

STTC Newsletter - May 2023

Solidarity Teacher Training College, Yambio, South Sudan



Graduation Ceremony - May 2023



The graduation of 22 May 2023 was a college first: the first cohort of fifteen students was awarded the Diploma in Education, and the first cohort of thirty-five students to follow the new ITT (Initial Teacher Training) curriculum was awarded the National Certificate in Primary Education. Both Diploma and Certificate are awarded by the School of Education, University of Juba, with which STTC is affiliated.



The celebration was started with a long procession from the Yambio Villa Park with the children's music band from St. Mary's Primary School. On the streets of the Massia market people witnessed the colourful procession of the graduates and wished them success in their teaching profession. STTC made use of this rare occasion to spread the awareness on the importance of education especially promoting girls' education and empowering them. Fr Thomas Bagbiowia, the Vicar General, celebrated the thanksgiving Mass along with Fr Joachim Oboi, the Parish Priest of St. Augustine Parish.

Dr Sr Bindu George, M.B.B.S., M.S., Gynaecologist, Principal at the Solidarity Catholic Health Training Institute for nurses and midwives in Wau was the chief guest of honour.



After presenting the Certificates, in her commencement speech, Sr Bindu spoke about the difference the teacher can make most especially in remote and poor areas, drawing from her own childhood experience in India. The students could connect with this; for many, it is the reality they are returning to. Appreciating the new graduates, Mr Peter Peter Mbia, Director General, Ministry of Education, Western Equatoria State, spoke about the need for more teachers in the country and the commitment of the newly qualified teachers in the teaching profession without shifting to other fields.



The class spokesman for the pioneering Diploma group, Hosea Enosa, made an eloquent appeal for 'lifelong learning' and especially for more women to continue their education. Already members of this graduating class have been called on to assume headship and other important responsibilities. Of the graduating Certificate class, several have already been accepted into the next Diploma intake where they will be joined by graduates from classes ahead, and from other colleges. We wish each of them well on the next stage of their personal journey.



Graduation – Computer Course



School children who attended the ‘Introduction to Computer Basics’ and the follow-up module had their own proud day on Saturday 27 May. They were awarded certificates of completion by the Principal Br Chris and the director of the programme, Sr Shu Fang. The ceremony was organised by Robert Arike Santos and his team of student-tutors who rounded off the weeks of volunteer teaching with a delightful afternoon. The parents were especially appreciative; this is a golden opportunity for the children to have hands-on experience of computers

Farewell to Sister Margaret Sheehan

STTC said farewell to Sister Margaret Sheehan at the graduation ceremony on Monday 22 May 2023, when she was called on to award the Diplomas to the first group, many of whom are past-pupils. With more than 14 years on mission here in South Sudan, Margaret is the longest-serving Solidarity member in the teacher training college, and the second longest in Solidarity as a whole. Her contribution has been extraordinary.

Margaret has given generous, unstinting service, in multiple roles, from the foundation of the college right to the moment of departure. She has been a real mother to all who have worked or studied here; the titles ‘mother of mercy’ and ‘mother of blessings’ have been bestowed on her by the local people. She has served as bursar, administrator and deputy principal, alongside teaching Mathematics and Social Studies. In addition, she led English language classes for local women including some of our workers.

Margaret will be remembered for her great compassion and hard work, setting an example for people decades younger than her. In the community, she was always ready to carry the extra load, especially when others were under pressure. Margaret left the college weighed down with bracelets and other mementoes. Recalled by her congregation, the Faithful Companions of Jesus, we wish her good health, joy and peace in her next mission. She returns to her home country of Ireland first, before her next assignment. STTC wishes Margaret good luck in the future commitment and good health.

