could mean the world to someone in need. It opens a window of possibility.

I was also touched by the thought of Jesus commanding with his love, and that nature and we as humans respond to that love. The trees of the field will one day clap their hands. The stones will cry out. Let us praise God today!





## The Impact of the Revolution of 25 January

During these times of instability, **60** per cent of the migrants interviewed identified lack of personal security as their top concern, followed by receiving payment from employers. The vast majority of them reporting no employment at all during the last three weeks. Women were more likely to be impacted from the lack of employment than men. While the respondents were almost equally divided between men and women, only **12** per cent of women who were working before January 25 were working afterwards. In addition, **80** per cent of migrants did not receive their payments for January.

The closure of banks extenuated the effect of unemployment as migrants were not able to access monetary transfers from their country of origin leading to **86** per cent of informants reporting change their food budget due to the events in particular for Sudanese (**97%**), Iraqi (**87%**) and Somali (**79%**). For almost **40** per cent of respondents their food consumption was drastically reduced during the events. **40** per cent of them expressed the desire to leave Egypt, but they did not have the means to do so.

While there are programs like Refuge Egypt (a ministry of the Diocese of Egypt), Caritas (a ministry of the Roman Catholic Church), UNHCR and other organizations to help refugees, the Revolution of 25 January also affected millions of Egyptians. To minimize the tension between vulnerable migrants and their Egyptian neighbours, this assessment recommends the inclusion of both populations in humanitarian assistance provided for both. It is well documented that the two populations reside under similar socio-economic conditions and humanitarian assistance should target beneficiaries based on vulnerability and not residence status or nationality.

During this time, in addition to helping thousands of refugees, according to Director Jonathan Lee, "Refuge Egypt has provided food and blankets to **33** (30 Ethiopian, 3 Sudanese) people who became free from captivity during the early days of the uprising. They have been fast-tracked by the UNHCR and are being registered for ongoing assistance from ourselves. A further **40** arrived just last week having been very poorly treated during their attempt to cross Sinai towards the border crossing. All of the women had been raped and are being tested for HIV by our clinics. We will again be registering them for ongoing support and assistance." The International Organization for Migration (IOM) Cairo reported that in 9 days (from 22 February-2 March 2011) **79,199** people have crossed the border in Sallum from Libya to Egypt. On March 2 alone, **5,993** people crossed the border, for the first time non-Egyptians were the majority (**3,066**).

Please pray for Christ the King Church in Tripoli, Libya where Rev. Hamdy is serving. Most of his congregation has fled and two priests have, at the advice of their embassies, returned to Canada and India respectively. Please pray as Colonel Qaddafi is killing his countrymen and won't resign because, as he states, he is not the President. He claims to be the "glory of the people of Libya." Please pray against the tyranny there and the threats. Please pray for safety in North Africa. Please pray for the safety and provision for all persons in the world.

## In the Interim...

During part of the crisis here, when the curfew was from 3pm in the afternoon to 7am in the morning, there were many evenings centered around reading books, watching the breaking news on the televisions, going up to the roof to watch the riots and demonstrations, taking phone calls, and trying to pass the time with others.

All of the foreign volunteers for the diocese of Egypt were invited to stay at the Diocesan Guest House (which is on floors 3 and 4 of the Clergy House where I live). When you can't go out for 3/4ths of the day, one has to pass the time in other ways. And when your mobile phone and internet has been cut by the government, you have to do other things.



Several times we played Scrabble. I had the joy of making several 7-letter words, however, I didn't always win as I wasn't as cut-throat as some of the others with whom I played. I also didn't try to block the other players as we were all having fun.

During this time I also found myself watching a few movies that my friends had given me over time and which I had never found the time to watch. I quite enjoyed "Prince of Persia: Sands of Time," and the new "Robin Hood." I don't know what year these films are from, but they were good. I also watched one or two others. Well, when I say watched, I had them on while I was doing other things. I am a multi-tasker, or perhaps, just ADD as I cannot seem to just do one thing at a time. I have to be doing many things.

In addition to taking some time to relax, when it was possible, I also worked on a course of Anglicanism for the Alexandria School of Theology. I had the privilege of teaching this course in the past, and while I am not teaching it this year, I am working on the subject matter. Archbishop Maurice Sinclair (the former Primate of the Southern Cone before Archbishop Gregory Venables) has written a book which we are using. I am taking that book and making a PowerPoint presentation to accompany it. This presentation will include history, photos, charts, etc... to visually represent what is written. This has been such a joy. While preparing something useful for students, I am getting a very good review of Anglicanism and expanding my horizons as I study sections again. I hope one day to be able to teach this outside of Egypt!

