



Vincentian Solidarity Office

October 2015 Bulletin



Expanding the Vincentian Harbor Project in Odessa

Confreres from the Vice-Province of SS. Cyril and Methodius involved in prison ministry in Odessa--a port city in the southern Ukraine--observed that inmates received little preparation to reenter society upon their release. This experience eventually led our confreres to join with other organizations in more systemic efforts to address poverty in the region. Their collaboration with the Daughters of Charity, DePaul International, DePaul Ukraine,



the “Communita in Dialogo” in Italy, and the Vinzi Project in Austria, gave birth to the Vincentian Harbor Project. The project began with a mobile social services center: a refurbished transit bus used to distribute food, clothing, medical care, counseling, and legal assistance to over 700 impoverished residents in Odessa. The Vincentian Harbor Project has since expanded to include three additional service centers.



One of the centers provides rehabilitation and transitional housing for homeless men from Odessa, and is located outside the city in Buldinka. The VSO obtained grant funding to purchase some of the property for this center, and to help renovate its existing structures into a residence for the men, and a small chapel-meeting facility. An especially creative aspect of this center, also financed with the help of the VSO, was the purchase of shipping containers and their



Containers converted into a residence

conversion into a comfortable, second residence for some of the men. The program in Buldinka continues to grow, so a third residence for men is currently under construction with main funding from the Slovenian Mission Center. The VSO is working to co-finance the residence and the installation of its geothermal heating.



CM residence and pastoral center

With contributions from the Communita in Dialogo and private donors, our confreres purchased land in Vizirka, which neighbors Buldinka, to create a rehabilitation and transitional housing center for homeless women. The Sisters of Mary of the Miraculous Medal provided funding to construct a residence for the women. The VSO obtained funding to build a workshop for the women (which they will use to learn handcrafts as vocational training), and a garage for the program vehicle and supplies. With monies from the Slovenian Mission Center and private donors, our confreres also began to construct a four-floor house near Odessa in Fontanka, as their residence and pastoral center from which to administrate the Vincentian Harbor Project. The VSO obtained funding, some of which came from the Archdiocese of Cologne, to help our confreres finish its construction.

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A Boys' Hostel in in Remalli

We previously reported on the community health care program of our South India Province in Remalli, which serves 29 villages in Andhra Pradesh State. The program includes a clinic facility, and focuses on the treatment and prevention of AIDS, TB and Malaria, and the promotion of communal health. The VSO helped the Province finance the clinic and the startup of the program, and to construct a hostel nearby that serves village girls who have lost their parents to disease, or whose parents are too ill to care for them.



The new boys' hostel in Remalli

Recently, the VSO obtained funds from a private foundation, which it partially matched with monies from the Vincentian Solidarity Fund, to finance the construction of a boys' hostel for the program. The hostel has 2 floors and 1,257 square meters of space, including a kitchen, dining room, 2 dormitories, 2 classrooms, 2 warden quarters, a laundry, visitors' quarters, 2 toilet-bath blocks, and a recreation room. The hostel will eventually provide 100 boys with proper care and enable them to attend school.



Some of the first boys to live in the hostel

A New Staff Member at the VSO

María José Pacheco del Río has joined the VSO as a project manager. María José is a native of Mexico

City. She earned an M.A. in Educational Leadership from DePaul University, where she also volunteered as a member of the College of Education Campaign Committee, and helped the university in its efforts to establish a presence in Mexico. María José previously volunteered and worked with our confreres in South Africa, where she was also part of an initial team to open a Pan African high school. María José also has degrees in engineering, in teaching, and in the culinary arts. Prior to coming to Philadelphia, she worked as a professor in a school of engineering.



María José Pacheco del Río

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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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