

STTC Newsletter - July 2023

Solidarity Teacher Training College, Yambio, South Sudan



STTC welcomes new Tutors

STTC welcomes Mr Chalumba Ngalu and Mr Joseph Dut, the two newest graduates from Tangaza University, Nairobi, Kenya, who were on Solidarity scholarship, to the teaching faculty. Chalumba has graduated in Computer Science, Mathematics and Education; Joseph in Biology, Mathematics and Education. As part of their induction, they are observing other tutors taking classes in STTC and how we try to implement learner-centred methodologies in line with the new curriculum. In their first week they also visited some semester two and three students on School Practice; this gave them the chance to see how STTC students respond to the many challenges of the classroom. We wish them the very best.



Formation for Women

Sister Guille is leading a series of ten workshops with the female students of STTC on self-esteem and empowerment. There are thirty-one students taking part, in two groups. Diploma and Open University student Zakia John is also participating as a facilitator under Sr Guille's expert guidance. The feedback from the first sessions is very positive, with the young women reporting that they are happy to have a space and a time for themselves, to ask, to share, and to laugh together. They could verify how resilient are our South Sudanese women. This journey of building up a strong 'sisterhood' will serve them well into the future.

School Practice

The final semester students are facing their final School Practice, to be observed by external as well as college examiners, while the other groups have their first month-long experience of the Primary school classroom. The commitment of our student teachers is commendable even though they have to teach the children under the trees in some schools. Again and again the STTC students demonstrate resilience, creativity and commitment, performing strongly despite the poor learning environment. They are giving a quality service to the children that is appreciated; the increase in attendance when STTC teachers arrive is one small indicator of that.





Inservice Program – Weekend

The pioneering group of Inservice Certificate students (weekend) have now advanced to Semester Three (IS3), while a new group of weekends has started out. Almost all are teaching from Monday to Thursday, and come to STTC on Fridays and Saturdays for a very full schedule of classes. Combining home duties, child rearing, teaching and studying is not easy but they are very keen and anxious to achieve Qualified Teacher Status. The weekend group joins the regular students for English on Fridays, to experiment with taking both groups together as ultimately, they will graduate with the same Certificate award. The aim is to extend Inservice provision in Yambio and in other dioceses, and to integrate this program fully, placing it at the heart of STTC.

Laudato Si' Workshop in Kit

Sr Guille and students Josephine Nyanriak (Semester 2) and Asadik Musa (Semester 3) joined the Laudato Si' RSASS workshop in Juba from 2-8 July 2023 conducted by Fr. Peter Knox S.J. Almost 40 people - most of them young - came from different states of the country, parishes and congregations, all with the same interest: to know more and co-ordinate efforts to work for our Mother Earth. Arising from friendship and common commitment, the participants agreed to build up a Laudato Si' network in South Sudan. As a follow, students of STTC have not only entered into action but have become advocates of 'Ecological conversion'. Thanks to Sr Guille and Br Stephen, who help with bigger events and consultation. Activities are carried out within STTC, in the primary schools around and in the community.



Independence Day

On 9th July, STTC celebrated the country's eleventh Independence Day with a well-organized scout parade, raising of the national flag and prayer service. Students expressed their gratitude for the developments and vowed to commit themselves to the process of nation building. In the college kitchen, a team of students under the direction of the expert in Zande cooking, Sr Rose Mathew, undertook to make the delicious local food, kisara, to mark Independence Day. This was a major task, considering the numbers involved. Back in the community house, the principal Br Chris Soosai (De La Salle), assisted by Br Isaac Odongo and Br Stephen Wandabasi (Edmund Rice Christian Brothers), cooked a celebratory meal for the Teachers to honour what is a very special day for South Sudanese, marking the twelfth year of Independence.

Textbook Making

One of the major tasks of STTC is printing textbooks. Thanks to Sr Jacinta Prunty, the Director for Academic Affairs, and to her collaborators, for magnificent work in printing books. STTC has gone ahead, with the full approval and active support of the Ministry of Education and General Instruction, to create what is the first-ever series of teacher-training textbooks to match the National Curriculum South Sudan and the Ministry's own Initial Teacher Training Syllabus and Guidance. The list of Solidarity textbooks (first edition) for the Certificate is as follows: Supporting the Learner, Behaviour and Classroom Management; The Role of the Teacher; Language and Literacy; Handbook for School Practice; English, Mathematics, Science, Christian Religious Education, Social Studies, Physical Education and Health. A separate book for Creative Arts and Music is planned.



Construction of new Classrooms

Thanks to the US based Sudan Relief Funds and the Solidarity Funds for the generous donation to STTC for the construction of two large and a small classroom. Fr Joachim Oboi, our parish priest, blessed the foundations of the new building on Friday 14 July, accompanied by the building workers, students and tutors. The final hymn at the prayer was the STTC favourite, 'Building on a sure foundation', particularly appropriate to the occasion. Straight afterwards, digging got underway, and the work is progressing well. The extra classrooms are badly needed as STTC tries to expand its programs, and watching them take shape is a great boost to morale.



New Solar Power System

Another cause for celebration is the safe arrival of the enormous container carrying the new solar system for the college. This project is truly international. The container-load of equipment, sponsored by Caritas Austria, began its journey overland in Europe, travelling by ship to the port of Mombasa, before being driven across Kenya and Uganda to Juba and on to Yambio by a team of drivers from Somalia. Safely making this 10-day journey, with poor roads and insecurity in places, is indeed cause for thanks to God. The formal checking of the contents by Sr Elizabeth, as each item was offloaded by crane, was undoubtedly one of the highlights of the month! STTC is eagerly waiting for the arrival of the engineers who will install this much-needed system.

