



World Bulletin

Spring 2020

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

Haiti Ten Years Later: Rebuilding the Foundations of Hope

In the ten years since a catastrophic earthquake shook Haiti to its very core, fate has not been kind. Each time they perched atop the brink of recovery, it seemed, something inevitably knocked the country's people back down: a deadly cholera outbreak; a devastating Category 4 hurricane; disruptive political unrest.

Undeterred by these challenges – and buoyed by the remarkable resilience of their fellow citizens—Salesian missionaries have remained fully committed to rebuilding the country they have served for 85 years. Today, their investments of time, expertise, labor, and other resources are yielding priceless dividends.

“Driven by the vision of a brighter future for Haiti, our missionaries have persisted in bringing hope to youth in need,” says Father Gus Baek, Director of Salesian Missions.

After the earthquake destroyed 90 percent of Haiti's schools, our



missionaries repaired or reconstructed damaged classrooms, built new schools, and trained more than 1,200 teachers. As a result, more than 25,000 students have resumed their studies in more than 200 Salesian-run educational centers across the country.

Because children cannot learn on empty stomachs, missionaries also have integrated essential nutritional programs into the school day. In the immediate aftermath of disaster, a USAID-funded grant helped feed more than 18,000 hungry students, five days a week, for eight months. Today,

ongoing international partnerships ensure these programs' continued operation in order to maintain students' health and learning capacity.

Missionaries have re-established critical youth programs, too. The Lakay House for Street Children, a center that provided shelter, education and food, is fully back up and running – as is the Salesian Youth Center in Fort Liberté, which houses elementary and technical schools, a vocational center, a teacher-training program, and one of the country's only nursing schools. And the new Thorland Youth Center Port-au-Prince now serves 650 youth.

With the ongoing generosity of our many friends who have made this progress possible, Salesian missionaries in Haiti will continue to make a meaningful difference – equipping the next generation of citizens with the tools and skills they need to build a better future for themselves and their country.

This Month's Child



Name: Pappu
Age: 17 Years Old
Home: New Delhi, India

Pappu Shukla was only 7 years old when he was kidnapped and forced to work as a servant. Desperate to get away, but unaware of where he was, he boarded the first train he could. That train took him to Calcutta, where a volunteer for the Salesian-run “Childline” project found him wandering on the station platform.

Ten years later, Pappu is a shining example of our

missionaries' work on behalf of homeless youth in India.

Entrusted by local authorities to Don Bosco Ashalayam in New Delhi, Pappu received safe shelter, warm meals, and the chance to go to school. Now a student at the University of New Delhi, he dreams of a career in graphic design.

“I have come a long way, and I'll never forget what Ashalayam has done for me,” he says with a smile.

This Month's Call For Prayer

During this period of global uncertainty, please pray that all of God's children – near and far, young and old, of all backgrounds and abilities – have the resources and support they need to overcome their adversities.



Monthly Missions Report...

In Fiji...



To the outside world, Fiji appears an idyllic paradise – but for many island residents, their home is anything but. With limited educational and employment opportunities, close to half of the population lives in poverty. Increasingly, this drives youth to seek work, and better living conditions, in the capital of Suva.

In order to address their needs, Salesian missionaries will soon build the Don Bosco Youth Center: a sustainably constructed, eco-friendly community space that will include open areas for learning and mentoring, cooking and dining, sporting and recreational facilities, and a community garden. At this central hub, participants will receive educational and life-skills training, engage in Fijian culture and sports and – ultimately – build brighter futures for themselves and their country.

To learn more, go to:
SalesianMissions.org/fiji-community-center

In the Philippines...

At Don Bosco Agro-Mechanical Technology Center in Legazpi City, students are developing the skills they need to achieve self-sufficiency.

Here, instructors combine theory with hands-on practice at the school's demonstration farm. Aided by the latest equipment, students apply their classroom lessons toward growing vegetables and cereal crops, animal husbandry and veterinary sciences, and milk, cheese and other dairy production. In turn, the knowledge and skills they gain will allow them to earn a good living and give back to their communities once they graduate.

Don Bosco Legazpi, as the program is known, also helps local farmers establish small cooperatives on the demonstration farm, including offering microloans, technical support, and marketing assistance for their products. Currently, 15 agricultural entrepreneurs benefit from these services.



In Uganda...

At the Palabek Refugee Settlement, Salesian missionaries provide life-changing educational opportunities for more than 1,000 youth.

Located in one of the poorest regions of the country, the settlement hosts nearly 46,000 refugees and asylum-seekers who desire to build the skills they need for a better life. Here, missionaries operate four nursery schools, a vocational training center, and a job placement office.



The vocational training center offers courses in tailoring, hair-dressing, automobile mechanics, motorcycle repair, and solar installation. In addition, all students take agricultural classes. The job placement office assists students in resume writing, finding internships and on-the-job training opportunities, preparing for interviews, and other professional support.

Missionary of the Month: Father Agustinus Togo

As a young man, Agustinus Togo was on his way to being a professional soccer player. Instead, he became a priest. Today, Father Togo uses his soccer skills and his passion for the sport to teach and connect with indigenous Achuar youth in the Ecuadorian Amazon.

"[Soccer] moves many people," he says. "When there are matches or championships, young people

don't care if they have to walk a week or two, they go to play." He asked himself, why not use soccer as another way of evangelizing?

Achuar youth confront many outside threats to their traditional culture, including drugs and the misuse of technology. One way to prevent their getting caught up in these vices is to engage them in sports. Fr. Togo's dream is to open a soccer



school in the Achuar community of Wasakentsa, and then train youth in other communities.

Letter from the Director: We're in this Together

Dear Friends,

We are living in a challenging and unprecedented time.

During the past several months, we have been forced to re-imagine where and how we work; re-invent the ways we interact with each other; and re-evaluate the things that are truly important. And every day, it seems, there are new sacrifices to make – which can feel unsettling and scary.

This is why I am so thankful

for the steadfast support of friends like you. Today, when the easiest thing to do might be to turn inward and away, you have pivoted toward hope. You have recognized that impoverished children and families need us now more than ever – and because of your generosity and prayers, our missionaries have persevered.

I hope these stories of their success will shine the same rays of joy into your hearts as they have mine.



Together, you, we, and the people we serve will emerge from our current challenges stronger, and more resilient, than before.

With sincere gratitude,

Fr. Gus Baek
Fr. Gus Baek, S.D.B.



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