

July - September 2021 Appeal

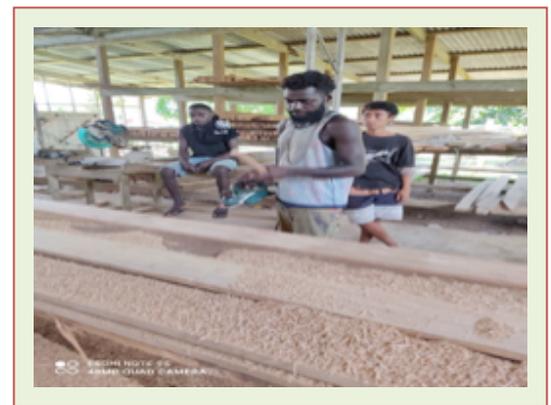
ST VERONICA WELFARE COMMITTEE, P.O. BOX 5098, WEST END, 4101

APPEAL FOR FUNDS TO ASSIST THE MARIST BROTHERS CONSTRUCT AN UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL AT MABIRI, WAKUANI LOCAL LEVEL GOVERNMENT AREA, CENTRAL BOUGAINVILLE – ONLY THE FIFTH SUCH SCHOOL IN ENTIRE BOUGAINVILLE.

After World War II Bougainville, the largest island in the Solomon Islands archipelago, merged with the Australian administered Territory of Papua and, in 1975, with Papua New Guinea when it gained independence. In 1988 conflicting interests associated with the Bougainville Panguna Mine, led to the ten year 'Bougainville Civil War' with tragic loss of life, human rights violations, destruction of homes and villages, and a 'crisis generation' of young men and women, who either fought as children in the war or were 'too young' to fight but grew up in the period. In 1999, the Marist Brothers established St Joseph's College in the village of Mabiri, Wakuani, purposely developed to educate ex-combatants and other young men of the crisis generation. St Joseph's has evolved to offer co-educational opportunities for 636 children and young people. Currently, classes range from kindergarten to lower secondary plus vocational training. Students come to St Joseph's from across Central Bougainville; many walk one to two hours every morning and afternoon to attend due to the lack of alternative schools. In Bougainville 39.4% of the population is below the age of 15. Despite this demographic, only 11 lower secondary schools and 4 upper secondary schools exist at the present time, with only about 500 upper secondary school positions available for cohort estimated to be several thousands. However, a functioning education system is critical in Bougainville, especially as the region is seeking independence from Papua New Guinea. (A referendum in late 2019 resulted in a 98.31% vote for independence.) This appeal seeks funds to contribute to the construction of classrooms, dormitories, ablution blocks and staff housing to enable St Joseph's College to offer upper secondary school education. Initially, classes will cater for 40 boys and subsequently plan to offer similar opportunities for girls. The project, anticipated to cost approximately Au \$310,409, will be overseen by the Marist Brothers in Mabiri.



Above and Right – Current classes at St Joseph's
Left - Site of St Joseph's College, Mabiri Village



To: St Veronica Welfare Committee – APPEAL FOR FUNDS TO ASSIST THE CONSTRUCTION OF A SECONDARY COLLEGE AT MABIRI VILLAGE, BOUGAINVILLE

NAME:

ADDRESS:

Amount: