



Salesian Missions

World Bulletin

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

Myanmar's Long Road To Reconstruction Is Paved With Hope

On May 2, 2008, Cyclone Nargis tore through the coastal region of Myanmar, claiming an estimated 130,000 lives and leaving millions of children and adults homeless and struggling to survive. Amid the devastation and chaos – marked by ravaged villages, flooded growing fields, and political unrest – the Salesians stepped in to provide immediate assistance to the most desperate survivors.

With the guidance of Rangoon's Archbishop Charles Mang Bo, SDB, Salesians across the country and abroad coordinated funding and relief efforts to provide food, shelter, and drinking water to over 25,000 victims. At a time when internal politics impeded other humanitarian efforts, the Salesians were instrumental in soothing the physical and spiritual suffering of those who needed it most.



While the immediate crisis has calmed, Myanmar's families are still at risk. The cyclone leveled their homes, flooded their rice fields, took their animals, and ruined their tools and seeds. As a result, millions of survivors continue to face starvation and disease as they grapple to rebuild their lives – and their livelihoods.

The road to reconstruction will require years of dedicated effort. Backed by your generous support, the Salesians are well poised to help families through these challenges to face a brighter future.

Children, in particular, remain the most vulnerable population in the aftermath of the disaster. Looking ahead, the Salesians plan to provide for the needs of families – food, clothing, shelter, and medicine – in order that their children may resume their education. Additionally, they will assist in agricultural revitalization efforts as well as rebuilding schools and vocational centers to support a sustainable recovery.

“The humane acts of courage and kindness of those who have volunteered to assist the people... and the international support and solidarity received by the Church in Myanmar shows further evidence of the generosity of humankind,” says Archbishop Bo. Through your continued support, the children and families of Myanmar will rise above the devastation to once again live in dignity and hope.

This Month's Child



Name: Jean-Pierre
Age: 11 Years Old
Home: Foyer-Lakay
Port-Au-Prince, Haiti

Having lived on the street for much of his young life, Jean-Pierre had struggled to avoid the violence, rampant drug abuse, and hunger that framed his daily existence. Worse, as just one among thousands of other street kids in the capital city of Haiti, Jean-Pierre's prospects – of education, of work, of hope – were already fading.

One day, tired, shoeless, and wandering the slums in search of food, Jean-Pierre encountered a worker from *Foyer-Lakay* – a program for street children run by the Salesians. “Come,” said the older boy. “I was just like

you, but now my life is changed.”

On the doorstep of Foyer-Lakay, Jean-Pierre was greeted with a warm hug, new clothes, and the promise of a better future. He gratefully signed Foyer-Lakay's “contract” – pledging not to lie, not to steal, and to respect everyone and everything – and now joins 300 other former street children who have access to nutritious meals, safe living quarters, and educational and vocational training in a supportive, values-centered environment.

Today, Jean-Pierre is flourishing. He is pursuing his studies with vigor and hopes one day to be an engineer.

This Month's Call For Prayer

The recent wave of major natural disasters and the rising cost of living have put a strain on the good people who typically assist the victims. Please pray that these caring benefactors find the strength, hope, and ability to care for themselves, their loved ones, and those around them in need.



Monthly Missions Report...

In Angola...

Launched in 2004, the Don Bosco Sports Project extends athletic opportunities to over 2,000 impoverished children, teenagers, and young adults across the country – youngsters living in city garbage dumps and other similarly squalid conditions.

To date, the program has successfully promoted social inclusion, emotional development, and access to education. In fact, the primary requirement for participating is regular attendance in school.

Now the Salesians hope to reach an even broader group of at-risk youth. Through the *Inter Campus* training program, these children will, for the first time, be able to learn and play the country's most beloved sport: soccer. This attractive opportunity to play the game will undoubtedly improve educational and vocational prospects for Angola's most vulnerable population.



In Spain...



Thanks to the work of the Salesians, needy youngsters in Madrid have new hope for a brighter future: The *Lumbre* (Blaze) Center, opened on June 5 in collaboration with the Daughters of Charity.

Located in a section of the city with an unusually high concentration of migrants, *Lumbre* offers coursework, vocational training, and specialized guidance to help at-risk youth identify and prepare for a career.

During the opening ceremony, Fr. Luis Manuel Moral, Provincial of the Salesians in Madrid, thanked the Sisters for their shared vision of helping disadvantaged children and young adults improve their prospects for becoming contributing members of society.

In Togo...

For many years, boys and girls in the southern district of Togo have struggled to continue their studies. The area's lone secondary school is overcrowded – and forced to turn away many motivated students. Unfortunately, those unable to afford to travel or move away from home to attend school are thrust back into the same cycle of poverty they'd been working so hard to escape.

Thankfully, this is all about to change.



In July, the Salesians broke ground for a new secondary school in Kara that will immediately increase access to education for disadvantaged children.

In addition to traditional subjects, the school will offer health and social education classes, environmental studies, and other valuable courses that are certain to make a meaningful impact.



Missionary of the Month: Fr. Nick Castelyns

Fr. Nick Castelyns is no stranger to Samoa. A long-time missionary stationed in the capital city of Apia, on the northern island of Upolu, Fr. Castelyns has been personally involved in establishing the country's first technical school and two parishes.

Over the years, he has also served as one of Samoa's chief catechists – working closely with the people in the villages who, because of distance, often lack direct access to their parish priest.

Having seen the positive impact of these efforts on the islanders' spiritual and educational lives, Fr. Castelyns now seeks to broaden the Salesian presence in Samoa. On June 15, he celebrated the opening of the Parish of

Salelologa, on the island of Savai'i, by becoming its first parish priest.

Fr. Castelyns envisions a parish that eventually grows to include a second Don Bosco Technical Center – and one that nurtures the vocational development of the many young Samoans and Fijians who aspire to the Salesian life. Congratulations, Fr. Nick, for being a role model and spiritual pioneer.

Hope In The Wake Of Disaster

Dear Friends,

Natural disasters – such as the 2004 tsunami in Southeast Asia and Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar – often bring out the best in humankind. Images of the devastation and suffering, as well as first-hand accounts of our missionaries in the field, call us to immediate action: We open our hearts to do whatever we can to ease just a small bit of pain.

Thanks to our kind and generous

friends – friends just like you – the Salesians have made enormous strides in helping disaster victims all over the world rebuild their lives.

At the same time, such disasters challenge us to remember the millions of other needy children and families across the globe who are just as desperate for our help – but whose stories never make the news. I know you will continue your generosity on



their behalf, and for that reason I want to thank you for being such a valuable part of the Salesian family.

May God bless you!

Brother Emile



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