

SOLIDARITY WITH SOUTHERN SUDAN

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101 Days of Prayer Toward a Peaceful Referendum in Sudan

What do September 21 and January 1 have in common? **PEACE**

September 21 is the International Day of Peace proclaimed by the UN in 1982 and celebrated around the world. January 1 is World Day of Peace initiated by Pope Paul VI in 1968. In between those two dates are 101 days.

Solidarity with Southern Sudan (SSS) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) with the endorsement of the Sudan Catholic Bishops' Conference, have teamed together to launch a campaign: "101 Days of Prayer Toward a Peaceful Referendum in Sudan."

Why?

After 21 years of civil war a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed in January 2005 which gives Southern Sudan the right to a referendum vote to stay part of Sudan, as is now, or to secede and become a new nation state, Southern Sudan. This historic referendum vote will take place on January 9, 2011.

As the time for the vote gets closer we can anticipate a time of increasingly heightened anxiety as Southern Sudan prepares to make an enormously important decision. Campaigns have been activated, organizations have been mobilized, and public opinion is being expressed as increasing scrutiny is given to this decision.

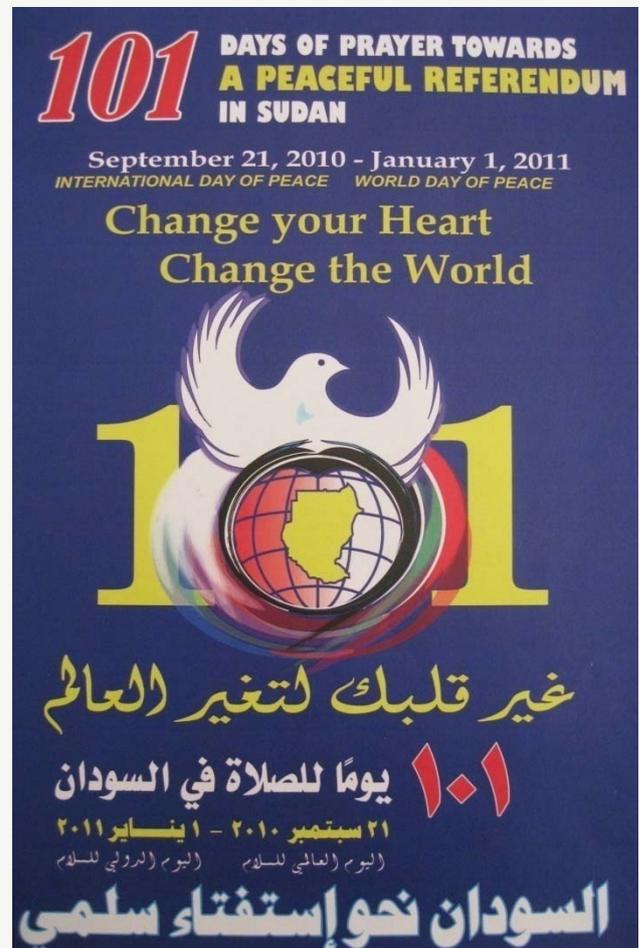
Diverse opinion and spirited discussions of controversial topics are healthy in a society as long as they are held in a peaceful manner. As a post-conflict country with a long history of war, however, Sudan's familiarity with peace is quite limited.

Hence, the emergence of "101 Days of Prayer Toward a Peaceful Referendum in Sudan." The idea is to use the 101 days in between the two global feasts of peace: International Day of Peace, September 21, 2010 and World Day of Peace, January 1, 2011, as a time of prayerful preparation for this historic moment. By giving priority to prayer a sacred space of listening and discernment will be created. The idea is not so much to multiply prayers as it is to become a more prayerful people.

SSS Pastoral Director works with a team

Sr. Catherine Arata, the Director SSS Pastoral Services, came up with the idea of 101 days of prayer. The idea began to take shape when interested people came together to plan and organize this campaign of prayer. This core group of committed people met on a regular basis to reflect on how to carry out this campaign throughout the Sudan. They designed a poster, prayer card and reflection booklet to be used during these 101 days of prayer. SSS expresses our sincere gratitude for the hard work and collaboration of the team.

POSTERS FOR THE CAMPAIGN
(7000 DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT SUDAN)



Prayer for Peace in Sudan

Lord Jesus, you said to us; “I leave you peace. My peace I give you.”

Look upon us your sisters and brothers in Sudan as we face this moment of referendum. Send us your Spirit to guide us. Give us the wisdom we need to choose our future where we will know your true peace. You call us out of slavery, oppression, and persecution so that we may have life in abundance.

Grant us peace with one another. Give peace among ethnic groups.

Help us to work together for the good of all. We ask this in

your name, Jesus our Lord. Amen

Mary, Queen of Peace,
pray for us.

Be in solidarity with your sisters and brothers in Sudan by praying this prayer every day. Stay up to date during the days of the campaign through the SSS website:

www.solidarityssudan.org

101
DAYS OF PRAYER

FOR A PEACEFUL REFERENDUM IN SUDAN

amiriza yukan
dawidajagalo
kuc peace emora
dor
zedurutoi
As-salaam
thautara zareda
egbwe
male
meer

prayer card design: Genevieve Cassatt, SSND • 2010

Peace in different languages

Solidarity Participation at SCBC Plenary

The Catholic Bishops of Sudan met in an Extraordinary Plenary Session in Juba from 15th-22nd of July. The reason for their gathering was to reflect together on the present situation in the country. At the end of the meeting, the bishops called a press conference and issued their statement: “A Message of Hope and a Call to Action.” The bishops began their statement with a Preamble in which they stated: “This is an historical moment. This is a moment of change. Sudan will never be the same again.” They went on to give an analysis of the situation in which they expressed concern that there has been little progress in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), preparation for the referendum is far behind, and human rights abuse has increased. In the conclusion, the bishops say “We therefore encourage all those who are entitled to vote in the referendum to choose what kind of future they, and their offspring will have, a life of freedom with justice and equal rights for all.” As Shepherds of the Church in Sudan we place our hope in God and look forward to a just and peaceful society where each person’s rights and dignity are upheld.” For the full text see: www.solidarityssudan.org

It was fitting that SSS presented the “101 Days of Prayer Towards a Peaceful Referendum” as a direct response to the bishops’ call for prayer in their statement. The Bishops wholeheartedly endorsed this campaign and thanked SSS for this creative initiative. They committed themselves to work through the Pastoral Directors of their respective dioceses to participate in this campaign of prayer.

