



Vincentian Solidarity Office

February 2021 Bulletin

What's Cooking in Sierra Leone?

It was another rainy morning at the Vincentian missionary house. A puddle was forming on the kitchen floor from the rain. The cook struggled to keep the fire alive on the floor of the kitchen. The priests moved their chairs to keep the rainwater from disturbing their breakfast. The cook looked down to avoid seeing the missionaries' sad faces. The two Vincentian missionaries couldn't imagine another rainy season in this shanty of a kitchen. Fr. Cyril Mbata, C.M., provincial superior of Nigeria wrote a letter of support, dated July 28, 2020: "In my last discussions with Fr. Jeremiah Agada, C.M. and Fr. Princewill Uche, C.M., they complained about the nature of their kitchen which is so dilapidated and has become impossible to make use of whenever it rains. This has become a matter of concern and needs urgent attention.... I request that you use your good office to assist the Province of Nigeria, to build a better and more decent kitchen for our confreres."

The confreres put together a cost-effective plan for the renovation of the decrepit kitchen. They elaborated the project and budget in neat handwritten script, scanned the pages, and sent it to the VSO. The list included construction materials, kitchen utensils, small appliances, and labor costs. Renovations included electrification, masonry, painting and carpentry. As the project progressed, they frequently shared messages and photos of the renovation work. Each dispatch showed the confreres with wide smiles. The messages included words of appreciation to the VSO and benefactors, "Thank you for keeping our hopes alive." The final report contained photos of the project and an inventory of the purchased articles. Each budget item and cost was neatly recorded by hand: a grand total of under \$5,000 USD.

In September 2017, Frs. Agada and Uche were sent from the Province of Nigeria to Sierra Leone. They were the first ever Vincentian missionaries assigned to the parish of St. Columba's Catholic Church, Moyamba, Sierra Leone. The missionaries serve several thousand faithful at the parish, four parish schools with 1,500 students ranging from pre-school to secondary school, and several outstations. The VSO team was impressed by the management skills of the confreres and the final renovation. The confreres had quickly advanced the project. They managed costs effectively, and presented

photos of a colorful, well-equipped functioning kitchen. It led us to comment, "What's for dinner in Sierra Leone?" The project transformed the kitchen from dilapidated to delightful. Frs. Agada and Uche have a dignified kitchen to live community and receive guests. The cook, too, observes the changed morale of the Nigerian Vincentian missionaries - happy for the support of the VSO and building God's kingdom in Sierra Leone. In the months ahead, the Vincentian missionaries are planning with the VSO to dig a borehole well to introduce water to the parish and 15,000 locals.



Local youth assisting with demolition of leaky roofing sheets



Carpenter demolishes old door frame



Fr. Princewill Uche, C.M. and Fr. Jeremiah Agada, C.M. in finished kitchen

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Our goal: To assist the Congregation of the Mission with obtaining funds for its evangelization and service of the poor.

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Water is Life for Village in Vietnam

The Vinh Vincentian Community of Lang Nam Parish, in the province of Vietnam has a water problem. Aluminum and other heavy metals contaminate the land and water. The water is not safe to drink. It causes all sorts of health problems for the 3000 inhabitants here. Buying water is possible, but too expensive for people who are mostly rice farmers. They suffer from skin and stomach issues and even cancer. The local Vincentians proposed putting together a water purification system. The parishioners volunteered time and effort. The rectory was able to clear out a room for the tanks and they hired an expert to manage the set up. He will be monitoring the system to make sure all is well in the future too. Local youths plan to help with deliveries of the clean water to locals who need it. The water is available to

the entire community all day for free. The people are being taught the benefits of clean water. Improvements

to health and well-being are sure to start soon.



Fr. Chien Q. Nguyen, CM. of Lang Nam Parish Vietnam blesses the purified water. Hundreds of containers are served daily to both parishioners and non-Christians in the area.

New Sprinter Van Means Reliable Transport for Seminário Vicentino Nossa Senhora das Graças, Curitiba, Brazil

The seminarians of Seminário Vicentino Nossa Senhora das Graças Curitiba Brazil live 15km (9.3 miles) from where they take their classes. The area in which they live is industrial. There is heavy traffic and

no sidewalks. Public transportation from this area is difficult to access. Also, the busses do not run on a reliable schedule. Using it can make the seminarians late for class and can even be dangerous. The seminary had

two older Volkswagen busses that they used to make the trip. But these only have capacity for 9 people and break down often. So, they asked the VSO for assistance. We were able to help with the financing for a new Mercedes Sprinter bus. This vehicle seats 20, and right now there are 18 seminarians. So now only one vehicle needs to make the trip, saving money on gas. And since it is new, it is certain to make the whole trip and the seminarians are sure to be at their classes on time. The seminary community also uses the new bus to get to events like weekend parish ministry, retreats, special Masses, and social outings.



Philosophy and Theology Seminarians from of Vicentino Nossa Senhora das Graças – Curitiba, Brazil with new Mercedes-Benz Sprinter. Formator Fr. Joélcio Saibot, C.M. (not pictured). April 2020



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