The Church in Africa
Office of National Collections
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SUPPORT THE
Solidarity Fund for the
CHURCH IN
AFRICA

"And so Africa . . . is called to joy."
—Pope John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Africa*

Dear Diocesan Coordinator,

The Church in Africa reveals a picture of both suffering and hope. Many people face a daily reality of food insecurity, water shortage, unemployment, lack of medical care, and illiteracy. At the same time, Catholicism is flourishing among the people of Africa. There are many new vocations to the priesthood and the religious life, with many of these new priests and sisters coming to serve the people of the United States. The **Solidarity Fund for the Church in Africa** gives much needed aid to the Church in Africa and expresses the gratitude of the Church in the United States for the warm and generous assistance of the African priests and sisters in our parishes.

In 2011, driven from their homelands by violence and drought, Somalian refugees flooded into Kenya. The Dadaab Refugee Camp filled to capacity with refugees, yet more people continued to arrive. Close to 450,000 people formed settlements in the camp, which caused an incredible burden on the resources of their host community. Courageous priests, nuns, and lay people worked on the front line among these refugees, distributing food and medical supplies as well as ministering to their needs. But the trauma of facing the suffering on a daily basis threatened to destroy the health of these workers.

A grant from the **Solidarity Fund for the Church in Africa** provided relief for these priests, nuns, religious, and lay people to attend a period of rest. During three retreats at St. Teresa Pastoral Centre in Lodwar, the workers were able to spend time away from their parishes and to reflect on their ministry. Older members encouraged the younger ones who had never seen the challenges stemming from famine and drought. Revitalized by these retreats, they were able to return to Dadaab and continue serving the refugees.

In order to fund projects like this, the Collection needs your help. Please encourage your parishes to use the posters, fliers, and bulletin announcements. **Speaking about the Collection at Mass is the most important thing parishes can do.** Additional materials, such as ads and web banners, are available at *www.usccb.org* (search "Church in Africa Resources").

For more information please contact me at 202-541-3346 or *bkennedy@usccb.org*. We truly appreciate your support of the Solidarity Fund for the Church in Africa.

With gratitude,

Bevin Kennedy
Assistant Director, Promotions
Office of National Collections