



CATHOLIC CHURCH
DIOCESE OF RUMBEK
SOUTH SUDAN

Independence Day, 9th July 2026

APPEAL FOR PEACE IN GREATER TONJ THREE COUNTIES, WARRAP STATE

Message of the Diocesan Priests and the Religious Missionaries of the Diocese of Rumbek with the Apostolic Administrator, Bishop Christian Carllassare

Dear brothers and sisters of Greater Tonj Three Counties, Warrap State,

As our nation marks another anniversary of the Independence of South Sudan, we thank God for the gift of our country and for all those who sacrificed for a nation founded on freedom, dignity, and peace. Yet our joy is overshadowed by the suffering that continues to wound our communities.

In recent days, violence has once again claimed precious lives, injured many people, and spread fear among families in Tonj North County. Tonj East has also been greatly affected by insecurity. Tonj South, despite enduring its own severe insecurity and hardships, is also deeply affected and shares the concern over the ongoing violence.

We entrust the deceased to the mercy of God, pray for the healing of the wounded, and express our closeness to all who mourn. We are also deeply concerned that, only a few days ago, a catechist and a Comboni scholastic travelling for pastoral ministry were threatened by armed men. Although they escaped unharmed, such incidents reveal how fear is replacing trust and violence is taking the place of dialogue.

We ask ourselves with sorrow: how has a land blessed with such a rich Christian heritage become increasingly insecure? Warrap is known for its vibrant Catholic faith, yet our faith must bear fruit in our daily lives. The true measure of our Christian witness is not only how we pray, but how we treat one another. As Jesus reminds us: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God" (Mt 5:9).

For this reason, we appeal to everyone - to young people, families, elders, community leaders, public authorities, and all people of good will - to reject violence, resist revenge, protect every human life, and choose dialogue and reconciliation. We especially urge the authorities to guarantee security, uphold justice, and safeguard innocent civilians. We also invite all sons and daughters of Warrap, wherever they live, to become ambassadors of unity rather than division. Peace is everyone's responsibility.

We remember in a special way the Catholic missions of Warrap and Awul, Marial Lou and Romic, Thiet and Tonj, which exist to proclaim the Gospel, educate the

young, accompany families, and serve the most vulnerable. Violence deprives communities of the opportunity to worship, learn, and grow together as one family of God. These missions need the support and commitment of all Christians and all people of good will.

As pastors, we refuse to surrender to despair. We believe that reconciliation is stronger than revenge, dialogue stronger than violence, and hope stronger than fear. The future of Tonj North will not be shaped by those who carry weapons, but by those who build peace each day through patience, courage, and love.

On this Independence Day, let us renew together our commitment to build the South Sudan that so many dreamed of: a nation where every child can grow without fear, every family can live in safety, and every community becomes a home of justice, solidarity, and peace.

May Mary, Queen of Peace, intercede for our people. May the Lord comfort those who mourn, heal the wounded, convert every heart inclined to violence, and bless Warrap State and the whole of South Sudan with the priceless gift of lasting peace.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God."
(Matthew 5:9)

Signed:

*The Diocesan Priests and the Religious Missionaries of the Diocese of Rumbek
with the Apostolic Administrator, Bishop Christian Carlassare.*

