

**Jalingo Diocese
Taraba State
Nigeria.**

**St. John Bosco Academy
St. Patrick's Parish
Zing.**

**Report to 'the Friends of Jalingo'
in the Greater Ballinasloe Area,
encompassing parishes of the Clonfert,
Elphin & Tuam dioceses.**

**Very Rev. Eugene Batare PP
St. Patrick's Parish
Zing.**

April 2021

Introductory Letter from Bishop Charles Hammawa

Dear Friends of Jalingo,

Greetings to you all from Jalingo, Taraba State.

I am writing these few words on behalf of the entire Catholic Family of the Diocese of Jalingo. I am writing to you with a huge debt of gratitude in my heart and also on behalf of the many Catholic and other families, whose children/wards are just now beginning to receive a Catholic education in the northern part of our diocese, comprising of at least 10 parishes. This has happened due largely to your kind donations in support of our humble effort to establish the St. John Bosco Academy in Zing. I am very much aware that the current global challenges are taking a toll on the life and the resources of people everywhere. This even makes your reaching out to us a heart touching act of sacrifice in solidarity and Christian communion. We will appreciate this forever. Please accept my profound and personal gratitude to each and all for the generous donations made and which have been gratefully received in two installments.

St. John Bosco Academy is the only Catholic Secondary School in northern Taraba State. This project, although still in its infancy has been well received and is deeply appreciated and supported by our people and their priests. It brings back some nostalgic feelings about the glory days of the mission schools, which were unfortunately nationalized after the sad years of the Nigeria civil war (1967-1970). There has been a tremendous sense of good will on the part all to make this project a success, not least because children – boys and girls of the 10 parishes in this part will no doubt receive the best education our country can afford. This we are also willing to share with children of other faiths, whose parents do not object to receiving an education deeply rooted in a Catholic ethos. The civil authorities of both the Zing Local Government Council and the Taraba State Government have enthusiastically given this venture their approval and indeed are cooperating with us in the spirit of a positive Church – State collaboration for the common good. Many of those holding offices in the local and state education offices deeply understand the great contribution the missionaries (majority of them Irish) made in their own lives and educational endeavour and hunger to see the same impact made in the lives their children and wards.

No doubt our frequent visits to their offices have led to many positive encounters and a sharing of experiences, which we have found very beneficial to our course. There has never been a moment our applications for approval for land, building permits, curriculum matters and teacher qualification, were not dealt with promptly and with dispatch. From the outset, it is clear to the government and to

us that we are establishing a faith-based school whose independence is guaranteed by law even if the government will ensure quality control through checks and balances.

Recently, through the diocesan Justice, Development and Peace office/caritas, I have had a borehole sunk in the school ground this will provide portable water both for students and the immediate community (See Appendix iv) and improve sanitary conditions in the school. May God crown our collective and collaborative effort for John Bosco's school with success as the years roll by, I look forward to a day one of you will pay us a visit and see how John Bosco is progressing.

On behalf of all our priests, religious and good people, I repeat my deepest and sincere sentiments of gratitude. As the chief shepherd of the people of God in this jurisdiction, I can only assure you that every penny you have sent to us has been used solely for the purpose it was intended – the advancement of Catholic Education in our diocese. Although we recognize that there is still a lot to be done to ensure that we reach our goals and achieve our big dreams, we can already see that together with efforts of our own, St. John Bosco Academy is on its way to a bright future.

Yours in Christ.

+ Charles

Most Rev Dr. Charles M. Hammawa
Catholic Bishop of Jalingo Diocese

REPORT FROM FR. EUGENE BATARE, PARISH PRIEST OF ST. PATRICK'S, ZING AND SUPERVISOR, ST. JOHN BOSCO CATHOLIC ACADEMY, ZING

An Overview of Recent Developments

St. John Bosco Academy is now in its fourth year of existence. Since opening, the school has grown quite rapidly, indicative of the trust parents have in catholic education. As at the time of writing this report, the total student population stood at two hundred and ten students (210). This comprises of one hundred and ten (110) boys and one hundred girls (100). Of the total number, 206 are Christians, 4 are muslims. Out of the total number of christian students, 83 are non catholics. This mixed religious background of our school is a reflection of Zing and its environs. Moreover, many of our christian students come from religiously mixed extended families.