US Bishop Visits SSS Community in Juba

Bishop Howard Hubbard from the diocese of Albany, New York, visited the SSS community in Juba on August 28, 2010. Bishop Hubbard is the chairperson of the International Affairs Committee of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. His visit here was one of solidarity with the Church in Sudan at this crucial time. Bishop Hubbard told us that Sudan, because of its history and present situation, is a priority for the USCCB. He stressed that the visit to the US in August by



Bishop Rudolf of Wau, Bishop Daniel from the Archdiocese of Khartoum, and Bishop Hiiboro from the diocese of Yambio was significant because it gave them the opportunity to speak to members of Congress about the necessity of international presence during the time of the referendum vote. He was especially interested in knowing that SCBC endorsed 101 days of Prayer campaign as spiritual preparation for the referendum. The bishop was accompanied by Steve Hilbert, staff advisor to the bishops.

SSS meets Diocesan Pastoral Coordinators

All the dioceses of the Catholic Church in Sudan were represented by their Directors of Palica at a special meeting in Juba, August 31-Sept 1, 2010 regarding the “101 Days of Prayer Towards a Peaceful Referendum in Sudan.” The meeting marked the close of the first phase of the campaign, the general organization and publication of material of 101 Days and the beginning of the second phase : Diocesan Leadership in planning and carrying out the 101 Days of Prayer in each diocese.



There was creativity and enthusiasm among the Palica Directors as they met and shared ideas for the 101 Days of Prayer. Palica, means: Pastoral (PA), Liturgical (LI), Catechetical (CA). Each diocese in Sudan has a Palica Center and a Palica Director. Palica denotes Christian formation.

The presence of the Archbishop of Juba, Archbishop Paolino Lukudo Loro, on the second day encouraged the pastoral directors to accept their role of leadership in this campaign.

SOLIDARITY WITH SOUTHERN SUDAN

SSS TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMME IN LEER, UNITY STATE:

For two weeks in May, June and August SSS personnel from Malakal travelled to Leer in Unity State to conduct First Year Teacher Training in five subjects for forty teachers. Srs. Ninet and Betty started Science and English in May; Sr. Ninet and Br. Denis, Science and Mathematics in June and Sr. Betty, English and Christian Religious Education (CRE), Br. Denis (Maths) and Br. Heldon Professional Studies in August.

This pilot programme is the result of much collaboration between SSS and the Leer County Director of Education who provided forty teachers; the Education Ministry in Bentiu, the capital of Unity State who signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Apostolic Administrator of Malakal Diocese, of which Leer is a parish; the male and female Comboni Communities in Leer who provided transport and accommodation and the Australian La Sallian Foundation who funded the programme. From Malakal, Leer is only accessible by air, followed by a two, three or four hour car journey depending on which airport flights are using and the condition of the roads to Leer.

Of the forty teachers, only four were women, due to the fact that there are few female teachers in that county. Regrettably, two have already had to withdraw for personal reasons. The teachers make us "highly welcome", are enthusiastic, committed and punctual. At first it seems as if their English is of a higher standard than Malakal as they come from English medium schools and English is more widely spoken in Leer. Among them there is quite a range of ability, experience and language facility. Many have studied in Khartoum while many have never been outside Leer itself. There is no variation in interest or commitment however, which makes them a delightful group to teach.

We were fortunate that in both May and August we had one week of four- hour morning teaching time daily due to its being school holidays. For the remaining weeks we had three hours in the afternoon when teachers after finishing their school day walk –sometimes for up to two hours and home again - to attend our course. So much more can be accomplished during the holiday period as teachers are fresh each morn-

Second group of students at Catholic Health Training Institute (CHTI) Wau



The second group of students were warmly welcomed by the staff of CHTI. They started their orientation program on the 29 August. The foundation course started on the 1 September. SSS members from the Teacher training, Sr. Barbara Palzcny, Br. Denis Loft and Sr. Jenny Cook are entrusted with the program. There are fifteen students from the dioceses of Yambio, Wau, Yei and Rumbek. We wish our new students God's abundant blessings as they start their formation to become Registered Nurses. We thank our donors for offering scholarship to these students.



Welcome to Peter Stemp

We are happy to welcome Peter Stemp to SSS Rome team. His six week visit to Southern Sudan exposed him to our work here. At the request of SSS Juba community he made video clips that will appear on CRS and SSS websites during the 101 Days of Prayer campaign and they are really excellent.

BUILDINGS ON PROGRESS

Construction is moving ahead in all locations – Yambio is faster than expected and Malakal is somewhat slower. In Yambio, the watchman's house, pit latrine and shower, generator house, are under construction. The fence work is completed. Bore hole work is put on hold because of the failure of the drilling rigs.

The bungalows in Wau are nearly completed. The repair of the columns of the Northern Wing is almost completed.

We are very grateful to Fr. Alberto Ruiz and Br. Bill Firman for their supervision of these building projects – not always an easy task.