

An Advent Project

During this season of Advent the Church reminds us of a significant scripture quote for this sacred season: "Give comfort to my people, says your God." This Advent season we invite you to give comfort to the people of South Sudan, the newest country in our world.

The people of South Sudan are suffering greatly because of an ongoing war. Since the conflict 3.6 million citizens have been forced to flee their homes and more than 2.1 million are trapped inside the warring nation.

Over 5.1 million people are in need of aid, and 4.8 million are facing hunger. Due to economic collapse and three years of poor agricultural conditions, areas of South Sudan are now experiencing famine.



Friends in Solidarity, Inc. is an organization that is trying to bring hope to the South Sudanese people through education, health care, peace studies and an agriculture program.


We are offering this Advent calendar as a way for you to learn about, pray for and offer a donation to help the South Sudanese people. Before the first day of Advent (Dec. 2) find a container you can use to collect your donations.

Use this calendar to complete the action for each day. On Christmas Day, count your donations and send a check to **Friends in Solidarity**. Your Christmas gift will be a blessing to the people of South Sudan.




Photo Credit: Paul Jeffrey

<p>Sunday December 2</p> 	<p>In South Sudan only 27% of people over 15 years old are literate (<i>The World Bank</i>). How would your life be different if you couldn't read or write? Thank God for the gift of your education. Enjoy a good book today and think of your brothers and sisters in South Sudan who don't have that pleasure.</p>
<p>Monday December 3</p>	<p>Each time you read a website, book or magazine today, contribute 10 cents to Friends in Solidarity to support the Teacher Training College.</p>
<p>Tuesday December 4</p>	<p>The literacy rate for males in South Sudan is 40% and for females it is 16% (<i>The World Bank</i>). That's unfair, isn't it? Pray for the girls in South Sudan who would love to be able to read.</p>
<p>Wednesday December 5</p>	<p>The pupil/teacher ratio in South Sudan is 50:1 (<i>Girls Education in South Sudan</i>). When you were a student, how large were your classes? Ask a child or grandchild about their class size. Contribute 5 cents for each student in this child's class.</p>
<p>Thursday December 6</p>	<p>In South Sudan only 47% of Primary school teachers are trained and only 57% of Secondary School teachers. Most teachers only have 4 years of education! (<i>Girls Education in South Sudan</i>) Contribute 10 cents for every year of your educations.</p>
<p>Friday December 7</p>	<p>Over 4000 teachers have participated in courses offered through the Solidarity Teacher Training Program. Pray for the continued success of this program and all the donors who have made this program possible.</p>
<p>Saturday December 8</p>	<p>Solidarity Teaching Training College helps to train teachers for the children in South Sudan. Who was your favorite teacher? Pray for him or her for working so hard to give you an education. In honor of this favorite teacher make a generous donation to Friends in Solidarity to support the Teacher program.</p>
<p>Sunday December 9</p> 	<p>1 in 3 people in South Sudan have been displaced. Imagine what it would be like to leave your home and all your belongings. Which one item would you take with you? Why? Pray for all those fleeing from South Sudan who have little or nothing because they have left everything behind.</p>