St John Bosco Catholic Academy, as it was stated in the Bishop's letter, is the only secondary school in the following three local governments of the northern part of the state namely: Lau, Yorro and Zing local government area councils. It is also the only school in this area that provides education to children the catholic way.

Inclusive Education

Our intention remains to help foster a harmonious relationship among young people of all faiths. While we restate our resolve to provide an education that is catholic in character, we look forward to welcoming more students of other faiths in the future. Our 210 students are currently looked after by a total number of fourteen (14) teaching staff and three non-teaching staff. Five (5) members of the teaching staff are female and nine (9) are male. Of the number, 11 are Christians and 3 are adherents of other faiths, including two Muslims – Idris Mohammed and Musa Dahiru. As a matter of principle, we have recruited all our staff purely on merit and the relevance of their competence and not for any other consideration. Moreover, until recently, the chairman of our parents/teachers association was Abubakar Bello, a Muslim faithful. All our staff are paid from the token amount every student pays as tuition.

A New Appointment

A priest, Rev. Fr. Martin Monye, has just been appointed to act as administrator and liason with the diocesan education office and also Chaplain / Spiritual Director. This means that Fr. Eugene's direct involvement with running of the school will come to an end due to the increase in the workload in the parish.

Future reports will be prepared by Fr. Monye when he settles down on the job. As well as being a priest, Fr. Monye is also a trained teacher. However, the day to day running of the academic programmes of the school is the duty of the principal. The principal, Mrs. Deborah Militus holds a Bachelors degree of Arts in Education BA. Ed with a specialization in English and Political Science. She will work closely with Fr. Monye to continue to push for more growth and development through a prudent management and application of whatever is left from the very little tuition paid by students after the payment of the salaries of staff.

Local Involvement and Support

The local community is happy with the effort of the Diocese in supporting the school through your kind donations, few individuals have on their own gave their support too. At the start of the idea of this school, Sir Philip Hassan (KSM) of blessed memory donated a plot of land to the Diocese to be used for the school. Another kind parishioner, Sir. Joseph J. Jenamba (KSJ) of blessed memory also donated a plot of land. Parishes within the deanery have also come in from time to time to support work in the school.

More Help From Ireland

An Irish couple, Mr. and Mrs. Martin and Laura Burke, have also shown interest in the school and made a generous donation of €20,000.00. With this donation, another classroom block of four classes with two offices has been completed and put to use. We received this assistance through the advocacy of Fr. Declan Brennan OSA., who was once a missionary in this Diocese. But it appears this was a once-off donation. A detailed report has already been sent to Ireland on how the donation was applied.

Academic Programmes

St. John Bosco offers secondary level education which in Nigeria covers a period of six (6) years, three (3) years of junior secondary school education and three (3) years of senior secondary school education. In the junior section, in keeping with the curriculum approved by the government department of education, students are taught basic introduction to the sciences and the arts. This level terminates with the award of a certificate in junior secondary school education. In principle, students who complete this level have basic literacy but also acquire some skills to live productive lives. In the three years of senior secondary school, students with the assistance and parents and teachers opt to focus on either the arts or the sciences. This prepares them for the disciplines and courses they might choose

when they qualify for and are given places in the university. Apart from implementing the prescribed curriculum, as a Catholic school, we teach in all classes basic Christian morality and also catholic doctrine. Students are also prepared for the reception of the sacraments of First Holy Communion and Confirmation. In addition, the chaplain celebrates the holy Eucharist for all students once a week.

Child Safeguarding

Following Catholic Bishop's Conference of Nigeria and also drawing from the experiences of the Church in other countries and continents, child protection is cardinal requirement in all schools of our diocese, St. John Bosco included. Workshops have been conducted for all academic and non-academic staff at the end of which everyone has signed to uphold high moral standards, decency and respect in working with children and young people. Everyone is aware of the grave consequences of any failure in this regard. So far, no case has come to the attention of the school authority. We however, are maintaining vigilance.