Sadly, in this past month there has also been the death of a young Roman Catholic priest in Tunis. He was found decapitated. There was also another priest in Upper Egypt found decapitated. St. Bishoi Monastery was attacked and part of its walls were demolished. You cannot escape the stress of the situations here.

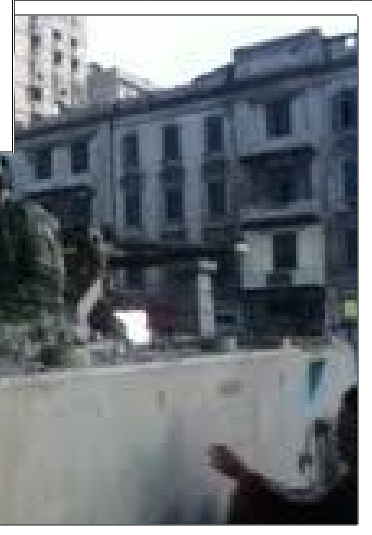
Please pray for stability and the end of violence, especially religious violence.



It was a joy to travel to Alexandria where Bishop Mouneer licensed Rev. Rick Belser from Charleston, South Carolina as a priest of the diocese. Rev. Rick will be helping to teach at the Alexandria School of Theology and will also assist the Very Rev. Samy Fawzy with the responsibilities at St. Mark's Pro-Cathedral, specifically assisting Rev. Emad and the Arabic congregation. Even in Alexandria, we saw tanks and military. But we also saw young men and women painting the streets and cleaning up the rocks and debris from the demonstrations and demolished police stations, government building, and other shops that had been looted and destroyed.

I must say, that I also experienced an abundance of generosity as the Dean of the Pro-Cathedral allowed the Bishop and I to stay in his house—which is quite normal, except that this time because the house was undergoing renovations, I stayed in the boys room and the Bishop stayed in the Dean's bedroom, while the boys stayed with their grandmother and the Dean and his wife slept on mattresses on the floor of their study. What humility and service. I am constantly being taught what true humility is, and how

the Middle Eastern heart is to always serve, even and especially when it involves self-sacrifice for others. This was Jesus' m.o. as he was Middle Eastern! Hospitality! Generosity!



I had the privilege of preaching at All Saints Cathedral, Cairo (pictured on right) on Friday the 18th and Sunday the 20th of February. The passage I was given was the Sermon on the Mount and the Law of Leviticus (the lectionary readings for Epiphany 7A). I don't preach very often because I am not assigned as a priest of one particular church, but as the Chaplain to the Bishop. This allows me the ability to visit all of the churches in the Diocese and to preach at all of them (although there are four that I have not yet preached at, even though I have participated in the services).



In my sermon I spoke about how we measure ourselves often to sports figures. Standing next to cut-outs of basketball players, we are dwarfs. Standing next to sumo wrestlers (as my sister Amelia and her husband Bill did in 2005 when we were in Japan) they are slender reeds—they are anyway, though! No matter how hard we try to grow taller, to get larger, to play better, to sin less, to compare ourselves, we always fall short. We cannot just try harder. We are incapable and it is impossible. But this is where the grace of God fits in.



It not only makes up the difference, but goes above and beyond the difference, overflowing in our lives. When we read Leviticus, we all fail. When we read the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) we all really fail! But, this is where the grace and love of God come in. Thank you Jesus!

Seen below are photos of Bishop Mouneer with staff at the opening of the new Episcopal Training Centre in Zamalek (a place to learn English or Arabic) and then a photo of me in the Bishop's office as I was offered some tea and English cakes—I have to admit I am gaining weight It was very nice! These celebrations were wonderful.



## The Coptic Liturgy\*

(\*Using the Liturgy of St. Basil, starting with the offertory then Anaphora. I thought you might appreciate this.)

