



World Bulletin

Fall 2020

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

With Education, Youth can Conquer the Odds

Young people around the world are in crisis.

Even before COVID-19, their prospects of finding and retaining stable employment were bleak: especially for those already living in poverty. A dwindling job market worsened by the pandemic means that many more who wish to work will never have the chance.

According to the World Bank, there are an estimated 1.3 billion youth between the ages of 15 and 24 worldwide. Of those, 13.6 percent – or 67.6 million – are unemployed. And the vast majority live in developing countries where opportunities to overcome educational barriers are few.

“More and more, youth are becoming trapped in a cycle of poverty they can’t escape,” says Father Gus Baek, director of Salesian Missions. “Without education, they lack access to decent jobs; without decent jobs, they can’t support themselves. That’s why it’s imperative that we invest



in the futures of today’s youth, with relevant, job-ready training.”

In more than 130 countries around the world, our missionaries are doing just that ... and their investments are yielding remarkable dividends. Despite current statistics, students who attend and graduate from Salesian-run vocational programs are finding work in sectors that are stable and growing.

In Thailand, for example, where pre-pandemic poverty rates were already on the rise,

Don Bosco Technological College in Bangkok has partnered with BMW to train students as certified automotive technicians. As a result, every member of 2020’s graduating class has secured jobs with the German-based company.

And in Italy, where youth unemployment approaches a staggering 41 percent, a flagship partnership between Yamaha Motor Italia and the Salesian Vocational Training School in Milan has begun placing graduates into certified mechanics jobs throughout the country. Thanks to coursework specifically tailored to Yamaha standards, complemented by on-site internships, students are building in-demand skills they can apply right away.

“This work experience ... has already filled me with positive emotions,” says graduate Marco Crippa. “It may seem trivial, but having a job repairing motorcycles is changing my life.”

This Month’s Child

Tomàs lives on the streets of Santiago having escaped from a violent and abusive home.

In order to eat, he’s forced to steal. To avoid punishment, he hides from police. He’s scared of drug dealers and gangs, but can’t seek protection from law enforcement. And so, this vulnerable 14-year-old boy is constantly on the run.

Not long ago, Tomàs might have fallen through the cracks. Thanks to Fundación Don Bosco, however, our Salesian missionaries know exactly where to find him.

This Salesian-run, Santiago-based operation is Chile’s largest rescue and rehabilitation program for street kids. In partnership with Microsoft, the organization recently developed an app that uses GPS data to help locate even the most invisible children.

Tomàs may not yet be ready to leave the streets; building trust takes time. With this innovation, our missionaries can provide the crucial support he needs – meals, clothing, health care and more – until that time comes.

To learn more, go to: SalesianMissions.org/gps



Name: Tomàs
Age: 14 Years Old
Home: Chile

This Month’s Call For Prayer

With the holidays approaching, please pray that those who are suffering the most will receive the love and support they need to overcome the challenges they face – and the hope and faith that better days are ahead.



Advent Devotionals – Sign Up Now: www.SalesianMissions.org/Advent

Advent is a time for intentional prayer, reflection and joyful anticipation. Our special devotionals, emailed weekly beginning Sunday, November 29th, will remind you of the true meaning of Christmas – and will inspire and guide your own preparation for our Savior’s birth.

Monthly Missions Report...

In Hong Kong...



Thanks to a generous grant from a local foundation in Hong Kong, a Salesian-run organization is successfully “Reaching the Unreachable” – youth who are struggling, often invisibly, with their mental health.

Founded in 1991 by Father Peter Newberry, this organization – known as Youth Outreach, or YO for short – is well known throughout the island for its work on behalf of at-risk youth. Here, a team of social workers and other professionals provide crisis prevention services, psychological counseling, youth employment support, housing, and much more.

Sadly, fewer than half of adolescents worldwide who suffer from poor mental health receive a diagnosis or treatment. By providing a safe, nurturing environment where youth can confront and overcome these challenges, YO’s “Reaching the Unreachable” aims to change this, one individual at a time.

In Papua New Guinea...

Students at Don Bosco Technical Institute in Port Moresby are leading the charge toward a healthier environment.

Motivated by Pope Francis’s 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si*, in which he exhorts us to care for Mother Earth as if she were part of our own family, these visionary young women and men have created and launched a new waste management project. The goal? To transform their school into a “zero-waste” facility through resource conservation, responsible production, and the re-use of materials.

Already, a dedicated team of six students and eight teachers has purchased separate trash and recycling bins, established seven compost pits, and designated a recycling shed. Together, these efforts prevent incinerating or dumping trash, which causes harm to people and the environment.



In Sierra Leone...

Once the dangers of COVID-19 became clear, Salesian missionaries at Don Bosco Fambul in Freetown – experienced from their leadership during 2014’s Ebola epidemic – immediately transformed their main campus into a first-aid facility.



With official permission during lockdown, they redirected “Don Bosco on Wheels,” an outreach bus for street kids, into a mobile health information unit that has already provided 500 youth with crucial virus prevention tips and masks.

And at Pandemba Prison – a place long abandoned by all but the Salesians – missionaries have turned the chapel into an isolation unit while working to negotiate release for youth accused of petty crimes.

True to his mission during trying times, director Fr. Jorge Crisafulli proclaims, “Let us not lose heart, because we are the only hope for them.”

Learn more! Go to:
SalesianMissions.org/ebola-covid

Missionary of the Month: Father Maurizio Rossi

With so many concurrent crises in the world right now, it’s no easy task to call attention to just one. But that’s precisely what Father Maurizio Rossi is doing on behalf of our “Common Home.”

Having lived and worked in the Indian Ocean region for the past 27 years, Fr. Rossi has witnessed, first-hand, the direct and disproportionate impact of environmental disasters on the people he serves. After a massive oil spill

contaminated the coral reefs of Mauritius last summer – and killed the fish that many families depend upon to survive – he resolved to advocate for change. “In all this, it is necessary to make the Pope’s will understood,” he says. “This is our planet, and we must take care of it.” His words ring especially true considering that Mauritius is a World Heritage Site.

Today, under Fr. Rossi’s



guidance, youth in Mauritius are working hard to foster a shared sense of respect for the environment. Let us hope that his influence reverberates around the globe.

Together, We’re Shaping Brighter Futures

Dear Friends,

Five years ago, Pope Francis issued *Laudato Si’* – an encyclical to address humanity’s responsibility to environmental stewardship. In it, the Pope extols us to shape the future of our planet in a way that sustains it for generations to come.

Our missionaries have taken *Laudato Si’* to heart. More importantly, so have the youth they serve. As those with the most at stake, these young men and women are

working hard to ensure lasting health for our common home.

At the same time, these youth are working hard to sustain themselves ... through practical educational opportunities that are helping them secure employment in one of history’s most challenging job markets. I am so proud of them, and of our missionaries who never lose faith in the power of education.



Together with your support, we are shaping much brighter futures: for impoverished youth, and for the planet they will inherit.

With sincere gratitude,

Fr. Gus Baek
Fr. Gus Baek, S.D.B.



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