Dear Friends,

As I write these words there are signs of spring emerging all around: the buds on the trees; the warmth in the air that up until recently carried a chill. Change is in the air.

In Solidarity with South Sudan there are also signs of change and growth. Br. Bill Firman fsc, based in South Sudan, is now the new Executive Director Sr. Yudith Pereira Rico rjm as associate Executive Director is running operations outside of South Sudan from the Rome office. Last November at the AGM I, Paul Smyth cmf and Sr. Danielle Julien fmirc assumed the roles of President and Vice President.

As I am sure all of you are aware for the reports in the world media, in December the situation in South Sudan began to deteriorate. In this newsletter we share with you some of the stories of the last few months: stories of our members and stories of our students. Stories that with their expressions of faith and hope are signs of the recognition of the truth of the Christmas message: God is with us, in the messiness of the world.
Please continue to support and pray for each of our members working in South Sudan who, through their continued presence in Solidarity with the people, strive to be visible signs of our loving God. Pray too, for our Brothers and Sisters from South Sudan, who continue to prepare themselves to serve their people, so that like yeast they may be a transforming presence in their society. Let us also remember the Bishops of South Sudan, that they may call the attention of the people to the values of the Gospel and seek to be a reconciling presence in this divided nation. During this lent let each of us look for ways, that we as individuals and communities, can express our faith and solidarity with the suffering people of South Sudan.

Paul Smyth cmf
President of Solidarity with South Sudan.

"The blood of the innocent, in their thousands, cries out from the ground!"
The Catholic bishops of Sudan and South Sudan address this Pastoral Exhortation "Let us Refound our Nation on a New Covenant", 30th day of January 2014, Juba. "The bold Prophetic Voice of the Church needs to be heard, and we speak from our hearts.... Read the extract

"The Good, the Bad and the Dreadful; the "unfairy" tale of the crisis"
Bill Firman, FSC Executive Director.
It has been a troubled time in South Sudan since violence erupted in Juba, the capital, on December 15th last year. Order was quickly restored in Juba but not before the violent genie fled the lamp of the capital and initiated death and destruction in some parts of the country. It is a very sad and scarcely imaginable ‘unfairy tale’ that has struck South Sudan... read the full article

Support

CRISIS Appeal
Donation Details
Solidarity with South Sudan depends on contributions from individuals and groups to support its many activities which build human capacity. Please visit our website to download the new donation details.

In sponsoring Solidarity activities, donations of any
From our Students:

"Life is crucial to all us, but is not appreciated by some."
From Akudeng Mary Malok (Rumbek)

"The crisis in South Sudan started a long time ago when some of us were still young and we have grown up in this situation. It has reached the stage where many people have lost their lives with the killing of innocent people. read the full article.

"Why are we killing ourselves?"
From Ayona Benjamin. (Juba)

"The recent crisis in South Sudan, which began in Juba and which later spread to Jonglei, Unity State and Upper Nile State, is extremely dreadful. It is painful and shameful to ruin ourselves because of political ambition. read the full article.

"There is sorrow and sadness all around with so many people losing their lives for no reason"
From Krandal Osman Tutu (Nuba Mountains)

"... Thousands of people have fled into refugee camps in Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia and more are on their way. Thousands of women and children are displaced. read more...

From our community members:

LIFE IN THE UN INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS CAMP IN JUBA
Cathy Arata SSND
"Christmas morning I went to mass at the
Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp in Juba and since then I have visited there about once a week. Here are a few stories from the camp."

**A BULLET TOO CLOSE TO THE HEART**

When I arrived home Justin was here to see me. Justin used to work for us (Solidarity with South Sudan) at our farm in Riimenze. He left us because of some pressure by his mother to return home.

War broke out in Juba on the evening of the 15th of December. On the morning of the 16th, Justin was in bed when he was shot by a "stray bullet" from the street..."

**FIGHTING IN MALAKAL AND EVACUATION OF THE COMMUNITY**

*Barbara Palezncy*

"The total destruction in many battles of Malakal, Bentiu and Bor and serious fighting in Juba touches me more deeply than I can ever express. The senseless killing and wounding, the flights of families in terror, the hunger all cry out to God to hear us." 

**MALAKAL COMMUNITY; INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE TEACHING IN RUMBEK**

*Betty Ryan fcj*

"Having come from the insecurity and battleground of Malakal on January 2nd Rumbek has been a heaven of peace and security." 

**FROM A NEW MEMBER IN SOUTH**

*Sr Annette St Amour, IHM*
"Being with the people in this liturgy, where prayer for all those still hiding in the bush and those suffering on both sides of the conflict, as well as, thanksgiving for survival in attacks, is a heart-felt crying out to God."

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