



# World Bulletin

Summer 2024

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

## Unshakeable Hope in Syria ... and Beyond

More than a year has passed since a catastrophic earthquake crumbled the foundations of so many lives in Syria. But the effects remain clear and present for people who—despite it all—are rebuilding their lives once again, with help from compassionate friends like you.

Since before the outbreak of civil war in 2011, Salesian missionaries have lived and worked among the poverty-stricken population in Kafroun, Aleppo, and Damascus—providing education and locally tailored social development programs for thousands of youth and families. That work intensified and expanded during the conflict, when these dedicated servants of Don Bosco were among the few organizations willing to remain.

“The trust they have gained, and the local knowledge they have built, underpin a unique ability to get things done in times of crisis,” explains Father Michael Conway,



director of Salesian Missions. “When the earthquake struck last February 6, our missionaries immediately rushed humanitarian aid to thousands of victims in areas otherwise cut off from communications and transport.”

Today—thanks to support of our dedicated Turkey and Syria Earthquake Relief Fund—that aid continues in the form of monthly vouchers. The people and families can use them to cover the rising costs of food, household fuel, and other basic necessities that support their health, dignity, and resolve.

Abdo, a University of Aleppo student, is one of them. He describes the traumas of

war as scars etched upon the land—scars ripped wide open by this latest disaster, the wounds salted by suffocating economic hardship.

“Imagine trying to feed a family when milk and meat, essential for children’s growth, are considered luxuries,” he says. “Every

penny is a desperate struggle for survival, leaving dreams and aspirations buried under the weight of daily necessities.”

The vouchers, Abdo explains, are a lifeline: one that demonstrates our collective faith in Aleppo’s people.

“In your generosity, we see a belief in [our] ability to rise from the ashes stronger and more vibrant than before,” he says. “Our hearts overflow with gratitude.”

In Syria and around the world, your support creates joy and hope when all else seems dark. And, as Fr. Mike says, “you can’t put a value on that.”

Thank you!

## This Month’s Child

Like so many young boys at Don Bosco Children’s Home, precious Jacob doesn’t know how old he is.

What he does know is that his previous life on the streets was a nightmare. One he feared he’d never wake up from. Sniffing glue helped him cope.

“Begging for money or something to eat is dangerous,” he explains. “It’s cold and we are hungry. Sometimes we try to light a fire, and the glue helps us not to feel so cold.”

Jacob’s future looked bleak ... until he found his way to the

Salesians.

In Kabwe, Makululu, Zambia—recognized as southern Africa’s largest and poorest settlement—missionaries rescue and rehabilitate abandoned and street children. Kids receive safe shelter, daily meals, and family counseling. They attend school each day and learn responsibility and cooperation during nightly chores.

This hallmark structure serves Jacob well. With his basic needs met and armed with new life skills, he eagerly anticipates learning a trade and building a brighter future.



Name: Jacob  
Age: Unknown  
Home: Zambia

## This Month’s Call For Prayer

While most students embrace the summer months as a time to enjoy a break from classes and homework, please pray that poor children in many parts of the world gain access to an education that will enable them to escape the grip of poverty.

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

Go to our website for details: [SalesianMissions.org/mass](http://SalesianMissions.org/mass)



# Monthly Missions Report...

## In Argentina...



Youth across Argentina are eager to learn new, relevant, and contemporary skills that will help them succeed in the classroom, further their education, and build rewarding careers. Yet poverty and a lack of resources often derail those dreams.

That's why Salesian missionaries focus primarily on supporting disadvantaged, at-risk, and impoverished children who otherwise wouldn't have the chance to attend school. And they provide wraparound services to bolster success: shelter, school-based meals, basic medical care, and more ... often free of charge.

Generous friends like you recently helped these missionaries purchase much-needed computer equipment including laptops, desktops, monitors, printers, and accessories. As a result, over 2,800 students can grow their technological skills and prepare to compete in tomorrow's workforce. And their educators have the classroom tools they need to teach more effectively, too.

## In Honduras...

San Juan Bosco Vocational Training Center in Tegucigalpa turns 39 this year. Founded by Father Guerrino Giacomel, the school has left an indelible mark in the time since.

That's because it provides practical education closely matched to local needs. When students graduate, they are ready for paid work in sectors eager to hire them.

Training programs span a range of professions, from hairstyling and barbering to the culinary arts, automotive mechanics, information technology, HVAC maintenance and repair, graphic design, and more. And—as demand for vocational education has grown—so, too, has San Juan Bosco's portfolio. In addition to traditional classroom-based learning, the school provides remote learning opportunities in order to accommodate more students.

In a country where well over half its residents live in poverty, the center offers a viable pathway to a promising future.



## In Ivory Coast...

How do you empower families and communities to transcend poverty and build more stable futures? A new Salesian-led employment training program is doing just that.

Offered through the Marie Dominique Center in Abidjan's Koumassi suburb, the program comes at the right time. A historical lack of educational opportunities for girls means that many area women and their families are illiterate. Illiteracy prevents them from finding livable-wage work, and the cycle of poverty continues.



“Guaranteeing Access to the Labor Market through Vocational Training for Young Women” teaches job-ready, in-demand skills students need to become beauticians, hairdressers, seamstresses, cooks, and hospitality staff. Initial demand was so high that 236 women immediately enrolled.

Their learning moves beyond the classroom, too. Missionaries hope practical apprenticeships with local employers will help graduates enter the job market and earn their own incomes, likely for the first time.

## Missionary of the Month: Father Jacek Garus

Originally from Poland, Fr. Jacek first encountered Don Bosco while attending a cycling camp as a teenager. “When I was 16 or 17, I met an exemplary Salesian priest,” he recalls. “He'd say, ‘If you're struggling, I'm struggling,’ and we shared meals together. He was so happy and committed to us.”

That early experience ultimately inspired Jacek's missionary vocation. Four years after his ordination

in 2014, following a request for assistance in Zambia from his provincial, the young Salesian was ready to take the leap. “Although I felt scared,” he recalls, “I said, ‘yes, I'm going.’”

That decision led Fr. Jacek to Kazembe, a large village in the northern part of the country whose residents are among the poorest of the poor. Here, he is principal of the Don Bosco Carpentry School and rector



of the Salesian community, which comprises 30 out-stations, a boarding school, and a youth oratory serving hundreds of children every day.

## Our hearts overflow with gratitude

Dear Friends,

Writing to you today, I feel an overwhelming sense of gratitude.

*Gratitude* for our men and women of Don Bosco, whose unswerving commitment to marginalized youth makes a difference each and every day.

*Gratitude* for loyal friends like you, whose support and prayers provide the strength and courage they need to persevere.

And *gratitude* for the privilege and joy of serving as your director.

**You share in this joy, too.**

So many people have pulled themselves out of poverty and built better lives for themselves because *you* believed they could. Together with our dedicated missionaries in more than 130 countries, you help make a transformative difference for millions of children and families: showing them how, as Abdo says, to “rise from the ashes stronger and more vibrant than before.”

Abdo's story—and the others included here—brightly illustrate



why your support matters ... and why our hearts overflow with gratitude.

All God's blessings now and always,

*Fr. Michael Conway, S.D.B.*  
Father Michael Conway, S.D.B.



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