



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

## Salesians Help Rebuild War-Torn Sudan Through Education

A 21-year civil war in Sudan -- the largest and one of the most diverse countries in Africa -- has cost the lives of 2 million people and displaced 4 million more.

Most recently, the conflict in the western region of Darfur has killed 200,000 people.

While the decades of war have been extremely difficult for the Salesians in Sudan, they have endured the hardship and have remained committed to their ministry among the poor and the young.

Since entering the country in 1979, the Salesians have established a variety of educational institutions, including vocational training centers, formal schools and primary schools in the villages.

Now, in the wake of the bloodshed and destruction, the Salesians have launched a major operation in Sudan called "Reviving Education, Rebuilding Sudan."



The program takes a broader approach to the Salesian work, defining education by its holistic meaning as "Imparting Literacy Skills, Livelihood Skills and Life Skills."

The Salesian's overall objective is to help build a new society in Sudan where every person can live in peace and dignity. Education will be the primary focus of their involvement.

To achieve the objectives, the Salesians have developed a 5-year plan consisting of eight major projects, including:

1) Upgrading the facilities of 3 existing primary schools;

2) Completing the Vocational Training Center at Wau;

3) Constructing a network of rural schools in Tonj County;

4) Establishing an Agricultural Training Program for farmers in Tonj County;

5) Setting up a network of schools for refugees living in the squatter areas

of Khartoum;

6) Offering new professional courses at the Vocational Training Center at Khartoum;

7) Providing employment oriented vocational training for youngsters from Darfur;

8) Establishing an Entrepreneurship Development Institute at Juba.

The Salesians understand that peace supports development and that development sustains peace. By promoting development through education, the Salesians are hopeful that their efforts will lead to a future of peace in Sudan.

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## This Month's Child

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Name: Bella  
Age: 8 Years Old  
Home: Iron ore mines of Karnataka, India

Bella is a frail eight-year-old who has been forced to work in one of the most difficult and dangerous jobs possible: iron ore mining.

Rather than attending school or playing with friends, Bella spends every day sitting in a field of rocks, hand-crushing them. Her feet are burned, her hands are blistered and her lungs are coated with toxic dust.

She -- along with the rest of her family -- live at the mine under a "tent" made of a two-foot square of plastic. There are

no bathroom facilities and they drink contaminated water. Disease is widespread.

Bella and her family are victims of a corrupt mining industry that operates despite countless and horrific human-rights violations.

The Salesians are doing everything possible to help children like Bella. By working with government authorities and providing immediate support to the victims, the Salesians are trying to improve conditions and create better education and job opportunities.

## *This Month's Call For Prayer*

*Millions of children around the world are suffering enormously. They are victims of poverty, hunger, sickness and abuse. Please pray that these precious young lives get a fighting chance to overcome their pain and despair so that someday their lives will be filled with joy and hope.*



# Monthly Missions Report...

## In Spain..

The Salesian House of Saint Antony the Abbot in Valencia, Spain, has opened its doors to large numbers of refugees, many from sub-Saharan Africa, who are living under the Ademuz bridge along the Turia river.

Specifically, the Salesians are providing meals for the displaced



families and are allowing them to use their bathrooms and children's playground facilities.

In addition, the Salesians are offering educational courses intended to give refugees the knowledge and skills necessary to find work and ultimately improve their living conditions.

The Salesians have committed to helping the refugees "for as long as there are people forced to live on the concrete under the bridge in the city of Valencia."

## In Colombia...



The Leo XIII Salesian Institute has been honored with the Prize for Educational Excellence by the Education Authorities for the District of Bogota, Colombia.

The award is given to the school that is considered "the best in the city."

At a special ceremony attended by government dignitaries, Father Mario Peresson, the school principal, received praise for the "quality of the educational and administrative management of the Institute, which sets out to improve the educational provision, the development and social involvement."

The award is just one of the many examples of how your generosity to the Salesians is helping to accomplish great things.

## In Swaziland...

Until recently, food distribution to the starving children in Manzini, Swaziland, was hampered by delivery trucks that were old and unreliable.

But now, donations received from caring friends like you have provided the funding necessary to purchase two new delivery trucks, plus a 40-foot container of nutritionally fortified rice for needy homes, soup kitchens and schools served by the Salesians.

Our missionaries in Manzini are extremely grateful for the new trucks, saying that "this will make a huge impact on our daily work and allow more timely home visits, delivery of foods to the homes and other vital duties that we have been struggling with due to a lack of drivable vehicles."



## Missionary of the Month: Cardinal Joseph Zen

The lifetime of dedicated service and outstanding accomplishments of Father Joseph Zen were recently honored by the Pope as he elevated the Salesian priest to the position of Cardinal.

The appointment to such a revered and coveted leadership role in the Church is quite a testament to the impact that the Salesians made in Cardinal Zen's life, particularly at a young age.

As the oldest of five children with a father who was confined to a wheelchair, Joseph Zen was a troublesome teen. His mother was desperately concerned about her

son's direction in life when a friend suggested that she try to enroll him as a Salesian aspirant.

"Certainly they'll say no" he recalls saying after his mother announced her intentions.

But his first encounter with the supervisor, Fr. Braga, made a profound impression. "With one look he understood me more deeply than all the explanation of my mother. From that day I had no doubts about my vocation."

He speaks fondly of his experience saying "Life there was very disciplined but there was so much joy! What was the secret? There was prayer, family spirit



and loving kindness."

The values instilled by the Salesians during those impressionable years provided Cardinal Zen with the moral strength to turn his life around and achieve greatness in the eyes of God.

## Angels to Needy Children

Dear Friends,

There are so many children in this world who desperately need help. The sadness one feels when looking into the eyes of a starving child never goes away.

At first, it can make one feel helpless. But then, through our faith in God, there is a sense of hope ... we can, in fact, make a difference. We know, because we see the miraculous outcomes of our efforts every day.

As Salesians, we are motivated

by our mission ... and inspired by our successes. And, as I have expressed many times, we are deeply grateful that we can count on the continued support and generosity of special friends like you.

The children touched by your kindness have never seen your face or heard your voice. Yet, when they are offered a helping hand, they experience the feeling that angels are watching over them. You are their angels!



Please accept my sincere gratitude for caring and may God bless you and your family.

*Brother Emile*