<p>Monday December 10</p>	<p>In South Sudan 4.7 million people are in need of health services (WHO). Solidarity Catholic Health Training Institute works to meet the needs of these people. \$50.00 buys books for nursing students. Contribute \$1.00 towards these books or make a larger donation if you are able.</p>
<p>Tuesday December 11</p>	<p>49% of Sudanese girls are married by age 18. A 15 year old girl has more chance of dying in child birth than of graduating from secondary school. As we focus on Mary during this Advent season pray for the women and girls who are pregnant in South Sudan.</p>
<p>Wednesday December 12</p>	<p>\$110 million dollars is needed to fully respond to the health needs of the Sudanese people. Thank God for your health and contribute \$1.10 to assist the people of South Sudan.</p>
<p>Thursday December 13</p>	<p>In 2016 there were 1.3 million cases of malaria reported in South Sudan (WHO). Malaria is a life-threatening disease. Pray for all those who are suffering from Malaria. Thank God again for your good health and access to health care.</p>
<p>Friday December 14</p>	<p>National Immunization Days in March aimed to reach over 3 million children under 5 with two drops of polio vaccine (WHO). South Sudan has been polio free for the last 7 years. Contribute 50 cents for this good news and ask a friend to match it.</p>
<p>Saturday December 15</p>	<p>The Catholic Health Training Institute in Wau is one of few centers in South Sudan training registered nurses and midwives. Make a generous donation to Friends in Solidarity to support these future nurses.</p>
<p>Sunday December 16</p> 	<p>Today's scripture reading reminds us to "rejoice always" because "God is near". God is near to the people of South Sudan through organizations like Friends in Solidarity and supporters like you. Today consider all the ways God has brought joy to your life and make a contribution that will bring joy to the South Sudanese people.</p>

"Give comfort to my people, says your God." (Isaiah)

Monday, December 17	The Solidarity Agricultural Project in Riimenze is assisting the people of South Sudan to regain their agrarian skills after many years of civil war. Today be grateful for the food you have and thank God for farmers who grow your food.
Tuesday, December 18	Nearly 5 million people across South Sudan are severely food insecure with thousands already facing starvation due to famine. For each meal/snack you eat today contribute 25 cents to help these hungry people.
Wednesday, December 19	The Agriculture Project in Riimenze, Sudan helps families to grow enough food to feed themselves. Contribute 25 cents for each fruit and vegetable you eat today to help these families have nutritious food.
Thursday, December 20	Today is International Solidarity Day! During these past 17 days you have been growing in solidarity with the people of South Sudan. Look at the pictures on this brochure and give each person a name and say a prayer for them.
Friday, December 21	During this time of so much violence in South Sudan, the Solidarity team offers peace and reconciliation workshops at the Good Shepherd Peace Center. Today, be a peacemaker. Donate 25 cents each time you act nonviolently today.
Saturday, December 22	Pope Francis had planned to visit South Sudan last year but his trip had to be postponed because the country is unsafe. Imagine living with such insecurity and fear – everyday. Be grateful for the gift of safety today.
Sunday, December 23	Think about all you have learned about the people of South Sudan and the work of Friends in Solidarity . Share what you learned with someone else and ask them to put a donation in your container to help support their work.
Monday, December 24	For unto us a child is born...and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah) Today, be peaceful as you wait for Christmas. Pray for Peace in South Sudan.
Christmas December 25	Count the money you have saved and send your gift to Friends in Solidarity. Merry Christmas! 

Prayer for South Sudan

Father of love and mercy,
 You created our people from every clan,
 tribe and nationality.
 It is your will that all our people should live
 in harmony, peace and unity,
 because we are all brothers and sisters.
 We ask forgiveness for the times we failed
 to live together in peace.
 Heal our offenses and help us to reconcile
 with one another.
 Grant to our leaders your divine wisdom
 and help us to promote respect,
 Justice and true reconciliation,
 so that the people of South Sudan
 may live in unity and peace.
 We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.
 Amen.

Thank you for making this Christmas
 a special one for us!



Photo Credit: Paul Jeffrey

Donations can be made online at:
<https://www.solidarityfriends.org/donate/>
 or checks can be mailed to:
FRIENDS IN SOLIDARITY, INC
8737 COLESVILLE ROAD
SILVER SPRING, MD 20910

Friends in Solidarity is a collaborative ministry initiated by Institutes of Women and Men Religious in the United States supporting the people of Africa, especially South Sudan, through capacity building initiatives that include the training of teachers, health care professionals and pastoral teams.

An Advent Journey 2018

Hope and Solidarity with South Sudan



Photo Credit: Paul Jeffrey

