



Vincentian Solidarity Office

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The Vice-Province of SS. Cyril and Methodius: A Beneficiary of the Patrimony Fund Project



The Vice-Province of SS. Cyril and Methodius faces great challenges in evangelizing the poor. Its pastoral territory includes the Ukraine and Belarus, and extends to Niznij Tagil in the Ural region of Russia, at the edge of Siberia. Thousands of kilometers separate its

confreres, who include a bishop, 23 priests and a brother. Since the establishment of the Vice-Province in 2001, these men have labored to rebuild their pastoral

infrastructure after decades of suppression of the Catholic Church under the former Soviet Union. Prior to the USSR, confreres from Poland and the former Czechoslovakia had ministered to people in the territory of the Vice-Province. Its current membership includes confreres from these regions, as well as from Slovenia and from the Ukraine.



Confreres in Niznij Tagil, Russia

Another challenge that has arisen in the aftermath of the USSR concerns the lack of an effective social welfare safety net, consequent to the recent and rapid transformation from state planned, to market based economies in the region. The confreres of the Vice-Province have responded to the resulting poverty with many social programs. These include outreach to street children, the homeless, and vulnerable immigrants, feeding programs, social centers, and



The mobile social services center

prison ministry. An exemplary social ministry of the Vice-Province is its Vincentian Harbor project in Odessa, in the Ukraine. The project utilizes a refurbished transit bus as a mobile social services center to deliver food, medical care, counseling, and legal assistance to over 700 impoverished people. The Vice-Province's other works include parishes, seminaries, and retreats for Catholic groups, including organizations of the Vincentian Family. The challenges of the Vice-Province, and its promising responses, make it an important beneficiary of the Patrimony Fund Project.

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An Elevator in San José

The Vice-Province of Costa Rica operates the Colegio Seminario, a secondary school located in a barrio of the City of San José. The school was originally established in 1894 as a seminary. Today it offers a high quality, Christian education to 387 boys and girls who are mostly from families of modest means.



The newly installed elevator at the school

The Colegio Seminario needed to install an elevator to comply with a new law advancing equal educational opportunities for persons with disabilities. The law, which the school supports, promotes the integration of students with disabilities into regular classrooms. With financial assistance from the school's Parent's Association, the VSO, and Kindermissionswerk, the Colegio Seminario was able to install an elevator providing full access to its building for students, parents, staff, and alumni with physical disabilities.

Trees in Vohipeno

One of the important works of the Province of Madagascar is the Foyer de Tanjomoha, a social service organization that serves children and adults with disabilities, orphans, vulnerable youth, and the ill in Vohipeno. The organization operates two schools, three vocational training programs, an outpatient and residential medical clinic, and a home for children. None of the organization's clients are able to pay for these services. Consequently, the organization has adopted measures to generate revenue to support its programs. One of its projects responded to the growing demand for wood for construction in the region because of over deforestation. The Foyer de

Tanjomoha began a small and sustainable forestry project, planting and growing trees to sell for lumber.



Tree seedlings of the forestry operation

The Foyer de Tanjomoha hoped to expand its forestry operation and requested the assistance of the VSO. The VSO obtained a grant from the Raskob Foundation, which it matched with monies from the Vincentian Solidarity Fund, to enable the organization to purchase and prepare twenty more hectares of land for the project, including its clearing, construction of access roads, and planting of tree seedlings.

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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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