

# TWINNAGE COMMITTEE

## NEWSLETTER No 129

February 2011



**Disaster Fund – Haiti:** I am pleased to be able to advise you that we have now received the go ahead to send support through Council General in Paris for Haiti – they write *“we are working with the Vincentian Family in Haiti on a number of projects and also in collaboration with the Society in USA who have two workers there. However, progress is very slow and often frustrating. Money is needed and will be used to help with the reconstruction but at a slow pace. We are helping out with the Cholera Relief -- money was channelled in that direction when the situation became quite serious.”* In response to this we have sent all the funds received for Haiti topped up with general donations to the Disaster Fund, £50,000 in total. Please pass our grateful thanks to all who supported the obvious needs and were so generous in their donations.

**Pakistan:** I am equally pleased to be able to tell you that the situation with the Society in Pakistan has now stabilised, the members themselves were naturally badly affected by the flooding. Again rounding up donations made specifically for Pakistan relief we have sent £25,000 which had also gone through Council General. Bro George Anthony, National President, writes: *“We really appreciate your concern for the flood victims in Pakistan and your help of 25,000GBP for them. The rehabilitation work has started in the flood affected areas and a lot of international agencies are involved. The Vincentians and the Church in Pakistan too would like to get involved in this work and the Archbishop of Karachi has been informed of your proposed help towards rehabilitation work. Now that the help is available from you we would start working on the project of rehabilitation along with the Archbishop, who has been approached for the purpose.”*

**Other Areas:** The IRC is also considering donations to other recent problem areas. We are meeting in mid February and may consider donations to Sri Lanka, Australia, Brazil and possibly others. If anyone has views they would like taken into consideration please let me know.

**Sri Lanka:** Amongst other disasters the problems in Sri Lanka were probably pushed off the front page but they too have suffered serious flooding. Leonie Fernando, their National President writes: *“The council*

*has already provided immediate assistance to the Regional Councils in the form of dry rations and also to clean wells that was polluted due to the floods. We are also awaiting a needs assessment report from the Batticaloa Council who will need substantial financial assistance to re-establish families who are in camps to begin life in their homes with basic kitchen utensils and other needs to resettle.”*

**Australia:** As you are probably aware the floods in Australia have made front page news and the Society there, which is very strong, has launched a major appeal. The thought of a small donation of support may be considered.

**Brazil:** At present we are not aware of any SVP initiative in Brazil, where the SVP is also very strong, but have asked Council General to keep us informed.

At present, even having made these donations, the Disaster Fund has quite a healthy balance and so we are not looking for any appeal to be made. More twins, Indian Students and the Sudan Appeal are all greater needs at present.

**Co-op Banking:** Boy has this been an uphill struggle! Those of you who have indicated that you will use bank branches should have received paying-in books by now. For those of you who have indicated that will pay in through local Post offices these arrangements should be in place by now and the paying-in books sent to you very shortly. The books are at National office but they are waiting for supplies of envelopes into which cheques must be put however I am advised that the Post office branches have these so have asked for the paying-in books to be sent early next week. If possible could you not pay into HSBC after 31<sup>st</sup> January so that we can have everyone using Co-op from 1<sup>st</sup> Feb.

**Twinnage Payments:** Could I ask all CCs to have a look through their records and chase up twinnage arrears. We should be getting 100% return as CCs and DCs should be meeting any arrears in accordance with the decision taken by National Council but the figures for 31<sup>st</sup> December show we have quite a high shortfall. If you would like copies of our figures these can easily be sent on request.

**Reps' Meeting:** I look forward to seeing everyone at St Chad's, Birmingham on 9<sup>th</sup> April for our annual meeting.