Financial Accounts

We present below a summary of how your most recent donation was judiciously used. However, inflationary trends in Nigeria, following an economic recession triggered by the covid-19 pandemic, a local youth uprising (EndSars) led to an astronomical increase in the costs of building materials. We have an increase of way beyond two hundred percent in the costs of building materials. That hampered our efforts from achieving our earlier plans and projections.

SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS (2020-2021)

(sums in Nigerian Niara (currency))

INCOME

Balance brought forward	227,282.00
Second Donation	3,748,745.00
Total Income	3,976,027.00

EXPENDITURE

a) Roofing	
Wood and nails	794,000.00
Roofing sheets	1,370,000.00
Accessories	110,000.00
Transport	85,000.00

Labour	250,000.00
b) Noggin, Ceiling, Piping, Doors and Windows	
Wood	250,000.00
Ceiling	120,000.00
Batting	95,000.00
Nails	35,000.00
Pipes	24,000.00
Cement	4,000.00
Doors	198,000.00
Windows	380,000.00
Transport	15,000.00
Labour	160,000.00
Total Expenditure	3,890,000.00
Balance	86,027.00

With additional funds, we will complete the plastering, flooring and painting work and hopefully, the installation of furniture in the classrooms. All the construction work done so far has been under the supervision of Chrisanctus Sunu, an experienced and highly reliable worker. Although he is not a trained engineer, he has accumulated experience working with DTV construction company which has done many jobs across the country. We find his charges more affordable despite the very high quality of the work being done.

Plans and Prospects

In the short term, we need to complete the classroom block we and the friends of Jalingo Diocese have been building. This will enable us provide decent classroom accomodation for all the classes. In the long term, we need to provide at least two more blocks of classrooms and recruit more competent staff to accommodate the ever-growing number of intake.

In the not so distant future, we hope to register with West African Examinations' Council (WAEC) and National Examinations' Council of Nigeria (NECO) to enable our students take their final examinations for graduation and eventual transition into university level education. For this to happen, the civil authorities have counseled us to provide a library, science laboratories, an administrative block and modern toilet facilities. In fact, with our meagre income, we have begun purchasing some minor laboratory equipment preparatory to the construction of the laboratories.

Although our initial plan was to run a day school with all the students coming from home, we are open to change of plan. Already, in appreciation of the work we are doing, the Catholic Women Organization (an association of women in the church) of our diocese has offered to raise money for the building of hostels especially for girls. We are still discussing this, a final decision will be reached in the near future and perhaps the Catholic Men Organization might be approached to consider doing same for the boys.

Please find attached photographs of the two new buildings and also of some sights and sounds of our beloved St. John Bosco Academy. We are favourably disposed to supply more information that you might require and offer further explanation on any aspect of this report that might not be clear to you.

Fr. Eugene Batare
Parish priest St Patricks Zing,
and Supervisor St. Johnbosco Catholic Academy, Zing
(eugenebatare@gmail.com)

Photographs of St. John Bosco Academy Buildings & School Community



The two blocks of classroom under construction in 2016/ 2017. At the right hand side is the first block which 'Friends of Jalingo' support has help to roof.



At the left hand side, is the block which Friends of Jalingo support has helped to roof while the other is the one completed through the generous support of Mr & Mrs Martin and Laura Burke..



Very Rev. FR. Eugene Batare presenting gifts to the students who have performed well at the end of term.



A section of the students during St. John Bosco Academy's End-of- Year Mass celebration December, the 18th 2020.



Left: Fr. Eugene & Fr. Martin Monye (New Administrator) celebrating Mass with the teaching staff.



Right Clergy and Religious of the Jalingo Diocese who came to St. John Bosco Academy for the end-of-year Mass on Dec. 18th 2020.



Some of the 200+ students making their way to their classrooms.



Blessing the teaching staff at the end of the Mass to mark the end of the year 2020.

Bishop Charles Hammawa blessing the borehole drilled as to provide water for sanitation, toileting and for drinking purposes to St. John Bosco Academy school community. This project was partially funded with the support of Bishop Charles, Justice and Peace/ Caritas.