

# HOPE



Salvatorian Newsletter Winter 2025

## STARTING POINT

The year 2025 marks a year of Jubilee for Christians around the world. Since the days of the Old Testament, Jubilee Years have been times of rest and reconciliation, prayer and pilgrimage. Since the 14th century, the Catholic Church has invited the faithful around the world to exude these same values as a way of celebrating—with joy—God’s mercy and love.

For this year’s Jubilee, Pope Francis highlighted the theme of Hope, which is so desperately needed in our world today. However, from the moment the Jubilee Year was announced, Pope Francis also made it clear that celebrations of the Jubilee must be joined with acts of mercy and justice.

He reflected, “During the Holy Year, we are called to be tangible signs of hope for those of our brothers and sisters who experience hardships of any kind...”



Since our foundation in 1881, Salvatorians have committed ourselves to the works of mercy Pope Francis is calling everyone to in this Jubilee Year. Whether these works of charity and justice take place in foreign missions or in small ways in our own communities, we remain committed to sharing the loving-kindness of the Divine Savior.

*Bro. Silas, SDS*

## BISHOP OF BUNBURY



*Bishop-designate  
Kolodziej*

Salvatorians are happy to share Pope Francis’ appointment of Fr. Jerzy (George) Kolodziej, SDS, as Bishop-designate of Bunbury (Australia).

Born in Dobra, Poland, Fr. George professed his vows with the Salvatorians in September 1988 and was ordained a priest in May 1994. Fr. George has been the Superior of the Salvatorians in Australia since October 2018.

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference President, Archbishop of Perth Timothy Costelloe, SDB, shares, “Fr. George will bring a wealth of experience in parish ministry, in youth ministry, and in spiritual and pastoral accompaniment to the new mission to the Church in Bunbury to which the Lord has called him. These same gifts will also enrich the life and work of his brother bishops through his involvement with them in the work of the Conference.”

We wish him God’s grace and blessings as he enters into this important work for the Church.

# BUSY MISSIONARY HUB

## News from New Holstein



*Fr. Mike helping alongside a volunteer at the SMWH*



*Fr. Simon in Kenya with villagers and bags of rice from containers*



*Hygiene products sent to Ghana from the iLead Foundation*

As we continue the work that Brother Regis Fust, SDS, and Sr. Dora Zapf, SDS, started in 1963, we also try to help as many people as possible locally.

In 2024, SMWH began packaging

Our Salvatorian Mission Warehouse (SMWH) shipped 20 containers to 15 missions in 11 countries last year, collectively holding close to 830,000 pounds of relief items. Currently, six containers are waiting to ship. In addition, gracious donors helped this ministry purchase 178,750 pounds of rice for distribution in Ghana and 27,500 pounds for distribution in Kenya.

After several years of trials and tribulation, in 2024, we successfully sent a container filled with humanitarian aid, including equipment, food, and bags of rice to Kenya, the homeland of Fr. Simon Muema, SDS. Though Fr. Simon lives and ministers in the USA, he helped SMWH navigate the details and the ultimate shipment to Kenya in July.

crackers and pretzel sticks to be sent to nearly 30 food pantries locally. We also worked with local schools to provide snacks and clothing for students from families struggling to afford these items. Additionally, our outreach to refugee families that need everyday items such as clothing, food, and furniture has increased.

Our newest venture is with the Lions groups from New Holstein, Kiel, and Chilton to initiate a medical locker to loan out medical equipment where the SMWH provides the medical equipment and the space, and the Lions groups work to connect people needing medical equipment.

Strengthening the connection of our Salvatorian priests and brothers with the staff and volunteers at the SMWH, Fr. Mike Neeland, SDS, has been invited to minister at the warehouse. Helping out where he is needed, learning more about the shipments and what goes into these logistics, and bringing his experience related to finding and growing the needed volunteer base have all been a part of his ministry of presence at the mission warehouse.

Deb Stein, Assistant Director at the SMWH reflected, "We aren't sure how long Fr. Mike will be able to help, but we graciously accept his support as long as he is available. He has been learning everything we do here and has helped with some new perspectives on how we could do things."

