



Vincentian Solidarity Office

March 2014 Bulletin



The Province of Fortaleza: A Beneficiary of the Patrimony Fund Project



Brazil is the largest nation in South America, with nearly 200 million people, and an economy that ranks seventh in size (by gross domestic product) worldwide. Brazil's abundant natural resources have helped it to grow economically, and reduce its level of poverty to 21% over the last decade. But whether one is wealthy or poor in Brazil, depends on where one lives. Brazil is known as a nation of great inequality: the top 10% of

Brazilians earn 39 times more than the bottom 10%. Poverty in Brazil is heavily concentrated in its northeastern region, where economic inequality is especially salient in the states of Ceará, Pará, and Pernambuco. It is in these states, and also Alagoas,



and you will find the works of the Province of Fortaleza. And from the perspective of the charism of our

Congregation, they could not be better placed!



Confreres of the Fortaleza Province

The 39 priests of the Province of Fortaleza mostly carry out their ministries in 12 parishes. The settings of the parishes are quite varied, and include crowded, crime-ridden city barrios, but also clusters of remote, impoverished villages in the forested Amazon basin region. Parish territories can have as many as 60,000

residents and 70 different communities—some only reachable by boat. Yet, despite their cultural and geographical differences, there are striking commonalities among the parishes served by the Province of Fortaleza. They are all vibrant centers of faith building and human action. Worship, catechesis, and spiritual formation programs abound, but so do social services, advocacy, and solidarity with the most marginalized members of society.



*Fr. Adauto Farias Pereira, C.M.,
at a popular mission*

Our missionaries first came to northeastern Brazil from the Netherlands.

Today most are native Brazilians. The Province of Fortaleza currently has 16 seminarians. In carrying out their works, the members of the Province are ever ready to sweat from their brows and employ the strength of their arms. And while they are rich in charism, they are lacking in financial resources because their works so focus on the very poor. For these reasons the Province is a beneficiary of the Patrimony Fund Project.

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(www.cmglobal.org/patrimony-en)

Child Support Centers in El Alto

Nearly two-thirds of Bolivians live in poverty. Indigenous peoples, and especially their children, are the most vulnerable among them. In response to this situation, our missionaries working in El Alto in northern Bolivia, created the Sayt'asim program to promote the economic development of the Aymara peoples. Sayt'asim, which means "Stand Up," includes a preschool learning and nutrition center, an alternative learning support center for primary school students, and training workshops to help adults start micro-enterprises.

The preschool and primary school support centers serve over 100 children from six different Aymaran communities. The center for the primary school children includes a ten-month training program in weaving, that provides sixth graders with skills for future alternative employment beyond farm work.



Students learning weaving at the Sayt'asim project

Our confreres in Bolivia requested the help of the VSO in obtaining funding for the start-up costs of the two child centers of Sayt'asim. The VSO obtained funding for the centers from The International Foundation and Cooperación Vicenciana para el Desarrollo - Acción Misionera Vicenciana de España (COVIDE-AMVE). The VSO matched these monies, and also donations from parishioners of St. Vincent's Parish in Philadelphia (U.S.A.), with monies from the Vincentian Solidarity Fund, to cover the costs of furnishings, supplies and staff salaries at the centers.

New Rooms in Sulludi

In 1995, our North Indian Province established a mission in Sulludi in Odisha State in India, to serve 11 remote villages. The villages are populated by impoverished Soura tribal people. The Sulludi

mission had grown in the number of people served and pastoral services offered, but its small, original presbytery, which was built for a single missionary, had not! The Province applied to the VSO for a micro-project grant to help cover the costs of enlarging the presbytery.



Workers building the roof on the presbytery addition

The micro-project grant from the VSO covered the larger portion of the costs of constructing a two-room, 38-square meter addition onto the presbytery. Local villagers also contributed their labor to the project.

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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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