

Pastoral Program Newsletter

September 2023



Trauma Healing Retreat

South Sudan is a country that continues to be plagued by many different kinds of suffering. People carry memories of painful moments in their lives that prevent them from looking to the future with hope and finding the strength to move forward in the midst of so many challenges. From 3 to 7 September, the Good Shepherd Peace Center (GSPC) offered a retreat as part of the trauma healing programme funded by the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas through the Friends of Solidarity USA. In our quest to help people delve more deeply into their own history and find the insight necessary for overcoming adversity, this program aims to guide each participant to "read in their life story" the experiences that have most deeply affected them and, from there, to find a new perspective. Through personal reflection and group sharing, participants open themselves to a new perspective on life and learn from other participants how to overcome adversity. Silence, trust, openness, honesty, respect, support constitute a simple methodology that helps each participant recognize the value of their own story and that of others.



YCS Conference

Every three years in the Catholic Archdiocese of Juba, the YCS Office and YCS Chaplaincy Team brings together the leaders of Young Christian Students (YCS) from the 27 Secondary Schools in and on the outskirts of the Catholic Archdiocese of Juba for a one week conference. The essence of the conference is to empower young people both spiritually and socially to be able to cope up with the changing nature of the society in which they live. The conference this year, funded by the Solidarity Pastoral Service, was held from 3 to 9 September 2023 with the theme: "Young Man, I say to you Arise..." (Lk 7:14).



Trauma Healing in Mangateen camp

A trauma healing workshop was held from 25-28 September at the Mangateen PoC camp in Mayom County, a county with one of the highest numbers of displaced youths who are fleeing suicide, abortion, rape, drug abuse, and night robberies. This workshop, supported by Sisters of Mercy, Americas through Friends in Solidarity, focused on the needs of these traumatized young people. Thirteen young women and twenty-four young men participated. These workshops seek to awaken body, mind, spirit, and emotions to foster health and human wholeness. Because healing from trauma is a learning process to recover the soul and free the body's consciousness to follow its destiny.

Spiritual retreats

From 24-30 September 2023, the Solidarity Pastoral Service provided support for two retreats. One was requested by the Provincial of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart for her Sisters, and another one requested by Bishop Alex Lodiong Sakor Eyobo for the seminarians of the diocese of Yei. Twelve Sisters of the Sacred Heart participated in the Sisters' retreat and found it beneficial. For the seminarian retreat, a deacon preparing for priestly ordination and two seminarians preparing for diaconal ordination participated in the retreat in order to fulfill one of the canonical requirements for ordination. These retreats were funded by the Maryknoll Fathers USA and Friends of Solidarity USA.



RSASS Annual General Meeting

The annual Assembly of the Religious Superiors Association for South Sudan (RSASS) took place from 17 to 22 September, 2023. Altogether, twenty-two religious women and men participated in the assembly. On the behalf of the GSPC management team, Fr. Christy John, CMF, presented the executive summary and financial report. All the participants expressed gratitude for the ministry of Solidarity with South Sudan at GSPC.

Youth Leadership Workshop

A five-day training program was organized by youth leaders of the central Deanery of the Torit diocese from 11-15 September 2023. This program was the 2nd phase of the training meant to ensure the formulation of sound policies that will have a positive impact on the youth ministries of the deanery. This training targeted 120 youth leaders from the two parishes of the central deanery and was supported by Solidarity with South Sudan. According to the vicar general of the Diocese, it is hoped that the leadership training will equip the youth with the skills they need for involving their peers and supporting the Church in her pastoral work.

