



Salesian Missions

World Bulletin

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

Salesians Desperately Try To Provide Life-saving Support To Storm Victims In Haiti

In Haiti, the Salesians are no strangers to tragedy and hardship. For decades, they have endured poverty and despair that is among the most extreme in the world.

But weather disasters over the past year have made a critical situation even worse.

The first blow of a devastating one-two punch occurred last May, when flooding washed out entire towns and claimed the lives of 1,191 known victims. More than 1,400 people are still missing.

In September, the horrific nightmare repeated itself when Hurricane Jeanne slammed the northwest corner of the small island country.

At the time of this writing, more than 1,000 people were known dead and 1,200 were missing.

In the wake of the storm's wrath, Salesians in neighboring



Haitian communities were trying desperately to gain access to the areas hardest hit.

Due to the widespread annihilation of roads and communications channels, information has been painfully limited. But initial reports paint a shocking scene of death and destruction.

"There are hundreds of dead bodies lined up in the streets ... entire communities are under 10 feet of water ... survivors are becoming violently

ill because the drinking water is contaminated ... people are literally starving to death."

To make matters even worse, many of the roads are washed out, making it impossible to deliver life-saving necessities such as medicine, water and food.

As they are known to do in times of most desperate need, the Salesians in Haiti are determined and relentless in their efforts to provide assistance to the suffering victims.

Although thousands of lives have been claimed, the Salesians find hope and inspiration from the lives that can be saved.

It will be a long, difficult and emotional road to recovery, but they are determined in their mission and encouraged by the friendship of good people like you.

This Month's Child



Name: Ana
Age: 3 Years Old
Home: Yolia Home for Girls
Mexico City

What *could* have happened to a baby girl named Ana is almost too unbearable to imagine.

Her mother gave birth at the juvenile age of 15, and was a homeless drug addict living on the streets of Mexico City.

What chance could a newborn baby have to survive under these deplorable conditions?

Fortunately, a good chance ... thanks to a Salesian program that is responding to the growing number of homeless girls.

The program is called Yolia, and it provides the support so desperately needed by troubled girls who have nowhere else to turn.

As a result, precious lives born into a hard, cold world are given a fighting chance.

Little Ana is proof. Her sparkling eyes, wide smile and tireless energy convey an inner-happiness and optimism that will provide strength throughout her journey through life.

This Month's Call For Prayer

The holiday season can be a difficult time for those who are lonely, forgotten or in need. Please pray that children everywhere and their families will have something special to be thankful for ... and that they will experience the joy and hope that make this season so special.



Monthly Missions Report...

In Vietnam...

The Vietnamese people have long suffered the ill-effects of war and poverty. In a country where much of the population fears for its basic safety, the challenge of providing hope and stability is enormous.

Difficulties, however, have not prevented the Salesians from making a significant impact.

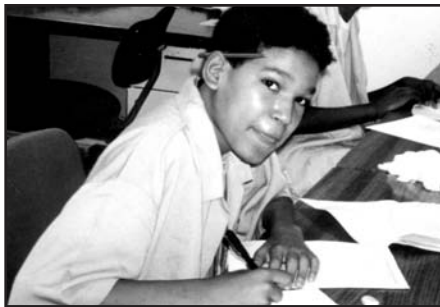
Since arriving in Vietnam in 1941, the Salesians have focused on the future by catering to the needs of the children.

Specifically, we specialize in four areas: schools for children in difficult social situations; programs for drop-outs and at-risk children; housing for young missionaries who come to Vietnam to lend a helping hand; and the protection of rights for ethnic, religious and political minorities.

The process requires great patience, but substantial progress over the years has proven to be a meaningful reward.



In Colombia...



Our work among the poor and needy includes some of the most remote places on earth.

It takes 17 hours by land to reach the town of Condoto, nestled in the middle of a tropical rain forest in western Colombia.

Most of the 30,000 inhabitants are descendants of Africans who escaped the slave trade. Mining is the main source of income. But the pay is low and the working conditions are harsh.

Nevertheless, there is much optimism.

That's because a huge number of children in the region are getting a formal education, thanks to several Salesian schools and the prayers of our good friends.

It's an important first step in the endless efforts to improve living standards for future generations.

In Eastern Europe...

The wounds of former communist regimes in Eastern Europe have not yet completely healed. Young people, in particular, wish for a better future but are skeptical, fearful and uncertain. In many instances, they have been abandoned by their parents and have nowhere to turn.

Fortunately, help is arriving in droves. Hundreds of young people from neighboring countries -- under the sponsorship of the Salesians -- are offering friendship, sympathy, moral direction and hope to their young counterparts.



With this emotional support, the young people of Eastern Europe are gaining confidence that better days are ahead. And they are building bridges that will lead them to new opportunities that were never before thought possible.

MISSIONARY OF THE MONTH: FR. CHACKO KAKKANAT

Isolation, extreme climate, and devastating poverty are not enough to prevent Fr. Chacko Kakkanat from helping the poor and needy in a big way.

For the past 18 years, he has almost single-handedly changed the outlook of Sadiya, Tinsukia - a distant settlement in a forgotten corner of Assam, India.

Upon arriving in 1986, Fr. Chacko realized that children from remote locations would never get the chance for an education ... unless there was

someplace they could live while attending classes.

So, Fr. Chacko embarked on a mission to construct a boarding house that could serve children otherwise left behind.

Today, the building is located between the middle and senior schools. And, it is "home" to 700 students who are grateful for the opportunity to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to get ahead in life.

Unfortunately, Fr. Chacko says that many more families

have come to him for help. They, too, want their children to have a fighting chance to overcome the grip of poverty and isolation.

Although it is a monumental challenge, Fr. Chacko is up to the task. He has witnessed the miracle that transforms despair into hope, and sadness into joy - a miracle made possible, in no small part, to his love and compassion for those in desperate need.

Holiday Blessings to One and All

The holiday season is upon us. Joy and celebration are abundant in what is truly a "wonderful time of the year."

It is a season when we give thanks for our good fortunes ... when we shower our loved ones with gifts and affection ... when we reach out to those in dire need.

I am sincerely grateful that we can rely on caring and compassionate friends like you to perpetuate the spirit of giving all year long.

Thanks to you, the joy and hope of the holiday season is spread throughout the world, reaching those who need it most.

More importantly, it continues on, well after the decorations are packed away and the hectic daily grind resumes.

In appreciation of your generosity, I extend our warmest holiday wishes to you and your family. Your compassion exemplifies the true meaning of Christmas and the message given to us by Jesus Christ: "As I have

loved you, so you also should love one another" (John 13:34).

May God bless you.

Brother Emile

