



DOMANDE ALL'ARCIVESCOVO DI COLOMBO - VI

Children

A large number of children have lost their lives. There are also many orphaned. But the number is not as great as said to be. There have been a few abuses as is often the case in such circumstances. But the government has taken stringent measures to check these. There are not many children for the orphanages as was expected because the government program for these children is to bring them up within the extended families under strict supervision. Children who have lost both parents are said to be few.

Several voluntary organisations have offered to take in orphans. The Catholic Church has offered too, but the government has not responded as yet.

Statue of Matara

The statue of Our Lady of Matara is a highly venerated miraculous statue. It adorns the church in Matara situated just by the sea. The first tidal wave about four feet high lashed during the distribution of communion. This carried away the statue into the sea. It was seen dropping out of the glass case in which it was kept as if the Lady walked out and not dropped out. Then the statue floated out into the sea. The choristers in the choir loft have seen this and do testify.

The first tide then receded far back into the sea and the people shouted, "Our mother of Matara is gone." The Administrator of the shrine Fr. Charles Hewawasam having survived the first wave then came and ran into the sea with some people to search for the statue. Around fifteen minutes later the second tidal wave was seen approaching and they had to run back to save their lives. The statue was then considered lost.

The retired Bishop of Galle Elmo Noel Perera informed the Archbishop of Colombo of the loss. The Archbishop is then reported to have replied "Don't worry bishop, the statue will come back. This Lady is quite used to the sea and will swim back." Three days later a non-Catholic gentleman discovered the statue in a banana grove at the back of his garden. He informed the Administrator of the find and the Madonna was brought back respectfully to the church.

Relations between the Catholics and others of other faiths

The relationship between the Catholic community and members of other faiths have been gradually building up and become very cordial until the arrival of Christian Fundamentalist groups in Sri Lanka around a decade ago. Their presence began creating discord and disunity. Even the ecumenical movement, which progressed very laudably, got vitiated with this phenomenon.

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 irreperibili 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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