



World Bulletin

Winter 2019

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

Cultivating Peace in C.A.R.

In 2013, at the onset of its ongoing civil war, the Central African Republic (C.A.R.) plunged into a violent and continuous conflict.

During the past six years, an estimated one million people have been displaced from their homes. As many as 70 percent of the population lacks access to clean water. An additional 1.7 million suffer acute food insecurity. And the health care system has completely collapsed.

Throughout the country's brutal and vicious ordeal, Salesian missionaries have accompanied its most vulnerable children and families: shining beacons of light into the heart of their despair.

In Damala and Galabadja, near the capital city of Bangui, they run feeding programs that nourish more than 1,500 students each day. To address the escalating need for local sources of clean water, they have already built more than 20 community-based wells. And, at the newly-constructed St. John's



Medical Clinic-Don Bosco, medical staff treat the ill and injured, as well as provide preventive services and maternal-child health care.

In addition to these crucial humanitarian services, missionaries seek opportunities to plant and nurture the seeds of peace – and it all starts with education.

“When youth have the opportunity to go to school, they gain the skills, confidence and new perspectives necessary to create dignity, and lasting socio-economic stability, for themselves and their country,” says Father Mark Hyde, director of Salesian Missions. “In turn, this ignites their hope for the future ...

something C.A.R.'s children so desperately need.”

Recently, missionaries repaired and re-opened schools and vocational centers in Damala and Galabadja, and equipped each building with a generator to prevent disruptions to students' learning. Funding from generous donors also helped establish an in-demand driver-training program and provide scholarships and school supplies to 700 students.

These “spaces of peace,” as our missionaries call them, now serve as an oasis of normalcy amid the violence. Here, in addition to their education, youth of all ages, cultures, and religions learn to live and work collaboratively – through sports, music, summer camps and other activities that promote teamwork and social skills.

The road may be long – but together, these students are taking the first crucial steps toward addressing the root causes of their country's turmoil ... and a brighter future.

This Month's Child



Name: Lamin
Age: 17
Home: Salerno,
Italy

Born in Benjul, Gambia, Lamin fled his desperately impoverished village in search of better opportunities as soon as he was able. Instead, he discovered further hardship and despair.

During his months-long journey across desert and sea, he witnessed two friends die; was thrown into a Libyan jail; worked in a sweatshop in order to purchase a ticket to Italy; and endured hunger, thirst, unsanitary conditions, and abuse by human smugglers. Fortunately, after finding his way to the Salesian-run “Mamma

Matilde” house in Salerno, he discovered safe shelter, nutritious meals, and a supportive, family-like atmosphere.

Today, Lamin goes to school, participates in life-skills training and recreational activities, and works at a local pizzeria. He dreams of becoming a contributing member of his newly adopted community, and of earning enough money to help his family back home: possibilities that are well within reach, thanks to our missionaries' continued support.

“My life is now beautiful thanks to Don Bosco!” he exclaims.

This Month's Call For Prayer

Transforming a needy child's life often demands a great deal of patience, perseverance, hard-work, compassion and love. Please pray that our missionaries sustain the physical and emotional strength to overcome enormous challenges in order to help others.



Monthly Missions Report...

In Eritrea...

Alarmed by the rapid increase in water-borne illnesses in Degra Mereto, Salesian missionaries have sprung into action.

Until now, this isolated community of 1,300 people relied on three wells for their everyday needs: two of which were polluted, and one whose reservoir leaked. With no feasible way to collect safe water from elsewhere, their situation was dire.

Led by Fr. Petros Abraha, superior of the Salesian community in Eritrea—and in collaboration with an Italian doctor interested in promoting the country's development – missionaries are working with Italy-based engineers. They will design and install a modern well, solar-powered pump, piping, and two supply points in the village. Local workers will participate in excavating the site, and residents will assume management of their new resource once complete: an approach that fosters their sense of ownership and pride.

Not to mention better health!



In Italy..



A new initiative called *M'interessato di Te*, or "I Am Interested in You," is transforming lives in Catania, Sicily.

Operated by Salesians for Social Work, a federation of over 80 nonprofit organizations serving those at risk for social exclusion, the program aims to intercept, protect, and prepare foreign minors for a better future in their host country.

In 2017 alone, nearly 16,000 of these youth arrived in Italy without a parent or adult guardian. Without intervention, they quickly slip through society's cracks, where they become vulnerable to exploitation and abuse.

"I Am Interested in You" leverages a network of street educators, psychologists, and volunteers to accomplish its mission. By connecting youth with Italian language lessons, legal assistance, vocational training, and job placement services, the program helps participants live independently as fully integrated citizens.

In the Solomon Islands...

When two Salesian missionaries witnessed, first-hand, the squalor and stench surrounding families living in Ranadi, they knew they must do something to help.

A dump site for the capital city of Honiara, Ranadi is home to the poorest of the poor: men, women, and children who live in appalling conditions while they pick through garbage for food and recyclables in order to survive. Their leader had invited Fr. Srimal Priyanga, rector of Don Bosco Technical Institute in nearby Henderson, to celebrate the Eucharist. But the community received much more.



Together with fellow missionary Fr. Alfred, Fr. Srimal has begun meeting with residents to explore educational, recreational, and sanitation projects. Though in the early planning stages, such initiatives promise to support the dignity, and improve the prospects and futures, of Ranadi's children and families: a concrete expression of Don Bosco's missionary spirit.

Missionary of the Month: Bishop George Pallippambal

Since first arriving in Arunachal Pradesh, India nearly 40 years ago, Bishop George Pallippambal has worked tirelessly to improve circumstances and opportunities among the thousands of people whom he serves.

Many live in tribal communities unreachable by car ... yet that has never weakened his resolve. He has established 46 schools that together educate 180,000 impoverished students; 17 dispensaries and a hos-

pital that offer preventive care and medicine; a vocational training center; and much more ... all in the furthest reaches of the state. And his successes are evident. At the Newman School in the remote village of Neotan, for example, 100 percent of students are fully literate.

In recognition for his "exceptional leadership in serving humanity," the All India Council of Human Rights, Liberties and Social Justice recently awarded Bp.



Pallippambal with its prestigious Certificate of Excellence. In his acceptance speech, the Salesian humbly dedicated the honor to the "last, least, and lost" of Arunachal Pradesh.

Don Bosco would be proud.

The Power of True Connection

Dear Friend,

In a world of constant "connection," far too many people have lost the ability to look a fellow person in the eye, and forge a real-life relationship. Sadly, as studies have shown, this leaves more and more people feeling isolated and alone.

Yet when you say, "I am interested in you; I care about you," something changes for the better.

When our missionaries in Italy welcome unaccompanied foreign

minors with these words, they help the invisible become visible, capable of realizing their full potential.

When they venture into squalid communities perched on a garbage heap, they emulate God's recognition and love for all of His children ... not just the well-off.

In fact, because of *your* interest in and care for *us*, our missionaries around the world succeed in reaching out to the last, least, and lost among



us: reminding them that they are not alone—and restoring their hope for something better.

Thank you for this remarkable human kindness.

May God Bless You!

Fr. Mark Hyde, SDB

SALESIAN MISSIONS 2 LEFEVRE LANE • NEW ROCHELLE NY 10801-5710

Tel. (914)633-8344

Be sure to visit our BRAND NEW WEBSITE: www.salesianmissions.org

facebook.com/FindYourMission

twitter.com/SalMissions

instagram.com/salesian_missions

linkedin.com/company/salesian-missions