

Solidarity Teacher Training College, Yambio, 21 January 2024

Dear Sisters, greetings from Yambio, South Sudan where we are in the dry season. Hot as always, snakes looking for water are the thing to watch out for. I myself have no fear at all as I am too stupid to know the danger. The others here are super-alert. A colony of owls (if that is the word) are fascinating to watch as soon as darkness falls – they eat snakes (among other things) so we are especially fond of them. From these nature-notes you might guess that the college is still empty of students but we are working extremely hard to prepare for the re-opening. Last week I travelled to Juba for meetings, things are moving now, and the time will fly.

This note is to say that I will be in Dublin, in my home community of the Coombe, **arriving Saturday 17 Feb. and departing on Sunday 3 March 2024**. I am coming to see Mam primarily; she is holding her own but of course is getting more fragile. (Thanks to Enda and Irene and the leadership generally for making this possible). A fortnight may not seem long but it allows me to be back here in time for the resumption of classes at the start of March, and I will get home again later in 2024 for a longer vacation. In advance of travelling, I thought I would ask about a few things, should there be anyone able to help.

With many thanks, and I hope to see sisters when I am home. It is good for the spirits to re-connect, and to get a complete change of scene. Benignus is one of the dear sisters who has gone to God since my last visit (September 2023); I know I have her backing now from heaven. Thanks for the continuing support and interest, and do keep the long-suffering people of South Sudan in your prayers. The war in Sudan across the border has shocking repercussions here in terms of refugees and 'returnees', skyrocketing prices, shortages and road insecurity. The people keep going as they have to; they have no choice.

With love, and see you soon, xx Jacinta

Jacinta would be grateful for help with any of the following; they can be left c/o the kind sisters of the Coombe

Should anyone be tidying out: coloured buttons, large buttons, scraps of ribbon, lace, elastic, the smallest pieces are fine (for puppets, toy animals, etc.) crochet hooks (any size).

Also tidying out, any holy music CD with words – any hymns that the students could learn

For the chapel, we need a small monstrance, if there is a second one in any community chapel or prayer room that is not in use.

Sacred Heart Messenger (Anna keeps old copies for me, thanks, but if anyone else has a backlog please keep for me – they are easy reading and good)

Small pamphlets such as Catholic Truth Society – the students like to read things that are not too large and off-putting. Any topic.

Paper patterns (as we had in school fadó, fadó) for making animals, toys, puppets, baby clothes, etc. (Not likely but worth a mention).

Biros with names or adverts on them are a special attraction here – the freebies you might get at a hotel or conference – something that looks different!