

MIRROR



Aid to the Church in Need

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Embracing the Child's Bible - their way of saying 'Thank you'. These children in Campo Limpo, Brazil have been rejected or abandoned by their parents.

“Our Christianity must be so ardent and so radiant - a city built on the hilltop and a light on the lampstand - that others are led to the conviction that we have the truth and the life.”

Father Werenfried (1913-2003), founder of Aid to the Church in Need

Dear Friends,

Let us call her Razia, the grandmother - a popular name for Christian women in Pakistan. Her grandson - let us call him Yusif - showed a talent for painting even as a child. Razia taught Yusif what she believed to be the most important thing for a life of dignity and steadfastness. She taught him to pray and read the Bible. In his village, out on the edge of the desert, Yusif would gaze up at the starry sky and ponder. Again and again he was filled with the desire, “Maybe I should become a priest one day?” At the age of 13, Yusif underwent a crucial experience. An angry mob of Islamic fundamentalists forced their way into the parish church of Our Lady. They burned all the liturgical and catechetical books and all the furnishings. They beat up the boys from the Catholic school next door. Yusif saw the smouldering remains, heard the weeping children and said to himself, “God’s people are suffering and I must

give my life for the Faith. I can resist God no longer.” Today Yusif is 22 years old. He is a joyful and dedicated seminarian. The pictures he is currently painting remind one of Picasso. Discrimination and persecution are awakening in the Christians a faith that is far



“The Holy Spirit brings joyful enthusiasm in the Faith and breaks through all the drudgery.”

deeper than in countries where membership of the Church is little more than a social custom. In Yusif’s own country Catholics live in real and constant danger. They are among the poorest of the poor, especially the women. But they are not deterred. One very poor man told us, “Of course I am afraid, but when I see him on the Cross, then I cannot do otherwise; I must be faithful to him, even if it costs me my life.” When I hear such words, I am filled with envy. For our faith often seems so weary, too weak to resist the social

pressures around us, too easily undermined by sneers from ‘politically correct’ people.

At Pentecost the Holy Spirit comes down with power on the Church. The Spirit breaks through all the drudgery, enlivening us and bringing us a joyful enthusiasm in the Faith. And “a great joy cannot be kept to oneself. It has to be passed on ... Anyone who has discovered Christ must lead others to him.” (Pope Benedict XVI in Cologne, 21 August 2005).

Every donation you make enables us to send out more *Child’s Bibles*. And so another Razia can instruct another grandson Yusif to read and love the Word of Life. And so other Yusifs can train for the priesthood, on every continent. Please pray for Razia and Yusif! They stand for so many others.

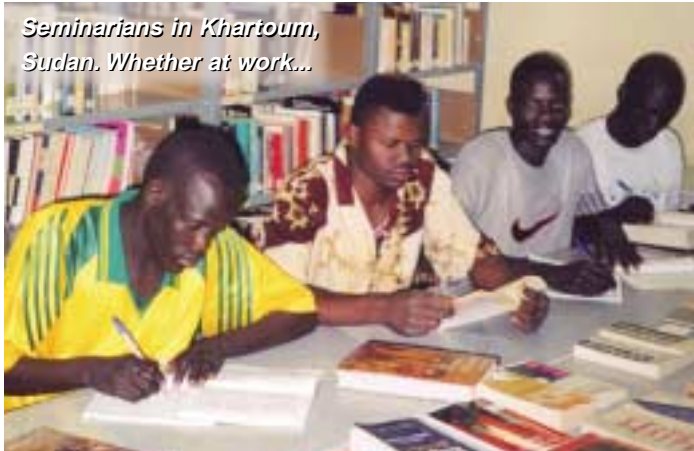
My blessings on you and on your families.

P. Joaquin Allieret

International Ecclesiastical Assistant



Aid for seminarians - “for love of You...”



Seminarians in Khartoum, Sudan. Whether at work...



... or at play, the sense of communion makes them strong.



Laudate omnes gentes - seminarians in Nigeria.



Offering their lives to the Lord - a priestly ordination in Ocaña, Colombia.

We owe to St Thomas Aquinas not only his profound reflections on love, the Trinity and the Cardinal Virtues. This great Doctor of the Church of the 13th century also gave us some wonderful hymns on the Eucharist.

