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LETTER TO FRIENDS OF SISTER EMMANUELLE

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« I can only repeat that we must give others optimism, willpower and love. Not just give but make them live in others. We must share. Without sharing, without solidarity, we cannot improve humanity. So let us persevere. »

Dear Friends,

At the beginning of November, I traveled to Juba for my annual visit to the programs of our local partner, the Saint-Vincent-de-Paul Society, Juba (SVDP).

Three days after my arrival, I was joined by **Florence Rivollet, our president** for a year and a half. **It was her first visit to South Sudan** after more than 12 years in our association. It was very exciting to share with Florence the discovery in situ of all the actions for which we all work from afar. Hereunder is her testimony.

« I was extremely moved by the incredible welcome I received when I arrived from the airport: as I was staying in the guest house located within the grounds of the Lologo Vocational Training and Community Development Center, I walked along the main way between hundreds of schoolchildren and trainees, under the songs of welcome and the ululations!

I appreciated being accommodated in the comfortable guest house: staying in the Center is practical and allows you to live in the very heart of all the activities. Our security was well assured with a guard at the entrance of the Center and an armed guard at night in the closed enclosure of the guest house.

The solar panel project fell through because in the state of the available equipment, it would be impossible to ensure the operation of the air conditioners which require high power.

The next day, I gave the director of the Saint Vincent school the six boxes of pencils, pens and neo-colors donated by Caran d'Ache. We distributed them in the three kindergarten classes and the first primary classes. The material is kept in the classrooms and supervised by the teachers.

I saw the new building under construction, funded by Austrian and English donors. When it is completed, the number of rooms will be doubled and this will make it possible to no longer have classes with more than 100 students (three this year).

For me, the nice surprise was the vocational training workshops. I was very impressed by what I saw, which was well beyond my expectations. These workshops are well thought out and adapted according to needs. For computer training, for example, it is impressive what they manage to learn in nine months! Not only to use basic software, but also to install Wi-fi network, server, surveillance camera system etc. Graduates will receive kits for this purpose.





In Masonry, they also learn plumbing and tiling. In Electricity, they know how to connect solar panels. Basic Medical training has been strengthened and is more professionalizing than a simple First Aid training: trainees are able to perform all kinds of laboratory tests to detect common diseases (malaria, syphilis, typhoid, hepatitis, Covid, etc.), pregnancy or blood type tests.

All of these represent recent curriculum enhancements that demonstrate SVDP's constant effort to adapt and respond to needs effectively.

Each workshop was presented by a trainee. Their explanations were so clear and precise that, at first, I thought they were instructors! All were very motivated and aware of the chance they had had to be selected, knowing that each year there are more applicants than places. The selection is made according to criteria favoring those who are the most vulnerable and in need. For those who are not fully literate, SVDP offers

additional courses. I remind you that all trainings are provided free of charge.

We visited the small businesses of four beneficiaries of the micro-credit system that resumed this year. In July, 14 graduates, who had set up small businesses for one year at least, were selected and received loans in SSP (between \$150 and \$800).

I worked several mornings with Marlin, the accountant, and her assistant Alice. A meeting was arranged with Andrew Kalema, the certified auditor expert. We finally solved the problems of weak and random Wi-fi connection: two portable modems were bought and left, for exclusive use, in the accounts department and Betram's (the coordinator of programs) offices. This is necessary for us to be able to keep the accounts and supervise them.

In Nyarjwa, we visited the Saint Vincent Health Care Center which was restored this year by maintenance work which lasted longer than expected and during which the Center was closed. We had a discussion session under a tree on the agricultural land with representatives of the local community to settle the conflicts that have disrupted the functioning of the activities this year.

At the Be In Hope home for street children too, we received a very warm welcome! We distributed books in English that we had brought (see photo). The boys are disciplined and well supervised by the new female social worker. Their rooms are clean and tidy. Every week, they attend computer classes and benefit from training in agriculture on the land of their home.

On the last day, we went with them on a boat trip on the Nile, ending our stay in style!

This first visit was a great experience for me: rich, intense and moving.»



We wish you a very Merry Christmas and as the holidays approach, we thank you in advance for your donation: **with 200 CHF, for example, you sponsor for one year the studies of a former beneficiary of the street children program!**

Patrick Bittar
Director

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