



DOMANDE ALL'ARCIVESCOVO DI COLOMBO - III

Initiatives of the Sri Lankan Church II

The third stage is the most crucial. It is the rebuilding of houses and schools that have been destroyed, the supply of fishing gear and boats to fishermen, and other resources of self-employment to those who lost all means of sustenance.

The Archdiocese has appointed an Action Committee of nine priests, three representing each of the three regions of the Archdiocese, to handle the whole operation. They will handle the relief operation with the Director of "Seth Sarana" the social action arm (Caritas) of the Archdiocese. The Committee will be responsible for the whole operation under the Archbishop. Two auditors have been appointed to monitor the finances.

The Archbishop has also inaugurated a relief fund under the designation "Archbishop's Tidal Wave Relief Fund" to help the tsunami affected. He has already channelled token aid from this fund to the other three affected dioceses (Galle, Trincomalee-Batticaloa and Jaffna) and will be doing more in the future.

The Archdiocese also organized teams of Catholic youth from the non-affected parishes to provide voluntary service in the affected areas. These young men and women helped to clear the homes and gardens of the debris etc thus making them habitable.

The areas worst affected in the north are Point Pedro, Mullativu and Palai. The Bishop of Jaffna Thomas Savundranayagam is operating similarly with his priests and HUDEC (Caritas). The Bishop is very keen to supply boats and fishing gear to the affected people and considers this a priority. At the moment they have been supplied temporary housing with tents. A large number of people are still without houses and are living in the camps.

The problem for the Church here is the construction of houses. Most of these people being fishermen live on the beach. It is now a problem to locate them along the coast within a reasonable distance from the sea. The lack of land within reasonable distance (200 metres) is causing problems for resettlement. However, the Church is to undertake housing programs and the supply of boats and fishing gear.

Even though the political situation there is making the problem more complex the Church is coordinating well with the LTTE and the Government agencies. And they are also engaged in the planning for the future with these agencies.

The Bishop of Trincomalee-Batticaloa Kingsley Swampillai is having a long coastal stretch to cover and is handling the area worst affected. The priests are doing a remarkable task within the possibilities they have. As mentioned earlier transport is one of their biggest problems and they need to reach out to some areas as yet. Here too HUDEC is functioning with the diocesan authority and they are looking after the regular supplies of food and clothing for the people in the camps. The supply of shelter is being attended to, but this is slow due to the difficulties in reaching out to some of the areas without proper road access.

(- segue)

800.086808

E' il numero verde dell'unità di crisi al quale devono rivolgersi i parenti di coloro che inizialmente erano stati segnalati fra i dispersi e che invece successivamente hanno dato notizie certe di sé.

286.000 MORTI

Sono già state censite 286.000 vittime, tra le quali 54 italiani. I nostri connazionali ancora irripetibili ammontano a 53. La gestione della lista dei dispersi è di competenza del Viminale.

PARTECIPATE ALLA SOTTOSCRIZIONE

A FAVORE DELLE VITTIME
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