

Pastoral Program Newsletter

July 2023



Empowering Women

132 women belonging to the parish in Rajaf participated in a four-day workshop facilitated by Sister Jane Rose Ozania (SHS) who is on the staff of the Solidarity Pastoral Services. The goal of the workshop was to support the participants in developing skills for handling issues in their families during times of crisis. As the parish priest noted in his remarks, women are highly vulnerable in South Sudan, and, because they often have no other resources, they sometimes resort to alcohol abuse as a way of coping with stressful situations. Alcohol abuse then often leads to the abuse of children and others more vulnerable than the women themselves. Sister Jane Rose's workshop provided an excellent opportunity for acquiring new skills for handling stress in the family in healthy ways.

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, through the office of Friends in Solidarity funded this workshop.



Training of Catechists

From November 2022 through July 2023, Father Christy John (CMF), member of the Solidarity Pastoral Staff, conducted a program for the training of catechists in the Diocese of Tombura-Yambio. The program was sponsored by the Pastoral Coordinator of the diocese and was held in three phases of ten days each. At the first meeting, Right Reverend Eduardo Hiiboro Kussala, the bishop of the diocese, expressed his gratitude for the commitment of the Solidarity Pastoral Service in training the catechists of the diocese. Fifty catechists from the six deaneries of the diocese participated. Upon completion of the training, each of the participants received certification as fully trained catechists. At the closing ceremony on 19 July 2023, Father Dominic Sasa, the chancellor of the diocese, presented each participant with a certificate of completion. First two phases of training were funded by Missio Austria and the third phase by Missio Munich.





Small Christian Communities

Only two of the parishes in the Catholic Diocese of Yeh are active due to the dire security situation in the region. Their bishop, Right Reverend Alex Lodiong Sakor, has long dreamed for the development of "Small Christian Communities" (SCC), not merely as a response to the dire security situation, but even more for the health and vitality of the Catholic faith in the diocese. This five-day training, funded by Missio Munich, was conducted by the Solidarity Pastoral Service and Bishop Sakor gave the opening address for the assembly. The Bishop spoke about the importance of SCC, and further, took this opportunity to acknowledge the important ministries of Solidarity with South Sudan in his diocese and throughout the country. 76 people from parishes and chapels throughout the diocese benefited from this program which was held from 24-28 July 2023.

Trauma healing for IDPs

Trauma is a daily part of life in South Sudan, and also in the camps for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) known as the "Protection of Civilians" (POC) sites. Here, people regularly experience repeated acts of violence, abuse, and humiliation which results in the immediate and long-term effects of trauma. School children are among the most vulnerable to this kind of trauma. In an effort to address this situation, the trained volunteers of the Solidarity Pastoral Team facilitated a five-day workshop, funded by Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, through the office of Friends in Solidarity.

The goal was to help students improve their self-concept and promote mental and emotional health for each participant. The hope is that such programs will result in healthier relationships and peaceful co-existence for students and teachers alike.



Training Young People for Leadership

The Solidarity Pastoral Service, under the leadership of Father Christy John, CMF, offered a three-day workshop for youth ministers in the Catholic Diocese of Yeh, funded by Missio Munich. He was ably assisted by diocesan facilitators Modi Mawa Martin and Lokule Santo Augustino. The goal of the workshop was to support youth ministers in better understanding and implementing best practices when leading youth groups in the parishes of the diocese. 48 people from parishes and chapels throughout the diocese participated in the workshop. Bishop Alex Lodiong Sakor gave the opening address in which he emphasized the importance of lay ministry in the Church and the responsibilities that being entrusted with such ministry entailed. Bishop Sakor also expressed his gratitude for the contribution that Solidarity is making to the health and vitality of the ministries of the Church in South Sudan.