The Dominican theologian formulated them in his prayer. We sing them on the feast of Corpus Christi. Indeed, his last recorded words were addressed to the Blessed Eucharist. Kneeling, he prayed

aloud, “For love of you, I have studied, watched and striven; I have preached you and taught you... Never have I said anything against you, but if I should unwittingly have done so, then I submit everything unre-servedly to the correction of the Roman Church.” What a wonderful programme for any seminary!

The major seminary in Makurdi, Nigeria, bears his name. Currently no less than 450 seminarians here are following in the footsteps of this great Doctor of the Church. Like him, they are very poor. There is not enough bread, there are not enough books, there are not enough beds... 50

students have to sleep outside the seminary. They plan to have a bakery and also need support for their studies. We have promised €25,000 - for love of the Eucharist. For one day they will call down Our Lord to the earth. For him they study, watch, work and sing. But without the presence of Christ, without the Resurrection, our Faith would be in vain, says Saint Paul (cf. 1 Cor 15:13-14) and “The world would be a nonsense, a kingdom of evil, of lies, of death”, as the Russian poet Soloviev adds. In Russia too, in Moldova, in Belarus and in Ukraine, seminarians are likewise waiting for your help. Here it might be €1,300, here €1,400, here €7,000 to assure their formation, and later their preaching and teaching in accordance with the Catholic Church. In Poland the figure is around €230,000, or €50 per seminarian. For Poland is a rich source of priests for the Universal Church, including the Church in Western Europe. They are the fruit of your prayer and sacrifice - “for love of you, O Lord”. Don’t let this love for vocations grow cold!

Thanks to your help, ACN supports one seminarian in every seven around the world:

Continent	2002	2003	2004	2005
Eastern Europe	9,752	10,899	10,054	8,967
Africa	1,134	2,002	2,184	1,248
Asia	1,039	894	1,483	761
Latin America	3,670	5,020	4,747	4,726
TOTAL	15,595	18,815	18,468	15,702



In Ukraine too the seminarians share an enthusiasm for football.



“A sure guide to hand”

“And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them...” (Mt 18:2). And so they stood there, the disciples, with the child in their midst. This is the point at which the future begins to take shape and this includes the future of the Church.

ACN founder Father Werenfried realised the importance of outreach to the young and that is why he placed the *Child's Bible* in the hands of millions of children throughout the world. Thanks to your generosity, the work continues - 43 million copies in 148 languages - and the Word continues to take flesh in their young hearts and minds. Those who cannot read as yet, can always listen, and then set to with their families and the catechists to fashion pictures of the life of Jesus, like those in **Pakistan** who, using scraps of material, colourfully craft the biblical stories and images that they will learn later in our *Child's Bible*.

They will read the words of Jesus for themselves - often the *Child's Bible* is their only road to literacy - then, in the *Little Catechism*, derive the teaching from them.



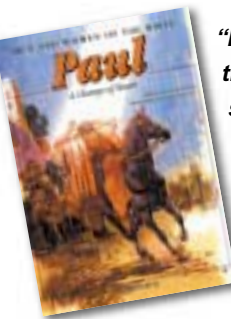
The Word, woven into the fabric of their lives. In Hyderabad, Pakistan, Father Anjou Soares and a catechist proudly show off the work of the families.

With Rome's approval, this book too has been published in the millions (4 million copies in 20 languages) proving how great is the thirst for the truth. Requests still pour in from over 60 countries - as do letters of thanks. A missionary writes from **Paraguay**: “Faced with the many sects, our parents and catechists now have, in the *Little Catechism*, a sure guide to hand.” Nothing is more sure than the authentic Word of God. Just how quickly and widely we can



Children and the Bible - two keys to the future. The joyful faces of these school-children in Zambia say it all. Can we not try to make other children happy too?

distribute it - in words, pictures or even comics - depends on your generosity. ●



“Men and Women of the Bible”. This comic strip series, supported by ACN, helps to forge a sense of community among the Christians in Pakistan.

Camilo, Miguel and the Child Jesus



The presence of the Child transforms hearts. In Cuba old and young alike are welcoming Jesus into their homes.

Soon everyone will have heard of them in **Cuba**. They call them “the Children of the Church”. Aged eight to twelve, they bring Jesus into the homes - a little figure of the Child of Bethlehem.

