Greetings!

On July 9, 2012, South Sudan celebrated its first birthday as a free and independent country. This year has brought many challenges and the road has not been an easy one between the new Republic of South Sudan and the Republic of Sudan; nevertheless, we walk together towards a future of hope. In this issue we’ll share with you some important highlights of progress in 2012. Thanks to Fr. Callistus Y.P Joseph CMF, Director of Projects for "on site" coverage and providing material. We bid farewell to Ms Julie Orr and sincerely thank Julie for her great work and dedication as a VMM (Volunteer Missionary Movement) Accountant for Solidarity in South Sudan - very best wishes to Julie in her future endeavors.

Solidarity with South Sudan

MESSAGE FROM SR PATRICIA MURRAY, ibvm
Dear Friends of Solidarity,
I have just returned from a month’s visit to South Sudan and am always amazed at what is being achieved by our members in Wau (training nurses and midwives), Malakal and Yambio and several other locations (teacher training) and Riimenze (agricultural training, trauma healing, practical skills for...
women, work with refugees etc.). Throughout the eight dioceses of South Sudan our pastoral team has organized workshops on peace building, reconciliation, trauma healing and Catholic Social Teaching (CST). Your ongoing financial contributions make so much possible and we thank each person, each congregation and each donor agency most sincerely for your generosity and support. I believe that wherever one Solidarity member is, we who support them are also there in solidarity with the local people, helping to build this new nation.

One small example illustrates the influence of our educational programmes. In the St. Daniel Comboni Hospital in Wau, where the CHTI nursing students go for practical work, someone was heard to remark to a new patient - one of the "green doctors" is in the ward and so you will be well looked after. The CHTI nurses wear green uniforms and are highly valued by staff and patients for their professionalism and compassion - a great tribute to their tutors.

Sincerely,
Sr Patricia Murray ibvm, Executive Director

PERSONNEL NEEDS OF SOLIDARITY
As our numbers increase in the Catholic Health Training Institute (CHTI) we are in urgent needs of tutors for the nursing and midwifery programmes. Some of our students come from the contested regions of the Nuba Mountain and Abyei and has made the long journey to Wau to train for their local hospitals and clinics. Our teacher training programme urgently needs teachers for science and professional studies.
Skilled administrators and people with financial experience are invaluable at this stage of the development of Solidarity. Perhaps there is someone in your congregation, parish or workplace who would consider answering this appeal. Additional information available from Sr Patricia Murray ibvm, Executive Director, pmurray.solidarity@gmail.com

SOUTH SUDAN MARKED THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE

On 9 July the Republic of South Sudan marked the First Anniversary of Independence as the newest nation in the world. This year has brought many challenges and the road has not been an easy one between the new Republic of South Sudan and the Republic of Sudan; nevertheless, we walk together towards a future of hope.

Caritas Internationalis, the Sudan Catholic Bishops’ Conference and Solidarity with South Sudan worked to coordinate this inspiring prayer.

Prayer for the First Anniversary of Independence

The Prayer can also be downloaded from the Solidarity with South Sudan website by clicking here (Solidarity Front Page News). Please distribute and forward this prayer widely to friends as we pray together in Solidarity with the people in the
In spite of endless challenges facing South Sudan's agricultural sector, Solidarity with South Sudan has piloted a five hectare community agricultural project in Riimenze Parish. This farm project helps address critical needs for food in the area. The community farming project trains local families, especially women, to grow new crops, explore ways of water harvesting and processing of food for sale in the local market. Sustainable farming initiatives are also being planned in Yambio and Wau. Solidarity with South Sudan believes that the successful implementation of these pioneering agricultural projects are of fundamental importance to South Sudan.

HEALTH CARE
Recently CHTI (Catholic Health Training Institute) welcomed new students. Presently there are 21 Midwifery students - 10 women and 11 men who are now in the "theory block" studying the importance of birthing in a country which, before South Sudan's Independence, the United
Nations ranked as one of the "ten worst places to be a mother." One in seven women died in childbirth.

TEACHER TRAINING REACHING OUT TO THE MOST NEEDY

Education has a vital role to play in building a better future for South Sudan and Solidarity is working hard. Solidarity is working on up-grading the teachers' skills and to date 1605 Sudanese trainee teachers, of whom 359 are women, have been trained through in-service programmes. This year Solidarity is responding to the most needy people in Agok in the disputed border region of Abyei by sending tutors to provide three by three-week blocks of intensive English instruction to ninety teachers there.

HERBAL MEDICINE WORKSHOP IN RIIMENZE

Sr Joana Mai Hla Kyi ran a very successful herbal medicine workshop in Riimenze for 24 keen participants. Sr Joana remarked; "All the participants were very interested and willing to learn". The workshop involved input from herbalist Joseph Subcondo and Sr Joana sharing her vast knowledge and experience growing crops in the herbal garden.
Peace is not always brought about by prayer but by pragmatic action. That is why Solidarity's Pastoral component is ceaselessly working for peace and has adopted the theme: "A Renewed Church for a New Country" for its 2012-2013 programs. A unique event occurred recently when Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and Solidarity with South Sudan joined together in sponsoring a two day workshop for the National Parliament of South Sudan on "Building A New Country on Moral Values." About 65 Members of Parliament attended the conference at which Father David Hollenbach, SJ, who holds the University Chair in Human Rights and International Justice at Boston College, emphasized those values founded on Catholic Social Teaching.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT
This progress made in education and health care is no accident. Over 200 religious congregations support Solidarity and a number of donor agencies. Men and women, religious and lay, from every corner of the globe, work side by side and travel hundreds of miles to reach a warm-hearted, generous people eager to learn and to be a part of the youngest nation in the world.

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