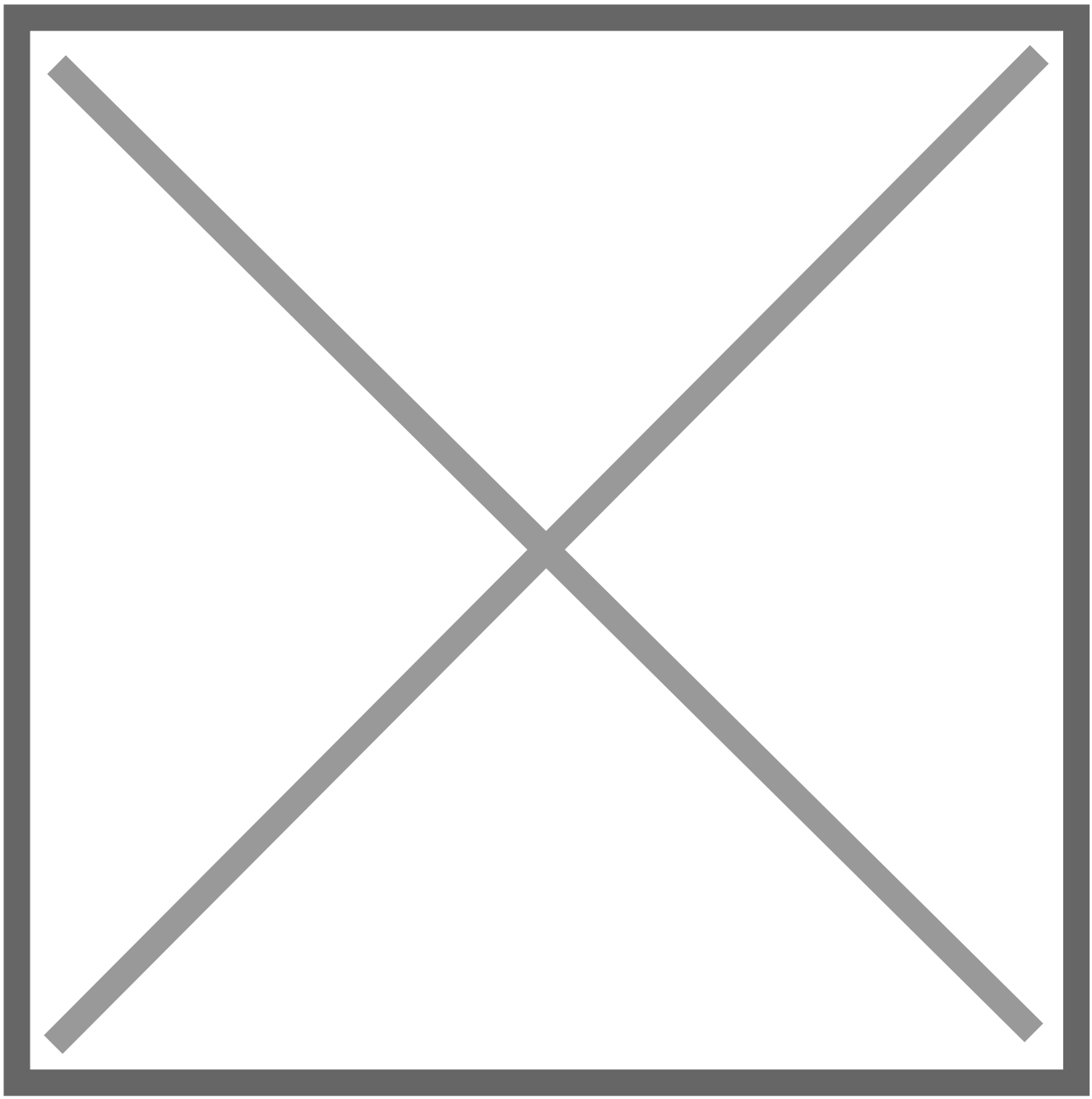
News



Fr. Youhanna Al-Amin is seen celebrating Mass in Sudan in an undated photograph. Catholic leaders in Sudan are renewing calls to end violence against civilians after the killing of Al-Amin, a priest serving in the Diocese of El-Obeid. Al-Amin was shot and killed June 19 in Kauda, in the Nuba Mountains, just as he was preparing to evacuate because of worsening insecurity. Two security guards were shot alongside him; one was killed, and one survived. (OSV News/Courtesy of ACN)

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KAUDA, Sudan — June 25, 2026
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Catholic leaders in Sudan are renewing calls to end violence against innocent civilians after the killing of Fr. Youhanna Al-Amin, a priest serving in the Diocese of El-Obeid, who chose to remain with his people amid worsening security situation in the region.

