



Greetings, Friends of Solidarity in South Sudan,

The mystery of the poor is this: that they are Jesus, and what you do for them you do for Him. It is the only way we have of knowing and believing in our love. The mystery of poverty is that by sharing in it, making ourselves poor in giving to others, we increase our knowledge of and belief in love (Dorothy Day, *On Pilgrimage: The Sixties*, ed. Robert Ellsberg (Orbis Books: 2021)).

Once again we find ourselves in the midst of the beautiful Advent season, a time for looking forward to the manifestation of the reign of God at the end of time, to that time when “every tear will be wiped away, when we shall see God as God is, and become like God forever”.

As we draw closer to the feast of Christmas itself, however, our thoughts turn toward the beautiful and touching scene at Bethlehem: a pregnant teenage girl and her husband, poor and without shelter, seeking a place in which she can give birth to her baby, a baby whom we came to understand and to believe is the incarnate Word of God.

I am the new Mission Promoter for Solidarity with South Sudan, on the job for only two months, working from our offices in the UISG building in Rome. I have just returned from my first visit to South Sudan, where I was able to spend almost six weeks “on the ground”, meeting and getting to know all of the women and men religious who are ministering in the various projects sponsored by Solidarity, and seeing, first hand, the impact that our work is having. I have been given the privilege of writing this Christmas letter to all of you.

There can be no doubt that there are many reasons for despair when looking at the situation in South Sudan: crushing poverty, an abysmal lack of education, ethnic and tribal violence, thousands of displaced persons, ecological devastation, etc. etc. “The poor” are clearly there—right before our very eyes. **And our challenge, as women and men of faith, is to be able to see the presence of God in each soul, to be able to see the possibility for a better future for all of these good people, and to accompany them in their search for that future.**

The works of Solidarity in each of our sites--the Teacher Training College at Yambio, the Health Care Training Institute at Wau, the sustainable agriculture project and other initiatives at Riimenze, the ministry at the UNHCR camp in Malakal, the oasis of peace at the Good Shepherd Peace Center in Kitt, the administrative hub in Juba--all witness to our faith that Jesus is present in this “most distressing of his disguises” (Mother Teresa of Calcutta). **Each of these projects represents, if you will, a candle boldly lit in the face of the darkness of despair.**

On behalf of Father Jim Greene, M.Afr., and all of my colleagues at Solidarity with South Sudan, whether ministering in South Sudan or working in support of these projects in Rome, the United Kingdom, or the United States, I thank you for your accompaniment of the people of South Sudan, and I wish you a holy and happy Christmas.

May the Wisdom Child and his Mother Mild smile on you and those you love this Christmas Day.

Father Dave Gentry

Mission Promoter

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Show you care



ONLINE DONATIONS We use PayPal's secure platform to facilitate instant donations. Please go to our website dedicated page and follow the instructions: <https://www.solidarityssudan.org/en/contribute/intro> You can also chose to contribute via credit card or direct from your PayPal account.

CHEQUES IN EUROS AND IN USD: should be headed to SOLIDARITY PROJECTS ITALY ONLUS-ETS and sent to Solidarity Projects Italy ONLUS - ETS Piazza di Ponte S. Angelo 28, 00186 Roma- Italia

CHEQUES IN GBP: should be headed to SOLIDARITY PROJECTS LTD and sent to SSolidarity Projects Ltd c/o UHY Hacker Young 2B Vantage Park, Wasingley Road, Huntingdon, PE29 6SR, Cambridgeshire UNITED KINGDOM

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Please note that the old Gmail accounts are no longer working!

*May your days be filled with peace, hope, and joy this holiday season.
As always, thank you for your support to our projects in South Sudan.*

Visit our website www.solidarityssudan.org

