NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER
Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (http://ncronline.org)

# Letters from South Sudan

Colleen Dunne | Feb. 18, 2014 NCR Today
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According to *BBC Africa [1]*, another round of violence has broken out in South Sudan, bringing more uncertainty to those living and serving there. Today?s letter comes from Lasallian Br. Bill Firman [2], who is the executive director of Solidarity with South Sudan [3]. Br. Bill is from Australia and currently lives in Juba.

> I try to be positive, but events the past couple of days are a bit disturbing. Just when it appeared peace was returning, the rebels appear to have recaptured Malakal, and the Sudan Tribune [4] has reported that it was admitted by government ministers that 70 percent of the army have defected to the rebels. On the other hand, most of the troops are in Jonglei and unity States ? so the peaceful states remain peaceful. We pray that peace, not violence, spreads.

Last week with a more hopeful tone, Br. Bill also wrote about daily life in the midst of uncertainty:

> In some parts of South Sudan life seems almost normal, but there are doubts and uncertainties. We are not in any obvious danger, but whereas I once would have driven confidently to Yambio or Wau, I simply would not do so at present. It is not anarchy in South Sudan, but no one is sure how much control exists over both the anti-government and the pro-government forces. If you have something they want ? such as a vehicle ? it is not easy arguing with troops with guns!
>
> Slowly the melancholy pall will lift. The worst of the killing and destruction seems to be behind us, but the path ahead is potholed indeed. Patient and wise decision-making is required so that tragedy is not invited. Our policy is not to put ourselves nor our fellow workers or students in unnecessary danger, but that life must go on as normally as possible. We came here to walk with these people in solidarity. I am inspired by my resolute and valiant companions ? and by the cheerful local people.

This is the third installment of Letters from South Sudan [5]. In the weeks to come we will continue share letters with *NCR* readers, giving a fuller picture of the complexities of political violence and hopes for peace.

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**Source URL (retrieved on *11/22/2014 - 03:06*):** http://ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/letters-south-sudan-1

**Links:**
[1] http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-26238849

[2] http://www.solidarityssudan.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=343:br-bill-firman-fsc-executive-director-based-in-juba&catid=18:rome-&Itemid=10
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