Al-Amin was shot and killed June 19 at 10 a.m. local time in Kauda, in the Nuba Mountains in Kordofan state, just as he was preparing to evacuate because of worsening insecurity. Two security guards were shot alongside him; one was killed, and one survived.

The priest had been recently assigned to Holy Cross Parish in Kauda.

"The faithful of the Holy Cross Parish, the Catholic Community and all the people of goodwill are deeply saddened by this tragic loss," said Bishop Yunan Tombe Trille Kuku Andali of El-Obeid in a statement June 19.

The bishop said the priest was "well known for his dedicated pastoral service, commitment to the service and care for those entrusted to him."

Explaining the circumstances surrounding the priest's death, Trille Kuku said soldiers from one of the military factions in the region had come to the church compound on

the evening of June 18 and demanded access to the medical store. The storekeeper "had no choice," said the bishop, and cooperated with the military staff, allowing them to take as much as they could.

The priest had reportedly considered evacuating from the region the next day over deteriorating security, but the soldiers had returned to the church compound that morning before he could leave and shot him dead in his room. One of his security guards, the bishop reported, was also killed, and one survived and was taken to the hospital.

Fr. Peter Suleiman Bolis, episcopal vicar of El-Obeid, said the priest was killed because he confronted the looters and resisted surrendering keys the previous day. The armed men had forced their way into the parish compound, destroying and looting the parish and also broke into the storages of the Bishop Gassis Relief and Rescue Foundation, taking away medicines and food items.

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"We condemn seriously such innocent killing of a Catholic priest," said Bolis in a statement on June 20. "I urge the government in leadership to react and stop the shedding of the innocents' blood."

Kauda is the main center of the areas of the Nuba Mountains controlled by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North, or SPLM-N.

"In recent months, the deteriorating security situation, together with armed and tribal conflicts, had forced the evacuation of some religious personnel from the region," pontifical foundation Aid to the Church in Need said.

The killed priest however, "chose to remain with the community he served, becoming one of the few priests still carrying out his ministry in this region very much affected by violence."

"Those who knew him say that he did not abandon his people when circumstances became increasingly difficult. His role extended beyond spiritual care," ACN emphasized.

Al-Amin is the second Catholic priest to die in the diocese. Around the same time in 2025, Fr. Luka Jomo, the Catholic parish priest of El-Fasher in North Darfur in the country's western region, died after being struck by a stray bullet. The Rapid Support Force militia, known as RSF, was deliberately shelling the city to dislodge their adversaries, the Sudan Armed Forces. Before his death on June 13, Jomo was also preparing to evacuate from the besieged city.

Italian Bishop Christian Carlassare of Bentiu in South Sudan said the killing of the priest appeared unrelated to the broader Sudanese war since the SPLM-N, a neutral faction, controlled much of the Nuba Mountains.

"However, recent violence in the area seems to have been fueled by local ethnic and political tensions," Carlassare told OSV News.

He explained that a collection of communities with diverse languages, cultures and identities lived in the Nuba Mountains.

"While these groups have often united in the face of common external threats, they can also experience divisions over local issues and interests," he said, adding that SPLM-North controlled the territory together with other smaller armed groups, but in recent months, clashes between the groups have increasingly affected the local population.

"In a context marked by poverty, food insecurity, and limited economic opportunities, criminal activity has also increased," said the bishop. "Some armed groups that were originally perceived as protectors of local communities have, in certain cases, become a source of insecurity and suffering for the very people they claim to defend."

The SPLM-North said it had "no interest" in killing the priest, as the Catholic Church had long provided vital services to the people of the region, particularly in the field of education and health.

"SPLM-N condemns the repeated violations committed by the rebel group of Habil Katen Aria since 12 March 2026," the movement said of the tribal militia. "These violations included targeting and killing innocent civilians, kidnappings, burning villages, looting humanitarian organizations' warehouses, as well as stealing livestock, markets, and citizens' property."

Humanitarian agencies warn that the Sudanese conflict is intensifying in Kordofan.

The United Nations said on June 18, following reports of a significant buildup of RSF militia and allied troops around the city, accompanied by intensified drone strikes and artillery shelling, that "dozens of drone strikes have hit El-Obeid over the past two weeks, particularly targeting fuel stations and trucks, killing civilians and cutting off access to basic services."

Volker Türk, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights warned that “The imminent offensive against El-Obeid risks commission of serious international crimes and deepens the catastrophic impact on an already beleaguered civilian population."

"The States with influence have the duty to exercise it now to stop this madness in its tracks," he urged, lamenting that El-Obeid's population has endured siege-like conditions for more than 18 months.