



Keeping in touch

Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

OVERSEAS AID INCORPORATED

November 2015

A FIJIAN MANEABA

A touch of kindness by Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Overseas Aid Fund enabled this farming community on Rabi Island to build a traditional styled *Maneaba* (resting house in the local language) from the ground up. The opening saw the whole community come together, old and young alike with smiles of contentment and a renewed energy in community activities which is part and parcel of Pacific life as a migrant community in Fiji. From the far reaches of their homeland on *Banaba* or Ocean

Island in the Republic of Kiribati, the Banabans have endured in their new homeland in Fiji since relocating in three waves of migration since December 15th 1945. You will always find gratitude in the big smiles and it is enforced with the words *Kam Bati N Raba* (Thank you very much!!)

Sr. Teitirua Tangata fdnsc
Our Lady of the Sacred Heart convent
Rabi Island
Republic of Fiji



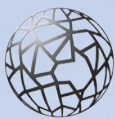
Locals in front of the Maneaba



Under the roof of the Maneaba



Family Group visiting the Maneaba



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Kiribati – Choose Life Project

The low-lying South Pacific island nation of Kiribati has an average height of 2 metres above sea level, making it one of the countries most vulnerable to rising waters and other climate change effects.

The impact of climate change is already taking its toll on over 105,000 people living on

the low-lying atolls of Kiribati. These lands are threatened by rising sea levels resulting in flooding becoming more common, seawater contaminating fresh water wells and sea water seeping into some garden areas and destroying crops.

Voices from Kiribati

Sharing by Sr Bina Kooka olsh

On the 3rd of March 2015, I went to see the king waves near the hospital at Betio. I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw the big waves went through the seawall and it broke off and splashed onto the land. I ran away and stood on a big stone and held the tree because I didn't want to fall down, it was rough and strong.

After that, I walked behind the maternity ward to the centre where the waves went through right inside the hospital. The water was everywhere under the patients beds. I saw again another big wave. I ran quickly to the back of the maternity ward and hid myself. I couldn't reach the other side as the water splashed onto the land and things from people's houses were floating all over. It was scary – people along the coast screamed and were shocked. They busied themselves trying to gather their scattered belongings that were floating away. People wondered and talked, saying; "Is this the



end of us? We are not safe anymore. Does anybody think about our problem at this time?"

This experience and many others raised a big question in us. What is happening that our beautiful island is not safe anymore? The climate change has affected our lands and is destroying it. It is time to wake up and educate the young ones especially our young Sisters to be a strong voice for our Kiribati people. To tell other countries that what they are doing to make life easier with fossil fuel use, could result in our country disappearing.



Voices from Kiribati — Sharing by Sr Maria Tarita Olsh

'The most terrible experience I have had in my life was when a huge wave bashed the hospital in Betio due to the rising tide. Betio is a small island which is part of Tarawa in the Republic of Kiribati.'

Early this year I went to visit the hospital in Betio to see my Sisters who had been admitted three days before.

While we were chatting we heard a frightening sound like a loud whistle blowing through the building. The cement brick walls began to shake and soon the waters flooded in. We were soon soaking wet, and I was shocked to see my sisters lying on the floor with other patients as if paralysed by fright. The patients were screaming as the power went out. We were scared and the nurses tried to help us by moving the patients to other areas and some men came with a

truck to take them to the sport complex where there is a big building.

I felt sad because of the damage. We have only one hospital, three primary schools and a small market which would be affected as the hospital was. The people have homes which are made of local materials and these would easily be affected too.

The people in Kiribati rely on well water which soon became salty. The leaves from all the trees turned brown and the breadfruit which is part of our staple diet, dropped to the ground. It took one month before the patients could be re-admitted to the hospital. The sea walls are still being replaced.

Kiribati needs your help. Please help our country from the rising sea level which may cause our land to disappear within 50 years. Please help our women to gain an education to be the voice of the Kiribati people.'

Sr Kaitaake

'The land for us in Kiribati is very significant. Every person owns and uses land. Many people work on the land to make a living and for Kiribati people this way of life is at the core of our culture. Even the people living in the cities have a lifestyle that revolves around the land as our livelihood is dependent on the land and the sea.'

Climate change is having a grave impact on the people of Kiribati, taro is one of our staple foods but there is a problem growing it because of salty water in our gardens and the coconut tree cannot grow in this salty land. Fish in the sea have to move to find another place for their shelter. They are all affected by climate change and rising sea levels.'



Dead palm trees



OLSH Sisters stand in solidarity with the people of Kiribati and speak out about the reality of climate change.

OLSH Overseas Aid is committed to providing education, training and formation to the women of Kiribati so that they may be empowered to take appropriate action and enabled to face the future with a realistic confidence. To this end, the 'Empowering Women Kiribati Choose Life' project has been initiated with our sisters in Kiribati in collaboration with the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Australian Province. Thank you to all our donors who continue to support the people of Kiribati.

Sr Philippa Murphy Olsh

Water Projects in South Sudan improve living conditions for the poorest of the poor.



This is why the water points are so important.



Water point tank Stand.



Christmas Cards

We still have plenty of our beautiful OLSH Overseas Aid Christmas Cards. They are \$6 for a package of 6 cards, with \$1 postage per package. Please contact the office on 02 9663 3599 if you wish to purchase, or download a donation form and specify that you want cards.

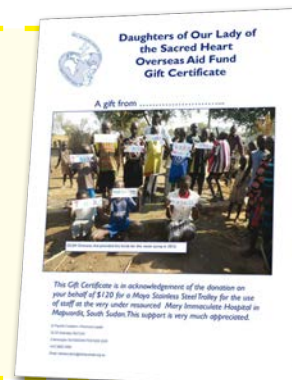


GIFT CERTIFICATES

Gift Certificates are available for those who wish to use their donation as a gift for others.

Use a form printable from the website or, alternatively, contact OLSH Overseas Aid on 02 9663 3599.

Gift Certificates can be for any amount and any region.



Would you like to make a bequest in your will to OLSH Overseas Aid?

Regularly we receive applications that far exceed the money we have available, and a bequest is a chance for you to do great things. Although you will not be here personally you will still be able to make a real difference.

If you would like to include the work of our Mission in your will, we will gladly advise your solicitor of the specific terms of the bequest. Alternately, Michael O'Dea AM of Carroll and O'Dea Lawyers, would be happy to advise you at no cost. He may be contacted directly at 02 9291 7104.

Or would you like to request mourners at your loved one's funeral to donate to OLSH Overseas Aid in lieu of flowers? Both these things can make a significant difference to the way we can help the people in need.