



Vincentian Solidarity Office

April 2020 Bulletin

Drill Well at Parish Complex, Shishinda, Ethiopia



New tank on right with old one, new PVC pipe for supplying water to school, presbytery, and hostel buildings

the parish. For the last two years, the growing population of Shishinda town has had limited accessible supplies of water. Formerly, the Vincentian parish was supplied water from a local natural spring that is now surrounded by inhabitants, and therefore cut off from the parish. Particularly in the dry season, the Vincentian missionaries, Rev. Abba Admasu Gebre, C.M. (Superior) and Rev. Abba Sisay Sisto, C.M. (Treasurer) would need to drive 8 km through rough roads to the nearest river to retrieve barrels of water by truck in order to supply the parish.

The parish conceived of a plan to provide onsite water by digging a borehole well. The water would be pumped from the well then stored in a 10,000 liter elevated tank, and water from the tank would supply the school and hostel. To finance the project, the

The Vincentian Parish at Shishinda, Ethiopia provides essential spiritual and social services to Catholics and the local population. The parish complex of St. Vincent's houses a presbytery, kindergarten, and girls' student hostel. Several staff live on site as well. Yet, the Vincentian missionaries were faced with the dire challenge of providing a safe, inexpensive, and accessible water supply for use by

Vincentian priests turned to the VSO and the project began in July 2019. At the start, concrete cylinders of one meter in diameter were fabricated on site for use to support the walls of the well. The project manager engaged local laborers to

clear the site and dig an initial test borehole. Guided by a local expert, the initial attempt to dig the borehole failed because of hard black rock near the surface of what needed to be a 12m-13m (40 ft.) excavation. Having moved the site, the team then was able to dig to the desired depth. As they dug the borehole they lowered the concrete wall supports into place. They dug an extra meter below the water level to maximize water collection in the dry season when water level drops. The design of the well also allows for further excavation as needed, that is, unless prevented by strong underground black rock. The well and tank are protected by a fence.

Water from the new well brings life and hope to the parish. With the completion of the well, the Shishinda Catholic community can provide for its water needs in both the rainy and dry season. The Vincentian missionaries are also freed from the labor inten-



Vincentian missionaries and workers taking delivery of new tank

sive task of regular trips to the river to retrieve water for the parish complex. Electric pumps easily fill the tank and gravity moves the water through PVC pipe to both the school and hostel. The beneficiaries are Vincentian missionaries, children and staff of Abba Paulos Kindergarten, residents of St. Vincent Hostel for girls, parishioners, and select neighbors - two hundred in all. The VSO, Vincentian missionaries, and beneficiaries join voices in thanks to God for the success of this project. We also thank our donors who believed enough to support the project.



Concrete cylinders for borehole well

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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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Vincentian Solidarity Office

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School Bus for St. Vincent's English Medium School, South India

English is an increasingly necessary language for gainful employment in modern India. St. Vincent's English Medium School at Singannagudem in Bapulapadu Mandal provides a pathway out of poverty with its English language education to children in this rural impoverished part of southeastern India. Mastery of written and spoken English makes students more competitive in the job market thus leading to a better quality of life. However, the children wishing to attend the school had no safe, efficient way to commute the 2 to 15 kilometers to school. The Vincentian administrators of St. Vincent School addressed the problem by purchasing a school bus. With the help of the VSO, St. Vincent's Medium School was able to buy a 42 passenger bus. One bus on three runs can safely take 150 school age children to their classes and then home

again. The children smile as they board their new bus with classmates, as parents wave goodbye knowing their child will return home safely. This important support to quality education literally puts children on the road to future success.



Pictured with new bus: school principal Fr. Thakidiyel Angel Mathew, C.M. (center) and teachers (left to right): Swapna, Gosala Syamala Kumari, Sr. Tessa Kizhikkattu, Darmana Raja Lakshmi, Sandya Rani, Thommandru Divya Sri, Sr. Aduri Mary Clare, Puli Sirisha, Mallavalli Sudha

Parish Leadership Workshops, Central America

Years of collaboration with lay leaders revealed challenges of human growth and integration of the Vincentian charism. The Vincentian missionaries noticed problems of low self-esteem, waning enthusiasm, interpersonal conflicts and lack of commitment. The local project coordinator and Provincial Superior, P. Rafael Antonio Presidente Arévalo, C.M. and ten trained lay leaders from St. Vincent's Parish, Guatemala City, set an ambitious goal, namely, to deliver workshops in human development and Vincentian Spirituality in several Vincentian Parishes in six of the seven countries of Central America. "This project will present 'Workshops of Personal Growth and Spirituality,' offering the participants tools for awakening harmonious growth, personal and spiritual, and conclude in a commitment [to service], ...based in the spirituality of St. Vincent de Paul by means of a social project at each parish." In a word, the Vincentian charism would serve as the integrating element for committed discipleship and service to the poor as its concrete objective.

The VSO was pleased to offer the province a Micro-Project Grant of \$5,000 for 2019 to deliver phase two of the three phase plan. In phase two, the Province invested in transportation and food allowance for the lay team of trainers and psychologist presenters, as well as materials and food for participants. Three parishes, two in Guatemala and one in Panama, were served. Over one hundred adult leaders attended the weekend sessions. The workshops reinforced communication skills, motivation, gift discernment and conflict resolution. Participants

expressed greater satisfaction with family life and higher levels of unity within the parish community. Vincentian pastors likewise observed greater fidelity to mission among the faithful marked by zeal for evangelization and service.



Phase two of "Parish Leadership Workshops," photo of workshop 39 attendees with presenters, Colegio San Vicente de Paul, Santiago de Veraguas, Republic of Panama, Feb. 3-5, 2019

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