"It has grown and much has changed since I initially visited during my novitiate year with the Salvatorians more

*continue...Missionary Hub*

# SOFIA

## Asia Mission

As we continue to share news of Salvatorian Office for International Aid (SOFIA Global), a Salvatorian-led project, this issue of Hope focuses on Asia, where SOFIA's work is present in India, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam.

We start with India, home to one of the world's oldest civilizations and one-third of the world's poorest people. With inadequate sanitation, water, and education, India has one of the highest rates of violence and discrimination against women.

Salvatorian projects include the Otto Hopfenmueller Community Hall, a multipurpose community hall that can accommodate up to 500 people. The hall hosts skills-training workshops, seminars, programs for women and youth, health-awareness programs, job-



*T: The Otto Hopfenmueller Community Hall  
M: St. John Vianney School  
B: Divine Savior School*

oriented seminars, awareness of the implications of new government laws and regulations, educational awareness, school dropout support, programs for physically challenged children, etc.

Another project in India is for St. John Vianney School in Nongbah, a very remote village. Specifically, the project here is to increase the capacity of toilets from 2 to 12 to provide hygienic sanitation for school children and teachers, and stem health epidemics in the area.

The third project is for developing teachers' quarters at Divine Savior School in Laitkynsew, another remote village. SOFIA, with the support of various partners, established the only English-medium school in the village. The school offers K-10 education, a boarding section for students coming from villages further away,

*continue...India*

## FULL HOUSE

Despite the winter cold, our USA Province Provincial House was full of friendship and hope this past January. We hosted our annual appreciation event to thank

members, friends, and benefactors who have played an instrumental part in our ministry this past year. Many blessings to all, including those who were unable to make the trip to Hi Mount Boulevard in Milwaukee. Our work is possible because of you, your prayers, and your shared gifts.

*Our celebration of appreciation!*



# PILGRIMS OF HOPE

Traditionally proclaimed by the Universal Church every 25 years, Christmas Eve marked the start of the “Pilgrims of Hope” Jubilee Year, as designated by Pope Francis, with the opening of the Holy Door at St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome. The year is elevated to encourage the faithful to embark on pilgrimages, repent of their sins, forgive the sins of others, and renew a focus on their spiritual lives.

Pope Francis, in his first Jubilee audience, framed this Year of Hope



as a moment of grace and opportunity for a fresh start, noting, “The ‘Pilgrims of Hope’ Jubilee year is a time to come back into right relationship with God and one another. It’s also a time to embrace hope and solidarity for our neighbors and the world.”

The logo established for this Jubilee year signifies humanity, coming from the earth’s four corners. The figures embrace each other, indicating the commonality uniting us all, with the cross at the forefront.

## ... Missionary Hub

than a decade ago,” said Fr. Mike. “The opportunity to share the goodness and kindness of our Savior remains with those who volunteer and those who receive these containers of humanitarian goods.”



Fr. Mike and the volunteers take a break.

## ... India

and a school bus to transport others who cannot be accommodated at the hostel. Teachers’ quarters will attract qualified teachers from the city, effectively boosting the quality of education.



## Please remember the Society of the Divine Savior in your will

A bequest is a wonderful way to support the mission and ministry of our Salvatorian Priests and Brothers, and is a testimony of your care and concern for them. Our legal name is “Society of the Divine Savior, Inc.” and our taxpayer number (EIN) is 39-0806210.

### OUR MISSION

In the spirit of our founder, Blessed Francis Jordan, the Society of the Divine Savior was founded more than 140 years ago and is a Catholic religious community working to share the love and mercy of our Savior, Jesus Christ, through all possible means.

### SALVATORIANS

Society of the Divine Savior  
P.O. BOX 758611  
TOPEKA, KS 66675-8611  
1-800-254-4902  
fathersilas@salvatoriancenter.com  
More at [www.salvatoriancenter.org](http://www.salvatoriancenter.org)