**Deacon:** Offer, offer, offer in order. Stand with trembling. Look towards the east. Let us attend.

**Congregation:** A mercy of peace, a sacrifice of praise.

**Priest:** The Lord be with you all.

**Congregation:** And with your spirit.

**Priest:** Lift up your hearts.

**Congregation:** We have them with the Lord.

**Priest:** Let us give thanks to the Lord.

**Congregation:** It is meet and right.

**Priest:** Meet and right, meet and right, truly, indeed, it is meet and right. O you, who are Mater, Lord and God of truth, being before the ages and reigning forever, who dwells in the highest and looks upon the lowly, who has created the heaven, the earth, the sea and all that is therein; the Father of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ, by whom you have created all things, seen and unseen; who sits upon the throne of His glory, and who is worshiped by all the holy powers.

Before whom stand the angels, the archangels, the principalities, the authorities, the thrones, the dominions and the powers.

**Deacon:** Look towards the East.

**Priest:** You are he whom stands the Cherubim full of eyes and the Seraphim with six wings, praising continuously with ceasing saying:

**Congregation:** The Cherubim worship you, and the Seraphim glorify you proclaiming and saying: Holy Holy Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory.





**Priest:** Holy, Holy, holy, truly O Lord, our God who formed us, created us, and placed us in the paradise of joy. When we disobeyed your commandments by the guile of the serpent, we fell from eternal life, and were exiled from the paradise of joy. You have not abandoned us to the end, but have always visited us through your holy prophets, and in these last days, you did manifest yourself to us—we who were sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death—through your only-begotten Son, our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ, who of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary

**Congregation:** Amen

**Priest:** was incarnate and became man, and taught us the ways of salvation. He granted us birth from on high through water and Spirit. He made us unto himself a congregation, and sanctified us by your Holy Spirit; he loved his own who are in the world, and gave himself up for our salvation unto death which reigned over us, whereby we were bound and sold on account of our sins, He descended into hades through the cross

**Congregation:** I believe.

**Priest:** He rose from the dead on the third day; He ascended into the heavens and sat at your right hand, O Father; he has appointed a day for recompense, on which he will appear to judge the world in righteousness and give each one according to his deeds.

**Congregation:** According to your mercy, O Lord, and not according to our sins.

**Priest:** He instituted for us this great mystery of godliness. For being determined to give himself up to death for the life of the world.

**Congregation:** We believe



**Priest:** He took bread into his holy, spotless, unblemished, blessed and life-giving hands.

**Congregation:** We believe that this is true. Amen.

**Priest:** He looked up towards heaven to you, O God who are his Father and Master of everyone.

**Priest:** He gave thanks,                      **Congregation:** Amen

**Priest:** He blessed it,                      **Congregation:** Amen

**Priest:** And he sanctified it.    **Congregation:** Amen. We believe, we confess, and we glorify



**Priest:** He broke it, gave it to his own holy disciples and saintly apostles saying, *“Take, eat it all of you. For this is my body which shall be broken for you and for many, to be given for the remission of sins. Do this in remembrance of Me.”*

**Congregation:** This is true. Amen.

**Priest:** Likewise, also the cup after supper, he mixed it of wine and water.

**Priest:** He gave thanks,           **Congregation:** Amen

**Priest:** He blessed it,           **Congregation:** Amen

**Priest:** And he sanctified it.   **Congregation:** Amen. Again, we believe, we confess, and we glorify

**Priest:** He tasted, and gave it also to his own holy disciples and saintly apostles saying, *“Take, drink of it all of you. For this is my blood of the new covenant which shall be shed for you and for many, to be given for the remission of sins. Do this in remembrance of Me.”*

**Congregation:** This is also true. Amen.

**Priest:** For every time you shall eat of this bread and drink of this cup, you proclaim my death, confess my resurrection and remember me till I come.

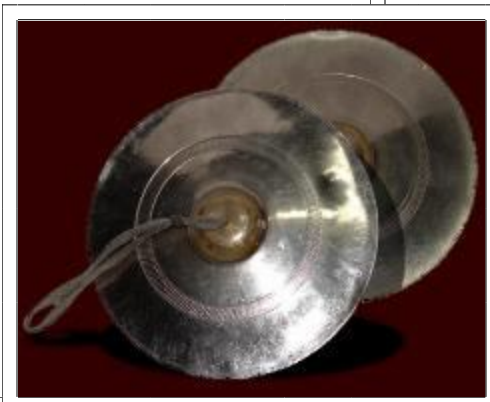
**Congregation:** Amen. Amen. Amen. Your death, O Lord, we proclaim. Your holy resurrection and ascension we confess. We praise you, we bless you, we thank you, O Lord, and we entreat you, O our God.

