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Letters from South Sudan

Colleen Dunne | Feb. 24, 2014 NCR Today
Letters from South Sudan
Juba, South Sudan

Today?s letter, sent on Sunday, Feb. 23, comes from Immaculate Heart Sr. Annette St. Amour of Monroe, Mich. After 25 years of working in South Africa, she recently arrived in Juba to help Solidarity with South Sudan [1] ?s pastoral development work. They are forming diocesan teams to assist groups with programs for peace and reconciliation.

> I arrived safely in Juba, South Sudan, on Thursday morning. Two members of the Solidarity community I live with met me at the airport, a DeLaSalle Christian brother from Australia and a Vincentian priest from the Philippines. The heat is intense, 100 degrees or more these days. We drink much water. Conversations around the table are most stimulating about what is happening in the various parts of the country and what needs to happen too in pastoral planning to deal with the situation.
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> This Sunday morning I had the privilege of going with the Maryknoll priest in our community here to the U.N. camp housing 20,000-plus refugees from the current crisis. About 400 gathered on chairs in an open area to celebrate the alive African liturgy. The readings for today were such a profound challenge in light of what this community has experienced. Being with the people in this liturgy, where prayer for all those still hiding in the bush and or suffering on both sides of the conflict, as well as thanksgiving for survival in attacks, was heart-felt crying out to God. It was a most moving experience. I feel I can be here because of your support and prayer. I thank you for that and ask that you continue to pray for peace in this land.

This is the fourth installment of Letters from South Sudan [2]. 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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[1] http://www.solidarityssudan.org/
[2] http://ncronline.org/feature-series/letters-south-sudan