



Salesian Missions

World Bulletin

Summer 2009

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

Salesians Provide A Helping Hand – And Hope – To Children And Refugees In Sri Lanka

For the past two decades, Sri Lanka has been the scene of a devastating civil war. Hundreds of thousands of innocent victims have been killed and the country lies in ruins.

While the end appears near in the fighting between the military and Tamil Tiger rebels, the recent aftermath has been unimaginable. Reports estimate the death toll at 20,000 casualties in just the final days of the war.

In response, the Salesians have engaged in a massive relief effort that is providing critical aid and support to the surviving victims.

In Chettikulam, located in the northern region of the country, 250,000 refugees – the largest collection of refugees in the world – are relying on the Salesians and other relief agencies for immediate help with food and medical care, as well as counseling for orphaned children.



The Salesians have started a mobile clinic with two pediatricians, three doctors and five nurses to provide medical care to those unable to leave the refugee camps.

The Salesians are also placing a special focus on the children affected by the war. “We are trying to help the young people in the camps by giving them basic vocational training, helping them to become active, responsible citizens of the future, respecting the laws and so contributing

to building up the country,” explains George Panicker who is involved in the Salesian efforts.

In addition to their support for the refugees, the Salesians have also played a major role in the rescue and protection of thousands of former child soldiers recruited by the Tamil Tiger rebels.

Since 2002, it is estimated that more than 5,000 children – some as young as ten years old and nearly half of them girls – have been forced to fight in the bloody war.

For the children, families and other citizens who have survived the harrowing ordeal, the path to recovery will be a long and painful journey. But with the dedication and perseverance of our Salesian missionaries in Sri Lanka – backed by generous and caring friends like you – there is reason for hope.

This Month’s Child



Name: Joseph
Age: 16 Years Old
Home: Don Bosco Center
Sri Lanka

Joseph is a smart and enthusiastic student at the Don Bosco Center in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

When greeted by his bright eyes and big smile, one would never guess that just a few years ago, Joseph was fighting for the Tamil Tiger rebels in a violent, gruesome and deadly civil war.

As a child soldier, Joseph was forced into terrifying combat against heavily armed government troops. And he was a victim of frequent beatings and abuse from his own leaders.

Fortunately, the young teenager was able to escape the rebels and find safe refuge with the Salesians.

The Don Bosco Center is home to dozens of former child soldiers who, like Joseph, cannot return to their families because of threats from the rebels.

“My mother and the rest of my family are facing difficulties following my escape. If I return to my house, I’ll face a lot of trouble from the Tigers,” explains Joseph.

Thankfully, he is well protected under the care of the Salesians. And he is busy getting his life on track by studying mechanics and building his self-confidence.

Joseph is yet another inspiring example of how your generosity can dramatically change lives.

This Month’s Call For Prayer

Too often, the world’s most needy and vulnerable children are neglected, abused and exploited. Please pray for their safety and that they may have the proper care they need to lead happy, healthy lives ... the guidance to make good choices ... and the education needed for a productive future.



Monthly Missions Report...

In Australia...

Young people in Australia – who have always demonstrated a remarkable commitment to social justice – now have a new outlet for their passion.

The Cagliero Lay Missionary Project affords young men and women between the ages of 20 and 30 the opportunity to volunteer in a Salesian mission at home or overseas. Currently, these volunteers are serving one-year placements in Australia, Samoa and Thailand; by 2012, the project hopes to include placements in countries around the world.

Many of the Cagliero participants are former attendees of Don Bosco Camp Dromana, and are seeking ways to extend their service as missionaries in the spirit of joy, love and selflessness.



In Dominican Republic...



The Salesians in the Dominican Republic have created a partnership with the National School of Law in Santo Domingo to develop social projects for the poorest of the country's children.

Aimed at educating future lawyers in the challenges facing young people, the partnership will integrate practical experience – in the form of direct social work – into the current law school curriculum.

“Educating people in justice achieves a better prevention of crimes and further develops justice as a virtue,” says Fr. Juan Linares, director of the program.

“I am very happy about the agreement,” says Dr. Jorge A. Subero Isa, President of the Dominican Republic's Supreme Court, “Through it, we will bring our lawyers and judges closer to the community.”

In Slovenia...

Young people in Ljubljana, Slovenia now have greater access to the Salesian oratory. Long plagued by problems of cultural integration, educational gaps and unemployment, these youths lacked many prospects.

Enter the “Happy Minibus” – which aims to change this, one youngster at a time, through bringing Salesians directly to the streets. Here, Salesians and their supporters can find and meet young people on their own turf, and introduce them to the benefits of vocational training and spiritual instruction.



“We're very grateful for the support of our friends and local authorities, who have made this project possible,” says Fr. Alojzij Slavko Snoj, Salesian Provincial of Slovenia. On the streets since May, the “Happy Minibus” is already promising a brighter future for many local youngsters.

Missionary of the Month: Fr. Pawel Sufleta

“Father Pawel works so hard for the young . . . [which is why] we decided to thank him for the time he devotes to us.”

So reads the letter nominating Fr. Sufleta for the White Lily Award – an annual honor bestowed upon those citizens of Elk, Poland, who best exemplify distinguished public commitment. As head of the Salesian oratory in Elk, Fr. Sufleta is well known for his work on behalf of

local youth – including his ability to earn the confidence of some of the most troubled youngsters through sports competitions, meetings, and cultural trips.

Fr. Sufleta accepted the White Lily for “exemplary behavior” during a ceremony attended by the Mayor of Elk, members of the town council, and the youth who nominated him for the distinction. “This award – though given to one person – goes to all those



who are working in the oratory and keep it alive,” said Fr. Sufleta during his acceptance speech. Congratulations, Fr. Sufleta, for your tireless, and unselfish, dedication!

The Quest For Peace

Dear Friend,

We are blessed in our country to live in relative safety – far removed from the violence and bloodshed that plague many other parts of the world.

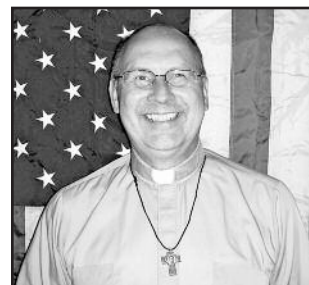
But we must not let our distance from this humanitarian crisis diminish our determination for peace ... nor can we forget about the hundreds of thousands of innocent victims.

For every story we share in

this brief newsletter, there are hundreds more examples of how you are making a major impact. Countless children, families and communities are eternally grateful ... as are we.

I know based on your generosity and kindness that you share our concerns and support our quests. Thanks to your help, we are making the world a better and safer place.

And, with you by our side,



we will continue to accomplish wonderful things together.

Thanks again for all you have done and may God bless you!

Fr. Mark Hyde, SDB



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