

**Update on the situation in Vanuatu**  
**March 17, 2015**  
**from the Fundación Corazonistas website**

**Spanish religious on the Island of Tanna (Vanuatu)**

Antonio López García-Nieto is a Brother of the Sacred Heart. He is 55 years old. Since 2001, he has been working as a missionary in the mission of the Technical School of Lowanatom. The centre is on the western part of the island of Tanna, one of the many islands in the Republic of Vanuatu. At this time, we do not have any information on his situation or that of the mission. It is impossible to establish contact. We are trying to get information from the embassies who have been informed. However, we have news from the other community of the Brothers who reside in Montmartre, Port-Vila. A Canadian brother (René Gallant) was wounded and hopefully will be transferred to New Caledonia as soon as possible.

The damages suffered at Montmartre are extensive; The roofs have practically all been ripped off. The students run the risk of not resuming their classes for quite a while. The Lowanatom Technical School of Lowanatom exists since 1992; it was created in order to contribute to the formation and education of adolescents (boys and girls) who abandoned their studies and who are without work in their tribes. We offer them the possibility of receiving a technical formation so as to facilitate their integration in the work force or to pursue their studies. Presently, 93 boys and 93 girls attend the school, ages ranging from 11 to 17. Most of them board at the center directed by four Brothers of the Sacred Heart who reside in this mission.

The « Corazonistas » Foundation from Spain have been collaborating with the Technical School of Lowanatom since 2005 through a program of scholarships. Moreover, the Foundation has assured the financing of a series of projects, namely improvement and expansion of the installations. Tanna is an island that has already suffered natural catastrophes in the past but not of this magnitude.

Signed: Brother Eusebio Calvo (Provincial superior of the community province of Spain)



General view of the Technical School of Lowanatom before PAM



Brother Antonio López with a few students of the school



Brother Antonio in a classroom



Interior of a new laboratory (before the cyclone)

### **News from Vanuatu after the passage of the cyclone (PAM)**

The Brothers of the Sacred Heart of Montmartre are well and safe even if the schools have been damaged extensively. Brother René Gallant, a Canadian was wounded and will need medical attention.

Communications have been practically impossible, including through internet with the Island of Tanna where the Brothers of the Sacred Heart have a mission at Lowanatom. As yet, there is not news from Brother Antonio López

The Superior provincial, Brother Eliko Selui wrote : « Greetings to each and everyone, to the Brothers and members of the family of Brother Antonio López on the Island of Tanna, in Lowanatom, Vanuatu. Up to the present, there are not communications with the overall archipelago. I was able to

communicate briefly with the Brothers of Port-Vila on the island of Efate, Vanuatu. They also do not have news from the Brothers in Lowanatom (Island of Tanna). I requested that Brother Vincent Bae, in Port-Vila, fly to Tanna as soon as possible and whenever the situation will allow him to do so. He will thus be able to inform us on the situation of the Brothers in Lowanatom. For my part, I will fly there on Friday, March 20 from Vanuatu. Vincent will be able to update me on the situation in Lowanatom and on Brother Antonio López. With Vincent and the Brothers from Vila, we will look into the situation and inform you as soon as possible as to the follow-up.

This is all I can tell you for now.

Trust and union in prayer with our confreres and the people of Vanuatu who are experiencing this desolation and who have lost almost all hope for the future».

Brother Eliko Selui, S.C.

Brother Anicet Paulin wrote :

« The DCC (Direction of the catholic colleges) received news from Geoffroy, the new volunteer in Lowanatom (Island of Tanna). He was able to communicate with his mother by phone. He is well and says that everyone in his surroundings also seem to be well. What remains are damages which are colossal ».

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We join with Pope Francis who said after the weekly Sunday Angelus : “I assure my proximity to the population of Vanuatu in the Pacific Ocean affected by the powerful cyclone. I pray for the deceased, the wounded and the homeless. I thank all those who were quick to respond in bringing their help.

### **Pictures of Montmartre – Port-Vila**





Salle de classe



Chez les freres



L'entrée de l'électricité



Chez les Freres



La salle Marius



L'atelier de menuiserie