



Misioneros de la
Preciosa Sangre

Parish House Project

Building of a Parish House for the Missionaries of the Precious Blood in Safim (Guinea - Bissau).

Introduction

Throughout its existence, the human being has the need to accommodate a decent place to rest and meet after the fatigue of everyday activities. One of the rights intrinsic to man, which the United Nations has claimed in recent years, is the right to adequate housing. However, this right has been alienated to the point of becoming a dream for the Missionaries of the Precious Blood of the District of **Guinea - Bissau**, especially those who live in the parish residence of **the Parish of San Antonio of Safim** since February 28, 2011.

After the departure of the Franciscan Fathers of the Parish of Safim, the Bishop of the Diocese of Bissau, Fr. José Camnate na Bissing, asked the Missionaries of the Precious Blood to **assume the responsibility of that parish**. At that time, these missionaries lived in the house of formation built in Bissaquel and where they still live today.

Every day they went from Bissaquel to Safim for pastoral work and visits to the villages that are part of the Safim Parish. After many years of carrying out this pastoral itinerary (Bissaquel-Safim) every day, things changed because the number of Christians grew and the pastoral presence needed to take another orientation, that of residing in Safim.

With this, the people of this parish requested the presence of these missionary priests because they trusted them, trusting that with their presence they could help in the resolution of their needs and problems, whether of a social or pastoral nature.

Due to the needs of the population of Safim, the Missionaries of the Precious Blood decided to stay there, **even without conditions worthy of habitability** to maintain their stay. The house was full of bats, without light, without water..., that is, without the minimum conditions to live.

Every day they needed containers with 25 liters to catch the water in the house of the nuns who live 1 km from the Parish. After a long time, the population of Safim requested help to clean the well of the water, for the local population, since the well was abandoned for many years due to lack of resources and maintenance of a public cistern. In addition, they had to tackle another work, the reconstruction of a school that was underway between the previous 3 or 4 years.

The house of the Missionaries - the parish residence became a place for young people, who came here **to study, play, ask for help**. Young people spend there every day, during the day, afternoon and evening, a couple of times.

Justification

Like any people or human society, the Missionaries are also the people, that is, the human beings who have discovered the face of the living God. They gave up everything for the desire to serve through their neighbour.

However, it is clear that the missionaries residing in the parish house in Safim are deprived of many things, especially the privacy spaces (**prayer chapel - liturgy of the hours, the living room, leisure, dining room, kitchen, living room of meetings, meeting place with people, space for young people...**). In addition, the current exterior and home environment do not have favorable conditions for the exercise of missionary activities with dignity.

Two missionaries who live there, "live in an unhuman condition"; the house where they live is **a pavilion with two bedrooms and bathroom**, the door has direct access to the street, so it gives the feeling that one is all day on the street. The other rooms are adapted as classrooms, because there is not enough space for all the students.

The current residence is in the middle of two roads that connect the capital Bissau and the North of Guinea and the neighboring country Senegal, as well as the South and East of Guinea-Bissau, with the neighboring country Guinea Conakri. There is no tranquility, **it is a constant noise**, not to mention the young people who come to study, because the living room (which could be used by the missionaries) was transformed into a classroom, and is next to the missionaries' room. Therefore, the missionaries are forced to be out of their rooms all day.

The worst time is **the rainy season**, due to the lack of space to be at home, either in the dining room - kitchen or bedroom. When it rains the terrace is completely wet and there is no place to sit. If there is wind, water enters the door and the room is flooded.

Despite these difficulties, the Missionaries of the Precious Blood are happy to be in Safim, to give their lives for these people, with the prospect of being able to serve the people of God according to the spirit of St. Gaspar, to be next to them. These people suffer without cause because of the bad government of the country.

However, we appeal to the people of good will who can **support the Missionaries**, with the aim of completing the work of the parish house, which is next to the new church that began to be built by Italian volunteers.

The new parish house will be the future residence of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood who live in Safim, as well as the volunteer parishioners. Today it has only the structure, four walls, because it is a house attached to the parish. That means that **everything is missing**: fill the roof (it only has the beams) and the floor, divide the space into rooms, place the windows, the doors, fix the bathroom...

The **needs** of the Parish House are the following:

- To build the structure (now it only has four walls).
- To build the cover and ceiling (it only has the beams).
- To pave the floor
- To build the bedrooms
- To build a bathroom
- To place the doors, the windows...
- Infrastructures and supplies: electric power, potable water...

When the Italian volunteers offered his service to build a new church, the missionaries asked them to annex a parish house from behind. The volunteers (for whom we thank God for their offer) accepted but made it clear that the parish residence did not depend on them. So all they could do was help put the four walls, the rest would depend on the Congregation and Diocese. The missionaries were aware of the **difficulties that exist economically in the Diocese of Bissau**, to which the parish of Safim belongs.

Knowing also that only with their strength they were not going to be able to finish the work, they decided to knock on the doors of the Foundation, the faithful of good will of the parishes of Portugal and Spain to ask for help.

In conclusion, made the structure, **almost everything to do** in this new house.