Spring is a season of renewal and rejuvenation. Please pray that suffering children, families and communities around the globe are given the strength, hope and support they need to resurrect their lives and face brighter days ahead.

Join us every Wednesday at 10am EST for our weekly Chapel Mass - Live Streaming NOW!

Go to our website for details: SalesianMissions.org/mass

This Month’s Call For Prayer

There’s a saying in Africa that goes something like this: “When you educate a girl, you educate an entire society.” Still, many societies on the continent remain resistant to gender equality, which dampens the saying’s effect. Recent graduates from a Salesian school in Tanzania serve as an inspiration.

“One of the most interesting aspects of this school is the strong female representation in sectors that males previously have dominated,” observes a Salesian missionary at Don Bosco Kilimanjaro International Institute for Telecommunications, Electronics and Computers (Don Bosco KIITEC) in Arusha. Here, 36 students—roughly one-third of them young women—joyfully accepted their diplomas last November.

“An ongoing campaign, “Binti Thamani” (“precious girl”), works to raise awareness among teachers and parents about equity in technical education and the vital employment opportunities it can lead to. Already, the campaign has reached well over 3,000 young women, including those who now study at or have graduated from Don Bosco KIITEC. Students benefit from some of the most advanced training technologies available in the region, including electrical engineering with industrial automation; renewable energy; computer science; and electronics and telecommunications. Accredited by the National Council for Technical Education, Don Bosco KIITEC awards successful graduates with a three-year National Technical Award Level Six diploma.

“We know that educated girls and young women are better equipped to live as independent adults, and to make positive decisions that affect themselves, their families and their communities,” Fr. Mike concludes. “They also support the growth and development of their country as a whole—which is important, since a strong Tanzanian economy will always need qualified professionals. And that includes women.”

This Month’s Child

Huare lives with her mother and four older siblings in a two-room house fashioned out of corrugated iron and a few tarps. Her village, Ndama, nestles in the shadow of a garbage dump and lacks running water and electricity.

By all standard measures, Huare is among the world’s poorest of the poor. Still, her future shines bright. That’s because Huare goes to Don Bosco Primary School in nearby Rundu—a Salesian-run institution for students ages 2-10 whose families otherwise couldn’t afford to educate their children.

Every day, Huare walks a mile each way in order to attend. Her mother insists on it: she knows that education is the most effective way to break the chains of generational poverty.

Don Bosco Primary School operates on a shoestring. Kind friends like you keep the doors of opportunity open for Ndama’s promising children.

And that support matters. Just ask Huare, who already dreams of becoming a doctor!
In Ecuador...

Father Agustín Togo had a vision: to engage and inspire indigenous Achuar youth through sport. Today, the Yankuam Jintia Fútbol School manifests this goal.

The school builds a crucial bridge into the classroom for at-risk youth whose impoverished parents would rather send their children to work. By choosing “from talent to vocation” as the institution’s motto, Fr. Agustín highlighted the idea that soccer would lead to education; education would lead to opportunities; and through those opportunities, youth could lift themselves, their families, and their communities out of poverty.

And it’s succeeding. Youth participation has grown from 80 kids to 700 in just four years.

“There is talent, skill, and technique among the young players,” he says. “My dream [is] to have a national team of the Achuar people and participate in championships in other cities around the country.”

In El Salvador...

“I always dreamed of a bike!” said 9-year-old René.

Thanks to kind friends like you, this dream is now reality for 120 kids living in Cantons of Tonacatepeque, a municipality of San Salvador.

Here—through the Laura Vicuña Pro Education Foundation—Salesian missionaries care for vulnerable children like René, many of whom come from broken families. With particular emphasis on empowering youth through education, and developing their human potential, the foundation operates schools and shelters for at-risk children; job training workshops; daycare centers; nutrition programs; and more.

Successful participation in these programs depends on reliable transportation, which is where the bikes come in. Salesian Missions secured the donated two-wheelers, which girls and boys can use to get to school. More than that, they can experience the joy of riding bikes and having fun with their friends, too!

In Zambia...

Across Makululu, homeless youth are the victims of society’s failures: the lack of education, employment opportunities, and meaningful civic support. This leads to despair, substance abuse, and family breakdown. At Don Bosco Children’s Home, kids with nowhere else to turn find refuge ... and hope.

Since 2017, the program has provided a stepping stone into more stable futures. Currently, 92 boys, ages 7 to 14, receive safe shelter, daily meals, family counseling, and individually tailored rehabilitation services. They attend school each day and learn responsibility and cooperation during nightly chores.

Children who successfully reunite with their families may continue their basic education at the center or in a community-based school. Those who can’t return home are invited to stay, complete their education, and pursue vocational training that prepares them to become self-sufficient, contributing members of society.

Missionary of the Month: Sarath Kumar

He was only in 5th grade, yet young Sarath clearly heard the call during Mass one day: *Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation!*

With Mark 16:15 resonating in his ears, this schoolboy from Tamil Nadu resolved to do just that. In time, stories of Indian missionaries serving abroad ignited Sarath’s discernment—a path that led him directly to Don Bosco and his own missionary vocation.

Now 23, Sarath looks forward to a second homecoming in Sri Lanka, where he completed his post-novitiate practical training. “I see the Salesian mission in front of my eyes and I am really excited to go back there,” he says.

His goals for this first assignment? To spread joy, hope, and happiness among the young—by teaching them to navigate their country’s troubled economic waters using education and faith as their beacon.

With Don Bosco in his heart, we know Sarath will succeed.

Building the Foundations for Lasting Change

Dear Friends,

**Education. Capacity. Sustainability.**

Those who know me personally know my deep commitment to each of these ideals—as a Salesian; as a past school administrator; and as a former provincial treasurer.

In order to pull the world’s most vulnerable communities out of poverty, we must empower its members to do it themselves. Yes, we always will give fish to those in need. We also must teach people to fish. That’s when lasting change truly happens.

In a world challenged by ongoing war, disaster, and thinly stretched resources, building community resilience and capacity is more critical now than ever. As you’ll read in this issue, it starts with education and training.

That’s where you come in. When vulnerable youth have opportunities to learn—and the support they need to succeed—they become architects of the future, equipped with the knowledge and skills to lead their lives, communities, and countries forward.

Your generosity provides the foundation these youth can build on. And I am truly grateful.

All God’s blessings now and always,

Father Michael Conway, S.D.B.