



Vincentian Solidarity Office

May 2021 Bulletin

Walking the Distance With the Vincentian Missionaries of Oceania

Murphy's Law states, "if something can go wrong then it will go wrong." Here's a short list of what did go wrong with this vehicle project: staff changes at the VSO; lost documents sent by post mail; and the big one--the global Coronavirus pandemic. The last obstacle took nine months to overcome for the vehicle purchase to happen. When the VSO began this project, the parish in Nausori Fiji had a working vehicle. Fr. Greg Brett, C.M., Provincial Superior of Oceania, describes the struggle to maintain the 1998 Toyota minibus, "The old vehicle we have is breaking down a lot and the repairs are beyond what we can pay." As the project slowly advanced, the vehicle sputtered along and eventually completely broke down. The Vincentian missionaries then used public transport or walked to the various communities within the large parish territory. As of February 2021, the Vincentian missionaries have a new Toyota Hilux 4x4 to show for all the effort and perseverance.

The St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Nausori is in a town in Fiji, 19 kilometers from the capital of Suva and part of the Province of Oceania. The new vehicle is used by the two priests there to get to more remote areas within the parish for the celebration of weddings and funerals. These are places with unimproved or no roads. And since public transportation **doesn't run on Sundays in Fiji**, parishioners who live a kilometer or two from the Church must walk to Mass. The priests pick up and drop off the elderly and mothers with small children. Because the old truck broke down before a new one could be purchased, both shepherd and flock had to walk. The missionaries, for example, had to walk to reach people for the Sacraments, pastoral care of the sick and meetings at four different churches and two different hospitals. On

weekdays there is some public transportation available in some areas, however the cost adds financial burdens to the parish.

In February 2020, project funds were transferred to the account of the Province of Oceania and held in Australia where banks were opened. The Vincentian missionaries were eager to buy the vehicle. However, soon international borders closed and business in Fiji went on lockdown. With the new unexpected turn of events, the project manager Fr. Vincent Manehoua, C.M. was stuck in the Solomon Islands for months. The Province of Oceania is a multi-country province, so banks were still needed to get the funds to a car dealership that was not always open during this time. The delays tested everyone's patience as the Vincentian missionaries had to scrap the old Toyota mini-bus. Regardless the setback with transportation and delays, the Vincentian missionaries hoped for the best as banks and business began to reopen in the new year.

On January 22, 2021 and after several months of waiting, a new Toyota Hilux 4x4 double cab pickup truck was purchased. Fr. Brett observed, "I will always

be grateful to ... the VSO team for supporting us in this project. WE certainly could not have done this on our own. Thank you, thank you and thank you." You can tell from the photos how happy they were to finally have it. Patience paid off! God's providence prevailed over Murphy's Law.



Fr. Joseva Naqou Tuimavule, C.M. superior of Fiji in the blue Sulu (a kilt-like garment worn by men and women in Fiji), handing over the new truck keys to parish priest of St. Vincent de Paul Parish of Nausori, Fr. Kaituú Eliesa, C.M., Jan. 2021.



Children on first ride in new vehicle.

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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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Major Overhaul to Computer Lab at DePaul Seminary Morogoro, Tanzania

At the beginning of 2021, there were only three outdated computers at DePaul Seminary in Morogoro, Tanzania and 19 seminarians. And they were so old, rarely were all three desktops working at the same time. On top of that, they expect 12 more seminarians next year. Computers are used by the students for assignments, internet research, seminars, workshops and presentations. Technology is essential to seminary formation and learning without access to reliable computers, the seminarians would fall behind in their training. The Region of Tanzania of the South Indian Province therefore requested assistance from the VSO. We were able to help with the funds needed for equipping a modern computer lab. Laptops were chosen over desktops for their energy efficiency and because electricity outages occur frequently here. An expert on technology further helped in finding the best model to suit the

needs of the seminary. Another expert in computer software will help to train the seminarians to use the computers for research.

Other equipment was also purchased including the very basics: tables and chairs. All told, the computer room is outfitted with 14 laptop computers, a printer, an LED projector, seven tables and 28 chairs. Now there are only two students per computer rather than five, so no more excuses for late homework.



Seminarians prepare for instruction on new laptops

Kitchen Accessories Reduce Stress When Planning Celebrations at Seminary in Cameroon

At St. Vincent de Paul major seminary in Yaoundé Cameroon big celebrations usually involve meals for the seminary community and many guests. Celebrations include ordinations, vows, youth internships and mission activities--all require the ability to feed large groups. But to have these meals the seminary usually needs to rent the dinnerware. This reliance on outside sources caused the seminary rector and

workers quite a bit of anxiety. They were always worried if they would have enough of everything for serving the food and setting places for guests. They worried about the cost of the damages--they have to pay for losses due to breakage or theft. Ultimately, it was decided that it would be best if they had their own goods. Not only is it more cost-efficient, but it can also produce revenue for the seminary as they can

now rent out their new plates, silverware, glasses, serving platters and chaffing dishes. Ultimately, planning and hosting events is less stressful because they control their own equipment. Employees like it because it means less work to gather and transport the equipment. More time and attention can be given to preparing the events so important to life in community.



New dinnerware in use at meal following the funeral of Fr. Gabriel Endom, C.M., April 2021



Dinnerware packed in wooden crates for transport

The VSO is grateful to the donors and agencies that make our work possible, including:

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