**Priest:** Therefore, as we also commemorate this holy passion, his resurrection from the dead, his ascension into the heavens, his sitting at your right hand, O Father, and his second coming which shall be from the heavens, awesome and full of glory, we offer unto you your oblations from what is yours, for every condition, concerning every condition, and in every condition.

**Deacon:** Worship God in fear and trembling.

**Congregation:** We praise you, we bless you, we serve you, we worship you.

*The epiclesis, invocation of the saints, prayers, fraction and other parts of the liturgy will be included in next month’s Chronicles. Stay tuned!*



## An update from my sister: Rachel Wayne

I spent my Christmas and New Year in Macedonia. It was super to be back to a place I called "Home" for 3 years. I stayed with Biljana and her husband for 2 weeks... and visited other friends as often as possible. In any given day I went on a minimum of 3 visits - but usually more. I spent Christmas with a trip to Apolon and as it was not Macedonian Christmas it just wasn't the same.... They tried but I ended up calling my parents and talking to them for a short while feeling rather nostalgic for family and friends back home. New Years was the opposite. We got all dressed up and went dancing till after the "ball dropped". It was super and I felt so involved in MK tradition. After a drive to Bulgaria with the ever so trusty "Delcho Trans" that had served all my airport transfers for so long... I was back in China.



When I arrived back it still hadn't snowed.... I needed to travel to Harbin and go to the Ice Festival. So over my Dad's birthday weekend I treated myself to a trip to an ice amusement park. I did the reverse bungee, went skiing, ice skating (Chinese style), and felt icicles forming on my eyelashes. It was an adventure. I also saw the largest Russian Style church in China. Harbin is on the border with Russia so we all went to a Russian restaurant and had Borscht and the works. I almost froze to death but I had a glimpse of what it would have been like to be sent to the gulags in Siberia! I was outside from 9am to 8pm....what was I thinking?!?!?

I was home for less than a month before my planned trip to see my little brother. I was so excited as it would have been a year and a month since I had seen him (last year x-mas in Russia, the year before x-mas in Egypt). I should have chosen to go over x-mas again because as it turned out I didn't get to go at all due to political strife. So I went scuba diving instead. I traveled by 36 hour train to the small island of Hainan in the South China Sea. You ask, "By train...to and island?" Well this is how it works in China. They actually uncouple the cars and ride them onto a ferry boat .... It was like traveling from France to England when I went to Europe in '95 - but we were on a bus and it just seems more normal to ferry a bus/car than a train. Suffice it to say we arrived in Sanya on the hot tropical beaches and I did what I intended to do. I got a tan - well actually I got burnt! But I did go diving and get a shell with a barnacle for my sister! Diving was good and there was some wicked phosphorescent sea life.



We flew back the day of the first Beijing snow of the year. It was so nice. White and clean Beijing is so abnormal from the Beijing that I live in. I live in the Beijing where the pollution count is so high the children are not allowed to go outside to play. I live in the Beijing where it is just not recommended to go outside. I live in the Beijing where my allergies have a field day with the molds, mildews, and dusts that are everywhere... It has come to a point where my nose, sinuses, ears and throat just have the Beijing. My students' parents ask about my cough or whatnot and I tell them I am not sick, I just have "The Beijing".



Back to not going to Egypt - The holiday I was trying to skip out on was "Chinese New Year". Part of me just wants to travel during time off of school, as one of the reasons I am teaching





abroad is that it affords me the means to travel freely - however I suppose it is good to experience some of the Chinese traditions along with the Chinese. A few days before I left for Sanya was the beginning of the Chinese New Year. I went with some friends to the tallest building in Beijing and we sat on the 80th floor overlooking all the fireworks at the same time. This decision was both a good and a bad one. Good because after arriving we could see all the fireworks but not have to hear the intensity of them as we were so far above them. Bad because while riding my bike to the subway I was bombarded... literally. There were firecrackers, fireworks and

other assorted loud noises the entire way. It was not really a peaceful experience. I am surprised that more Chinese are not deaf. After midnight some people wanted to go down on the street to join in on the festivities but I protested and ordered another bottle of champagne. I didn't want to go down during that chaos sans earplugs! My father taught me to protect my hearing.... So when we did finally leave it took us about an hour in the freezing wee hours of the morning to get a taxi home.

