

His Bell Tolled from Heaven's Aurora Bliss

By Joe Gbaba, Sr., Ed. D.

One starry night while whiling the evening away
In pure silence and deep meditation and penance on my veranda
I heard the sound of a bell faintly tolling in the middle of the night
And I wondered from whence the toll might come and why
Then miraculously the deep blue skies above opened up
And down came a legion of angels,
The seraphs and seraphim
They all clad in shining white garments
And among them was Gabriel the archangel
God's chief messenger of all ages
To state why the bell in heaven's aurora bliss tolled



With jubilation and unending joy
Gabriel the archangel revealed that His Grace
Michael Kpakala Francis had arisen from the dead

And that with deep faith in Jesus Christ
Archbishop Francis had conquered death
For His Grace had gone to his great Master Jesus Christ
The Lord of hosts
The Alpha and Omega and the conqueror of death!



(A scene of Joe Gbaba's Resurrection performed by Dehkotee Artists Theatre, Inc. in Monrovia in 1992. Archbishop Francis was one of Dr. Gbaba's mentors and patrons)

So the angelic hosts proclaimed
All the faithful should clap their hands
And glorify God for a great son
He had sent in our midst
To proclaim the Good News of Christ
So that we all may receive God's plan of salvation

Indeed there was good reason to rejoice
For I too had received the light of peace and justice
When I interacted with His Grace while on earth
And when we communed as father and son
And when he preached on many church holidays
At Sacred Heart Cathedral or at St. Joseph's Parish
Fearlessly proclaiming the gospel
Even if it meant his death
But such great men do not die in death
For to die in Christ is to have life everlasting

His Grace was a humble servant of God
He was a great architect and a man of strong Christian faith
He was forgiving and wise
And his courage and love of God was as solid as steel
Nothing could deter him from serving God
For he was a builder and not a destroyer
For this reason he rebuilt
Whenever the destroyers of human life
Attempted to break down God's structures
He had worked so hard to build

Now I know why and from whence
The bell tolled from heaven's aurora bliss
To mark the angelic home going
Of His Grace Michael Kpakala Francis
A servant of God who served mankind
With his whole heart, mind, and soul
He was never too big to speak to every child he met
And he was a friend of the poor and rich
He loved everyone equally
Irrespective of gender, creed, or color

And, as I pondered on these thoughts
Then suddenly the angels disappeared
In the cold misty air of the morning light
Leaving me meditating and marveling the wonders of Christ
And then I realized
His bell tolled from heaven's aurora bliss!

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