

At the beginning of Lent we were introduced to Awut & Ajak, the two mothers featured in this year's Trócaire campaign. We heard their story of coming together to rebuild their lives through love, friendship, and solidarity amidst the horrors and loss of a civil war. In their remarkable community, even though life continues to be full of challenges and obstacles for these amazing women, they face these challenges together.

Fr. James OYET LATANSIO, the General Secretary of South Sudan Council of Churches made such a heartfelt appeal to us; he asked that we remember our brothers and sisters in South Sudan and that we hold their hands in solidarity. From his appeal, we responded with our 'From Limerick with Love' fundraising campaign. Over the past five weeks of Lent we have had 90 people taking part from all over Limerick City & the County. To date we have collectively covered the distance of approx. 11,500kms and we have raised €2,200 and counting. This has been a journey born out of our collective response to Fr. James' appeal, where his words touched the hearts of so many others here in Limerick and beyond.

As a result of conflict about 3.8 million people in South Sudan had to flee their homes and walk for miles and miles in search of refuge. Over Lent we have been walking in solidarity with them, and as we walked, we reflected upon not only their struggles but also their strength, and it has inspired us to keep going, in order to make a real difference in the lives of those we probably will never meet but one day soon they will hear about the people of Limerick and about how we cared.

As God's people we are called to not just sit comfortably within our comfort and privilege, but to respond in love and to walk in solidarity with the most vulnerable people within our world. And even though we have not been able to gather together within our churches, we have however been able to come together as a community, as the body of Christ, as church to reach out in solidarity with our neighbours and show them our support.

If you would like to show your support, you can do so by making a donation at:
<https://gofund.me/d9deb4d6>

Also you are invited to tune in next Monday 29th March at 8pm on the Limerick Diocesan Facebook Page for 'A Liturgy on Solidarity', which is being streamed live on Facebook, here is the link:

<https://www.facebook.com/dioceseflimerick>

Once liturgy goes live on the night, for those of you not on Facebook, you can click on the Liturgy of Solidarity image on Limerick Diocesan website - here is the link:

<https://www.limerickdiocese.org/what-we-offer/liturgy-and-life/resources-for-liturgical-seasons/holy-week-resources-2021/>

To quote from Fratelli Tutti, Pope Francis' encyclical on fraternity and social friendship:

'No one can face life in isolation ...

We need a community that supports and helps us, in which we can help one another to keep looking ahead.

How important it is to dream together...

By ourselves, we risk seeing mirages, things that are not there.

Dreams, on the other hand, are built together.

Let us dream, then, as a single human family, as fellow travellers sharing the same flesh, as children of the same earth, which is our common home, each of us bringing the richness of his or her beliefs and convictions, each of us with his or her own voice, brothers and sisters all.'