



World Bulletin

Summer 2015

Prepared Exclusively for Special Friends of Salesian Missions
A Written Testimony Of How You Bring God-Saving Grace To A Troubled World

Salesians Committed to Nepal’s Survivors

In the early hours of April 25th, Nepal’s collective worst nightmare came true.

A 7.8 magnitude earthquake reigned terror and destruction on this nation of 28 million people – killing more than 8,000, injuring thousands more, and leaving an estimated 8 million survivors in desperate need of humanitarian aid.

“Nepal was wholly unprepared,” says Father Jijo John, S.D.B., a Salesian missionary coordinating relief efforts in Kathmandu. “A legacy of political instability, coupled with widespread poverty, means that disaster readiness is very difficult to achieve here.”

Fortunately, Fr. John and his team have been assisting and tending to thousands of these victims since the first tremor struck the country. Having served Nepal since 1995, our Salesian missionaries were uniquely positioned to assist, even as other relief organizations struggled to gain access to the worst-affected areas. And this is



why Nepal’s District Development Committee – the country’s official disaster-reduction agency – tapped Fr. John and his fellow Salesians to assist with relief efforts.

Initially, the “Don Bosco Relief Team” organized and participated in the collection and distribution of food, clean water, medicines and sturdy plastic sheeting to be used for temporary shelter. And, while their resources were limited, their work was highly successful: more than 100 tons of aid materials reached 30,000 victims in 19 different villages. An additional 60 tons of food and tarps sent by the Salesian

Calcutta Province in India were also distributed.

Now – as monsoon season looms large – the team is moving beyond strict emergency measures to include the next phase of disaster response: medium-term relief.

“Ultimately, we want to help people rebuild with simple, earthquake-proof homes,” says Fr. John. “But this needs to happen in steps.”

To that end, the Don Bosco Relief Team has begun distributing corrugated metal sheeting to displaced victims. This is because plastic sheeting is insufficient to protect families from the driving rains and powerful winds that will soon hammer the country.

The process of recovery and reconstruction will take time and patience. In the months and years ahead, they will remain committed to seeing the country rise again from the ashes, better and stronger than before. To see how you can help please go to: www.salesianmissions.org/nepal

This Month’s Child



Name: Rachidi
Home: Porto-Novo, Benín

One day, young Rachidi ran happily through the streets of his village. The very next, he was in a foreign country – taken by his father and sold into slavery for the equivalent of \$30.

“He told me he was leaving to buy bread with the money he was paid,” Rachidi remembers. “But he never came back.”

Betrayed by those he loved and trafficked into Nigeria with no connection to his home, Rachidi scrubbed dishes, scoured floors and

toiled over the cooking for hours on end. He slept on a hard floor. Sometimes, he wouldn’t have anything to eat. His language, identity and future were slipping away.

Rachidi is but one of an estimated 40,000 Beninese youth forced into domestic and agricultural labor each year. Thankfully, he was rescued by Salesian missionaries and reunited with his mother. To watch a video about this tragic situation please go to: www.salesianmissions/notforsale

This Month’s Call For Prayer

Please pray for all the suffering children in the world - whether they are orphaned by war, homeless by disaster, starving by famine, illiterate by poverty, battered by abuse - and that we will have the ability to come to their aid and ease their pain.



Advent Devotionals - Sign Up Now: www.SalesianMissions.org/Advent

Advent is a time for intentional prayer and reflection in preparation for the Christmas holiday. Sign up for our Advent Devotionals and each week for the four weeks, you will receive a special email with daily Scripture passages and inspirational messages. These reflections will guide you toward a more joyful anticipation of Christmas and reconnect you to the true meaning of the season.

Monthly Missions Report...

In Brazil...

Lurking in the underbelly of Brazil's gorgeous beaches, glitzy nightlife and glamorous celebrations is a grim reality that few wish to acknowledge: the squalid *favelas* – or shanty towns – where millions of desperately impoverished children and families struggle daily to survive.

"Far too often, to be born in a favela is to accept a destiny of violence and crime," says Cristiane Gomes, a social worker working with Salesian missionaries in Brazil.

At Casa Don Bosco, youth who otherwise might succumb to the streets discover an alternative path. In addition to having their basic needs met through meal programs and health clinics, they can access basic educational and vocational training programs that prepare them for stable future employment.

Already, more than 50,000 girls and boys renounced their assumed fate, and have begun building brighter futures, with the help of the Salesians!



In Haiti...



In Fort Liberté – five years after a devastating earthquake reduced *Politechnique Don Bosco* (Don Bosco Tech) to a pile of rubble – a new Salesian Youth Center has risen from the ashes.

This new and expanded center now includes a dormitory complex; improved facilities for the agricultural, nursing and vocational schools; enhanced elementary, high school and teacher training schools; and a state-of-the-art water purification plant that provides more than 1,200 students, faculty and staff with fresh, clean drinking water.

Fr. Mark Hyde, S.D.B., director of Salesian Missions, recently attended a dedication ceremony for the center – which was wholly underwritten by donations made to the Haiti Relief Fund.

"I was moved to see the results," he says. "We could not have succeeded without such a generous outpouring of support from our friends in response to this disaster."

In Rwanda...

Worldwide, a lack of access to clean water is directly linked to poverty and poor well-being – and is a significant factor in childhood mortality.

This is why, around the globe, Salesian missionaries have prioritized water projects in every community in every country in which they serve.



Recently, students of the Salesian school in the Rukago community of Kigali watched as a new water tank, and new sanitary bathroom facilities, were installed on school grounds. Students and their families were previously forced to walk more than a mile to collect water from a swamp.

The project, made possible by the generous support of our Clean Water Initiative, is expected to greatly lower the number of children who become sick due to contaminated water. It will also reduce students' time out of school due to waterborne illnesses, and their need to search for a decent water source. To read more about our Clean Water Initiative please visit:

www.salesianmissions.org/cleanwater

Missionary of the Month: Fr. Jorge Bento, S.D.B.

"Why are you leaving when there is so much need here at home?"

It is a question young Fr. Bento grappled with before heeding his missionary call. Having served four short years in Cape Verde – close to his native country, and in a province whose people yearned to deepen their faith – he was poised to leave for distant shores.

"The reason was, and is, a

mystery," says Fr. Bento of his decision. "But I know it was God's will for me."

No doubt, Fr. Bento was influenced by the Salesian missionaries who often passed through his hometown of Ponte de Vagos, Portugal. Inspired by their example, and intrigued by sharing the Good News with those who had never encountered it, he entered the pre-novitiate as soon as he was able.



Today, he serves in Mozambique, working with some of the country's most impoverished youth and families.

Serving the Least Among Us

Dear Friend,

Just a few short months ago, the world watched helplessly as a heartbreaking disaster struck yet another impoverished country.

Across Nepal, thousands of innocent lives lost. Millions – so many of them children – left homeless and in desperate need of food, medicine and shelter. Mudslides, infrastructure collapse and the Himalayan mountain range conspired against the efforts to gain

access to the earthquake's victims. The average person from afar felt powerless to make a difference.

Thankfully, our Salesian missionaries – already present and on the ground in Nepal – were not helpless. And I am so grateful that in this time of crisis, as in so many others, they immediately mobilized to assist. I hope you will be inspired by their specific efforts as reported in this World Bulletin.



Of course, none of this would be possible without caring friends like you. Because of your generosity, we persevere in serving the least among us – whenever, and wherever, we are called. May God bless you!

Fr. Mark Hyde, S.D.B.

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