Dear Friends and supporters,

This past year has been a very difficult one for South Sudan. The violence that exploded last December has led the country to a civil war. More than 7 million people are facing the threat of hunger. Solidarity works to accompany and empower the people, being present especially during this time of crisis, when our sisters and brothers are suffering the tragic consequences of war, tribalism and the political leaders’ battle for power.

Photo: Thanks to Paul Jeffrey

Solidarity has temporarily lost the mission of Malakal: the community suffered the attacks at Christmas and during the following months the house and teacher training centre were completely looted. All the students, including the graduating class, dispersed. The population fled to other villages or sought refuge in the UN compound. Two community members lived at the UN camp with more than 20,000 people, fearing further attacks.

The Solidarity Teacher Training College (TCC) in Yambio has seen two classes of teachers graduate. Without the centre in Malakal, it is planned to increase the facilities to receive more students: dormitories, dining porch, sanitation and staff rooms will be added.

At the Solidarity Catholic Health Training Institute (CHTI) in Wau registered nurses graduated again with top results and continue to prepare midwives as well.

The Solidarity Pastoral Team is responding to the present crisis, with Trauma Healing, Reconciliation and Peace building workshops and emergency pastoral visits. The team has continued its work with bishops, clergy, pastoral directors, religious, and catechists from all the dioceses.

The Solidarity Agricultural Programme is being developed to involve the local population. Numerous, diversified, local capacity building workshops take place in Riimenze. The agricultural programmes at the STTC in Yambio and at the CHTI in Wau are also designed to develop Community Farming and Sustainable Agriculture practices.

Now more than ever the Spirit that moves Solidarity is more needed. The diversity of more than 260 congregations working together in different ways - governing, forming communities, supporting with funds, personnel and praying - is a model for the people in South Sudan and for our students. Pope Francis has recognised the project by giving the first donation we received this year.

We thank you for continuing this journey of walking hand in hand with the local church and the people.

If you are not yet involved, we invite you to be part of this initiative.

Your prayer and financial support are urgently needed to continue serving the people of South Sudan.

This Christmas season, please donate generously.

From Solidarity with South Sudan, with our deepest gratitude, and united in prayer for PEACE, we wish you

CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS AND PEACE!

Yudith Pereira Rico rjm
Associate Executive Director