Similarly at the end of the lunar month there is another day of ridiculous fireworks set off my children and adults alike.... Between buildings and on the streets. It creates an amazing mess but as every day between the first and last nights explode with firework noises nightly the cleaners are well practiced. I found it so ironic as during the last day of the festivities I had the news on just to drown out the noise echoing through the apartment blocks and they were talking about all the injuries and the other negatives of fireworks in China. The counter debate was that it was a tradition and therefore had to stay. My roommate came home amidst this with an amazing story of walking home through the "war zone". A huge firework set was going off and it tipped over spraying fireworks into the feet of those watching. A large one hit a car... it was just chaos. Apparently things like this happen all the time as the size of fireworks sold in China for personal use are the grade that only professionals can use in the states. Fun but.... Not so safe.



I have come to the realization recently that it has been 4 years and 6 months since I have actually "lived" in the States. I know it is my desire and my choice to live abroad and I love it.... It is also a bit hard sometimes. I miss every birthday, every Christmas, every Graduation, every first bloom in spring and every first snow fall of winter.... In short have chosen to not be there for you all. But so much as I have been dwelling on this decision to be an ex-pat for a while... I have decided it is selfishly in my best interests to stay here. I love that I can go to ... well McDonalds... and not speak a word of English..... I love that I can read dozens of characters, and reprimand my students in Chinese. I love that I am learning about a place that's food used to make me vomit( I had a serious issue in college with all things soy). I love that all those years of using chopsticks at 4832 Everett paid off. I am happy that you all know that I am choosing to freely be me - and that consists of living like a million miles away.

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Love,

Rachel



## Final Thoughts...

“Leisure: the Basis of Culture” is a book from 1948 and comments on the pace of life. The argument of this book is that at the foundation of culture is leisure, not work. Think of the Garden of Eden: God created us for fellowship and leisure. Marxism (and the Protestant work ethic) says that value comes through work. Thus in America (and in the West) children and elderly are not important because they don’t work. This is a Communist idea. But, interestingly Americans often have the same culture.

Now, we do have to work and do different things. Adam named the animals and tended the Garden. But, leisure is the beginning and end of our life. We can’t be lazy, but we need to be leisurely.

Now, I know what you are going to say. Drew... you are the pot calling the kettle black, or in other words, practice what you preach! I don’t really spend a lot of time leisurely. I need to learn how to rest in the assurance of the Lord (as seen on the right as I am praying). I need to learn for learning sake, not for the purpose of doing. Man does not live to work, but works to live.



## Happy Birthday Rosemarjorie!

My niece, Rosemarjorie Adele Feth, turned 3 years old. My sister Amelia (Rosemarjorie’s mother) writes, “*Rosemarjorie wanted to have yogurt and applesauce for her [birthday] meal. For dessert she didn’t want cake or ice cream. This was her request: pink jellybeans, blueberries and applesauce, pears, oranges, M&M’s, candy canes, and candy hearts. We put a blueberry muffin in the middle with her new Blueberry Muffin mini-doll to go with her Strawberry Shortcake themed birthday and love of blueberries. When she saw it on her birthday plate she said, “It’s mine!”*”



*Liam wanted to play with Rosemarjorie’s Strawberry Shortcake dolls, car, and props, but Rosemarjorie said they were hers. He had to wait until her naptime. Now... I can hear him singing the Strawberry Shortcake song. Rosemarjorie is wearing a long Strawberry Shortcake nightgown.*



*Pacifica [their little sister] sat on the floor trying to eat the toys. Then she was laying down rolling all over the floor.*

**NEXT MONTH:** March 2011

- Ash Wednesday & Lent
- The Coptic Liturgy (part deux)
- Reading Books
- The Grand Mufti of Egypt
- John & Fabi Schmidt (Brasil)
- The Godfather II

**PRAYER REQUESTS**

- Please pray for Egypt and the Middle East
- Please pray for safety in traveling
- Please pray that I might learn & understand Arabic
- Please pray for peace physically, emotionally, spiritually



**CONCLUDING WORDS...from the BCP**

Most loving Father, whose will it is for us to give thanks for all things, to fear nothing but the loss of you, and to cast our care on you who care for us: Preserve us from faithless fears and worldly anxieties, that no clouds of this mortal life may hide us from the light of that love which is immortal, and which you have manifested to us in your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.  
*Amen.*

**Drew+**

So...What is the best way to contact me?

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Please send contributions to:

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Akron, Ohio, 44333 USA

\*With the check, please include a note with Drew Schmotzer on it.  
Please do not write "Drew" in memo line.

**Thank You!** شكراً