

# TWINNAGE COMMITTEE

## NEWSLETTER No 122

May 2008



### **DISASTER FUND - Burma and China Appeal:**

Council General have requested support for the Society in Burma and China following the recent well publicised disasters.

In Burma we have 240 active conferences and around 2500 members. The Society in China is more problematic but support can be channelled through Hong Kong.

The appeal from CGI is as follows:

### **NARGIS STORM IN BURMA - EARTHQUAKE IN CHINA HELP US HELP THEM!**

As you know, Nargis cyclone has violently hit Burma some days ago. Provisional tolls are tremendous: 30,000 to 110,000 deaths, 230,000 missing and 1.5 million homeless.

A few days after, a terrible earthquake hit Sichuan Province in China, killing 30,000, with 200,000 missing and and 4.5 million homeless.

As always and everywhere in this situation, needs are huge and very urgent: food, water, medicines, clothes, etc. On a longer term basis, there will be needs of reconstruction, and to try to help affected people get back to normal life as soon as possible.

The political situation in Burma makes it difficult for international help to reach the victims from outside the country: the Society of St Vincent de Paul is present in Burma!

In China, even though SSVP is not present in the region, it is able to bring help through our Central Council of Hong Kong which has contacts with Caritas and the Church.

We have to use this strength. but without money, the Vincentians can't do anything!

**We officially ask the Vincentians of the world to get mobilized!**

Please ensure, as far as you can, that our conferences and councils send donation through the usual Twinnage channels and not to Paris.

The International Relations Committee have carried out a review of the funding required to support on going work during 2008/9.

**TSUNAMI ORPHANS:** The fifth annual payment to support the Tsunami Orphans appeal is due to be sent later this year. With some standing orders getting lost with time and some annual payments being forgotten we do look like having to find money to meet a shortfall and would ask all Twinnage Reps' to politely remind any donors who pledged annual payments but have not made them.

Should donors continue to make standing order payments after the fifth year these will be sent to India to distribute as they best see fit.

**STUDENT SPONSORSHIPS:** With our other appeals the funds coming into the Indian student sponsorship schemes have fallen a little and this has coincided with an increase in the rupee rate of grants being given.

We supported over 1100 students last year but to maintain this figure we will need to promote this scheme more actively. New leaflets were available at the Reps' meeting and further supplies are available on request.

**SUDAN MEETINGS:** Please remember the three planned meetings with Kamal Tadros:

Sunday June 1<sup>st</sup> 2.30pm -  
Church of the Immaculate Conception, Farm St, London W1K 3AH  
(please note that the hall is more easily accessible through 114 Mount St)

Thursday June 5<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm –  
St Vincents's Parish Centre (Westleigh), Groby Rd, Altrincham

Sunday June 8<sup>th</sup> 2.30 pm –  
St Winifrede's Church, 54 St Paul's Avenue, Bradford BD6 1 ST

Kamal will also be speaking at masses on the weekend of June 7<sup>th</sup> / 8<sup>th</sup> at the Church of Our Lady Star of the Sea, Llandudno

**INDIAN TWINNAGE:** We have now obtained our 1500<sup>th</sup> Indian twin! At the Coventry meeting I was asked if we should be switching our support from India to Sudan. My answer is an emphatic NO. The work being done at conference level in India is magnificent and really needs our support, particularly in rural areas. There are more people living below the UN poverty line in India than in the whole of Africa, and the re-twinning scheme is ensuring our support is targeted where it is most needed.