



World Bulletin

Summer 2021

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

A Lasting Legacy of Education in Kenya

In 1985, Father Sean McFerran and his cofounder Brother Joseph Cherian flung open the doors of Don Bosco Boys Town in Nairobi with a promise to teach the poorest of the poor: children whose parents couldn't even afford the modest fees of government-sponsored education.

By siting the school in one of the city's most affluent suburbs, these savvy Salesians hoped to call attention to the plight of youth living in the slums, and inspire wealthy donors to support Don Bosco's mission. That strategy worked. From its quiet beginnings in a makeshift, tin-roofed shed, Don Bosco Boys Town developed into a bona fide institution offering primary, secondary, and technical education designed to prepare youth for in-demand jobs and long-term employment.

During the past 35 years, this need has exponentially grown.

Despite Kenya's rapid economic growth, "nearly two million of Nairobi's three million residents



still live in impoverished informal settlements," explains Fr. Gus Baek, director of Salesian Missions. "More than ever, poor youth desperately need access to basic education and technical training opportunities in order to turn their lives around – and this is where Don Bosco Town continues to shine." (Ultimately, administrators dropped "Boys" from the name to reflect the school's co-educational mission).

To date, Don Bosco Town has graduated more than 6,000 young

men and women, almost 80 percent of whom have found employment in their fields of study - including tailoring, engineering and mechanics, carpentry, electrical work and welding, secretarial skills, and a full spectrum of computer-related careers. Compared to Nairobi's population, this may seem like a drop in the bucket; but "reversing the tide of poverty and despair happens one student at a time," says Fr. Gus.

And there's a ripple effect, too. In the spirit of Fr. Sean, whose unwavering passion to ease suffering among the poor brought him to Kenya at the age of 66, many graduates choose to use their education to give back to their communities. As CEOs and entrepreneurs, they create business ventures to benefit those living in the slums. The same slums they themselves once lived in.

A truly remarkable legacy that will endure for years to come, thanks to the ongoing support of our friends.

This Month's Child



Name: Willis
Age: 9 Years Old
Home: Madagascar

For most of his young life, Willis had to fend for himself.

The youngest of seven children born into poverty, his situation became even more desperate when his father lost his job, his parents separated, and his mother died. Deprived of the affection and support that every child needs – and overwhelmed by the daily stresses of searching for food – he developed psychological problems and a related substance abuse disorder.

Willis easily could have become another faceless statistic. Thankfully, concerned adults

brought him to Notre Dame de Clairvaux in October 2020, and his future turned around.

Located in Ivato, this Salesian-run center has served thousands of orphaned and abandoned kids like Willis since 1984. In addition to primary vocational education, the center provides daily meals, counseling, medical services and other programs to help poor, troubled children thrive.

Today, Willis happily attends school and is grateful for the second chance he found, thanks to the Salesians.

Join us at our weekly Chapel Mass - Live Streaming NOW!
Go to our Website for details: salesianmissions.org/mass

This Month's Call For Prayer

While U.S. students embrace the summer months to enjoy a break from classes and homework, please pray that suffering children around the globe gain access to an education that will enable them to escape the grip of poverty.



Monthly Missions Report...

In Argentina...



Mendoza is inarguably Argentina's most important wine-producing region. For more than 120 years, the Salesians have been a driving force behind its success.

Missionaries first established the Don Bosco Institute in Maipú in April 1901 to teach local youth the art and science of viticulture. In the Institute's vineyards and Experimental Wine Cellar – the oldest in the region – students apply classroom learning to real-world situations, and graduate with the specialized skills they need to grow Mendoza's agricultural potential and gain leadership in the industry.

In a rural area where nearly 75 percent of residents depend upon the land for their livelihoods, the Don Bosco Institute shines as a beacon of relevance and opportunity. Today, 500 aspiring sommeliers, vineyard technicians, wine producers, and agricultural scientists are shaping brighter futures for themselves and their homeland.

In Senegal...

In partnership with Spain's Real Madrid Foundation, Salesian missionaries in Thies and Tambacounda are extending the positive benefits of sports to disadvantaged youth.

Guided by the motto "they play, we educate," both schools harness athletics as a catalyst for personal growth.

Here, more than 300 girls and boys, ages 5-17, attend practices that teach valuable skills on and off the field: teamwork, respect, responsibility, and more. Participants also receive tutoring, meals, health care, and psychological support.

"Sports and other activities are very effective methods for getting discipline; they favor good living and good health," Don Bosco once said. Today in Senegal, hundreds of kids are proving him right.



In South Africa...

A new Salesian-led educational initiative in Cape Town aims to reverse the rising tide of unemployment, poverty, and homelessness among local youth.



Aptly named "Waves of Change," this free program partners with established maritime training organizations to prepare students with the skills they need for well paid jobs in the industry. After completing a companion life-skills course, participants also receive financial assistance to pursue official certification through the South African Maritime Safety Authority.

Waves of Change leverages long-standing relationships between the Salesians and area employers as well – many of whom consistently hire its graduates.

Currently, more than 200 participants between the ages of 18 and 35 eagerly anticipate being part of it.

Missionary of the Month: Fr. Chisomo Joseph James

God has His own ways, as Fr. Chisomo is quick to tell you.

"Where He wants us to be happy, He never lets us choose," says the young Malawian with a vibrant grin.

Take his career, for instance. When he aspired to aeronautical engineering, the Holy Spirit led him to the seminary instead. Or his intention to follow St. Ignatius; while attending a Jesuit discern-

ment program, a chance meeting with a Salesian re-directed him to Don Bosco. And his missionary assignment to South Sudan: a place he'd never imagined and "by all means, wasn't ready to go to." Yet a series of dreams revealed to him that he was meant to be there all along.

Today, this 33-year-old priest finds great joy in his service to poor youth and those living with



leprocy.

"To become a Salesian was the will of God, and the peace I have now I am sure wouldn't be felt anywhere else," Fr. Chisomo says.

It's a Matter of the Heart

Dear Friends,

Don Bosco once famously said, "Education is a matter of the heart." But what did he mean?

Every day around the world, our missionaries offer an answer.

Sometimes, it means building a school for desperately impoverished children – and trusting that generous donors will share in our mission to transform their lives.

Other times, it means centering

skills training around an untapped opportunity – while injecting new life into an entire region.

It can also mean meeting students where they are: using activities kids love to draw them out and teach them skills they can use to become responsible young adults.

Of course, Salesian education is clearly a matter of your heart, too. Your compassionate support courses



through the veins of every school, every classroom, and every training program we offer, and for this, I am truly thankful.

With sincere gratitude,

Fr. Gus Baek

Fr. Gus Baek, S.D.B.



SALESIAN MISSIONS

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