Dear Friends,

As we send out this issue of Solidarity's Email Newsletter, we join with you in the worldwide celebrations at the election of the new Pope, Francis, the first Pope from the Latin American world. Staff from the Rome Office joined thousands from around the world, in the Piazza, waiting for the appearance of the white smoke. We were inspired by Pope Francis' first words of greeting as the Bishop of Rome inviting all to participate in "a journey of fraternity, of love, of trust" and to pray together for the whole world. The witness of his pastoral work in Buenos Aires is another visible sign of the global solidarity to which we are called as Christians. Yesterday we joined thousands of pilgrims in the Square for Pope Francisco's Inauguration.
This newsletter also celebrates a new President of the Governing Board of Solidarity with South Sudan, new Governing Board members, new Graduates, new volunteers, and new students. In a recent visit to South Sudan in conversation with current students from Solidarity's teacher and nurse training programs, I was deeply moved by their obvious growth in learning but even more by their commitment to be leaders in the future.

Reflection on these two very different experiences - one in Rome and the other in South Sudan - is a reminder of the important role of leadership in building community locally and globally in church and national contexts. May our prayerful support be with Pope Francis - the 266th Pope of the Catholic Church - and also with these new youthful leaders in the new Nation of South Sudan.

We sincerely thank you for your prayerful and practical support in so many ways. The Staff in the Rome Office and the members in South Sudan join together in wishing you a blessed hope-filled Easter. May we be "men and women...who open up a horizon of hope...letting a shaft of light break through the heavy clouds" in our different places throughout the world. (Pope Francis)

Sr. Patricia Murray ibvm
Executive Director
Thanks for your Generosity at Christmas

Veronica, a Solidarity Teacher Training Student from the Nuba Mountains with her son, Henry-Scott (receiving the Solidarity Christmas Card in January with their picture - front and centre!)

The work of Solidarity with South Sudan in training nurses and midwives, teachers, small farmers and communities traumatized by decades of war is already starting to make an impact on the local communities. Much more work is needed and many challenges lie ahead but with our joint efforts Solidarity with South Sudan will continue walking with the people of South Sudan towards peace and democracy.

Together we shall give hope for the future in South Sudan. The response to Solidarity with South Sudan’s Christmas Appeal was very encouraging. Our deep gratitude goes to the religious congregations, parishes, and individual donors from all over the world who have given so generously.

Message from the New President of the Governing Board

Dear Friends of Solidarity with South Sudan,

During the General Assembly in December 2012, I was elected President of the Governing Board. I look forward to the work lying ahead of me, and I hope that in some way we will meet - be it only through the
written word.
I am Irish by birth and in spirit! I joined the Congregation of Our Lady of the Missions (RNDM) in England where I lived and worked for most of my life in the area of Education. Now as a member of the General Leadership Team of the Congregation my base is in Rome. Since Solidarity’s inception my congregation has been privileged to be sharing in the unfolding miracle of the Catholic Health Training Institute, Teacher Training College, Agriculture Development, Pastoral Initiatives, Trauma Healing, Community Building and Leadership Training.
This international initiative between Religious Congregations and the Church in South Sudan is a unique opportunity to collaborate in the best interests of the people. I assure you that I will do what I can to support this great work of God.
Thank you to all who work as part of this project, to all who help to resource it and to all who take an interest in the work of Solidarity. I pray that we will continue to recognise that in partnership we have the capacity to engage with the challenges of our time in increasingly life-enhancing ways.
"The globe and its entire people are in the hand of every succeeding generation. We are put here simply to provide another hand, another idea, another bit of support. We are here to take care of those who cannot take care of themselves while the rest of the world takes care of us, to do ‘for the least of these’ so that the very life of a creating God can be Honoured in them."
(Welcome the Wisdom of the World - Joan Chittister).
God bless each of you.
Sister Elizabeth Hartigan RNDM

First Graduation from Malakal's Solidarity Teacher Training College

Wednesday 20th February 2013 marked a day of celebration for Solidarity Malakal Teacher Training College. Graduating students and their family members, present teachers and invited guests gathered for the blessing of the College compound and the Graduation of the first students to complete the four year Pre-service Training Certificate. Australian teacher volunteer with Solidarity with South Sudan in Malakal, Sharon Gardiner, shares with us in words and photos this beautiful day of celebration.

Please click here to download the full story from our website.
Story of Two Graduating Teachers
"We Didn't Come for Food or Water, We Came for Knowledge"

Malakal Solidarity Teacher Training College has just celebrated its first Graduation. Since January 2009 eight teachers have attended two-month courses twice a year during their school holidays. Now they are ready to provide a better and much needed education to the children of South Sudan. Two of the graduates, Giel Jiath Waar and Gordon Koang, tell their stories on how and why they came to Malakal Teacher Training College. They share their learning experiences and their plans and hopes for the future. Please click here to download the full story from our website.

A Walk Down Memory Lane
From Dream to Reality

The Malakal Solidarity Teacher Training College has come a long way since its humble start in 2009. It is now a bustling educational institution where teachers in need of further training as well as prospective teachers receive a thorough education following the South Sudan National Curriculum. Take a walk down memory lane with Principal Sr. Ninet D’Costa FMA, who has been with Solidarity with South Sudan in Malakal from the very beginning. Please click here to download the full story from our website.

Blessing and Opening
Solidarity Teacher Training College, Yambio
The blessing and official opening of Solidarity Teacher Training College (TTC) in Yambio, February 2013, was attended by representatives from the Diocese of Tombura-Yambio and the State of Western Equatoria and by many friends of the TTC. During her opening speech of welcome, the Principal Sr. Margaret Scott RNDM asked the students from many different parts of South Sudan to stand up. This simple exercise demonstrated that the students come from different States and that Yambio TTC is now truly a national college. The Minister for Education spoke about the need for greater professionalism on the part of teachers and the important role that teachers play in building the new country. Fr. Anthony Bangoye, Vicar General of the Diocese, remembered the first visit by representatives of USG/UISG to Southern Sudan in 2006 and marveled that the existence of Yambio TTC was a testimony to the commitment by international religious orders to help meet the needs of the people of South Sudan.
Young Australian Gives Back to His People

Koal Kuk, a 19-year-old Australian High School Graduate, volunteered with Solidarity with South Sudan for two months at the Malakal Teacher Training College.

"What surprised me was that despite the country's dire situation, the people seem to be happy. It is a paradox that I attribute to their strong sense of community"

Please click here to download the full story from our website.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Solidarity's work in education and the health-care professions would be impossible without the magnificent support received from our volunteers and our donors. You have helped Solidarity bring the gift of greater opportunity to the people of South Sudan. Thanks to all who are a part of that gift.

Br. Ken Ormerod FSC, volunteer tutor with students at Solidarity Teacher Training College, Yambio.

Publisher Contact
Solidarity with South Sudan
Rome Office
Piazza di Ponte S. Angelo, 28
00186 Rome, Italy
South Sudan Office
PO Box 144, Juba
Email: solidarityssudan@gmail.com
Website: www.solidarityssudan.org

Forward email