

## ARCHDIOCESE OF JUBA, THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN

### CURRENT SITUATIONS AND NEEDS

On July 9, 2011 South Sudan became an independent Nation State. On that day, Sudan disintegrated into two nations: The Republic of South Sudan and the Islamic Republic of the Sudan. On July 9, 2012, South Sudan celebrated its first independence anniversary. Given the long violent history of the people of the north and south Sudan, which resulted in the present breakup of the country, the relationship between the governments and the people of the two nations is and will certainly continue to be contentious, inimical and possibly violent.

Already in April 2012, armed confrontations between the armies of South Sudan and Sudan have taken place on the international border leaving many dead and a great displacement of peoples. There is a serious call for humanitarian care for the displaced people of the Sudan in South Sudan. There are also thousands of South Sudanese uprooted from their homes in need of assistance.

The presence of the oil in South Sudan close to the border is the main cause of the conflict. It is hoped that the talks in the Ethiopian Capital Addis Ababa will yield an agreement on the border and the post Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) issues between the two nations.

Our Church, finding herself on the crossroad between the two countries, must continue to bear witness to Christ's reconciling Gospel of love and mercy. Our Church must be a voice of reason to the contending people of the two nations. A monumental task indeed.

On the evangelical and pastoral fronts, we are facing a flood of returning destitute refugees and internally displaced people to whom we must minister and proclaim the Gospel. The Archdiocese of Juba is the receiving church and being in the capital of the new country, many of the returnees prefer to remain there causing a great pastoral challenge. In the face of this, our Church must recruit and train many more clerical and pastoral agents. We must rebuild our churches, chapels, prayer centres, seminaries, convents, rectories, catechetical training centres, etc.

On the socio-political front, the Church is and will continue to play a vital leading role in building peace and advocating for justice, the equitable sharing of resources, good governance, security and the rule of law which must be built on the solid foundation of Christ's Gospel.

On the socio-economic front, the Church, in partnership with the government and other religious and social institutions, is providing a leading role in sheltering, feeding and educating the citizens of our new nation. We are promoting

traditional and new economies-farming, small businesses and supplying clean drinking water to the people. We must rebuild our social institutions –schools, health centres, trade and technical centres. Most of our facilities were damaged or totally destroyed during the long civil war.

Our people are desperate. They have lost everything, and are unable to help themselves. Many, particularly the most vulnerable children, women and the elderly, are dying daily from starvation and curable diseases. A salary of about 200 South Sudanese Pounds equivalent to \$ 50.00 cannot maintain a family of over five persons according to today's standard conditions of living.

We in the Church are the hope of our people. Our clergy, religious, catechists and lay leaders are fighting against all odds to keep the flames of faith burning in our country. While burying the dead, supporting the survivors, sheltering the displaced, healing the wounded and broken hearted, feeding the orphans, displaced children and elderly, we continue to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ vigorously, build the Church and consolidate faith in our country.

We need your help to continue to keep hope alive among our traumatized people. We need your help to strengthen faith in the Lord Jesus who never fails us. I am therefore appealing to you our brothers and sisters in faith to support us to be able to survive on our own. Thank you in advance for standing in solidarity with us in our time of need. May our Risen Saviour Jesus Christ bless you with the fullness of grace, peace and health.

In Faith,

*Fr. pietroloro*

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