They knock, and the door is opened to them. Only a few people turn them away, even though for decades many Cubans have neither heard nor sought to hear anything of the liberating message of this Child. Camilo himself came upon such a family. The

mother opened the door to him, listened to his words about the Child in the manger and then led him to her own child, Miguel, six years old and gravely ill with cancer. Camilo brought Miguel the message of life. Two days later, he saw him with his mother in church. And just a few days after that Miguel died, the Child Jesus clutched tightly in his hand. Camilo is quite sure, “Miguel is one of us now, the Children of the Church.” Cuba,



this island of communism, is witnessing many miracles of conversion through this Child Jesus. 350,000 figures have found a place in people's homes and, more importantly, their hearts. Cuba is thirsting for the message of redemption. The Church in Cuba has asked us to help bring another 300,000 figures of the Christ Child into the homes by next Christmas, together with Camilo and the others. This is Good News indeed. Will you help?●



Sudan, one year on



"The war has destroyed all the houses in Mayen Abun," writes Roberto from the diocese of El Obeid in Sudan. You have already helped Sudan's people (Mirror 2/2005). Thanks to you, they were able to make bricks and build houses – and in particular an orphanage. "Now refugees from Darfur are coming to us too, and there are many children among them." Others are former slaves whose freedom Bishop Gassis has purchased (right); now they are searching for their parents.



The mission station (left) will also have a school for children, where catechists will be trained as well. The diocese is vast - the size of France. "We are overjoyed and deeply grateful", writes Roberto. "Your benefactors have done all this. Both we and the children are praying for them."



Hans-Peter Röhlin,
President

The Last Word

A divine stroke of genius

I dare say every one of us has at some time experienced how good it is to enjoy a meal with those who are near and dear to us. It doesn't need to be much - a pizza, a plate of spaghetti, or perhaps a little bread and wine. It creates a feeling of fellowship, and in being happy together we find that even the food we eat seems to be somehow different, better. I am sure the Last Supper was something like this. This meal too forged a fellowship - and here too there was a transformation of the food eaten by those present - but of a far deeper kind. On this occasion Jesus spoke the words over the bread and wine before him: This is my Body, this is my Blood, given for you. Do this in memory of me (cf. Lk 22:19-20).

In the sacrament of Communion Jesus enters into my very self, he enters into your very self, he enters into each one of us. We become, in a real sense, the Mystical Body of Jesus, we become Church. This is our vocation - to re-live the life of Christ, as Father Werenfried has put it.

Jesus in this way created an opportunity, a way to enter into a deep communion with him, for people of all future times, right down to this day. Is not this offer of Jesus a divine stroke of genius, an offer that we should gratefully welcome as often as possible?

Need, love and thanks - Your letters

More hope now, thanks to the chapel
Thanks to the chapel that ACN has built in our quarter, we can now bring in the young people off the streets who had nowhere else to go before. And we can also teach the Faith to the children here, instead of on the streets. This fills us with hope.

A woman from Santiago, Chile

A nice surprise
In a recent Mirror I read the article about the Fathers on Somoir. It was a nice surprise. In 1937 one of my uncles, a Franciscan, went there in order to live among the people. The Bataks always meant a great deal to him. For my priest-uncle his mission was a constant 'way of the cross'. Nowadays, when we hear about nothing but Islamic Indonesia, and only occasionally about the difficult situation of the Christians there, it is nice to hear that what my uncle and his fellow priests started

didn't fall on barren soil. All this is reason for me to donate my Lenten gift of this year for this mission. It will be enough for one Batak family.

A man from Vlaardingen, Netherlands

For the Church in Tanzania

My son has succeeded in passing an exam, and now he sends you 1,000 Euros to help build up the Church in Tanzania. Thanks be to God for the graces he has bestowed on my son.

A proud mother from Chassieu, France

We have been so touched

Please find enclosed a cheque for £1,000 being almost the total proceeds of a sale of family items. We have been so touched by your accounts of struggling priests and nuns in dangerous areas of the world that we would like the money to go towards helping just one or two hard-pressed Roman Catholic communities.

A couple from the West of England

Where to send your contribution for the Church in Need:

Please use the **Freepost** envelope – it saves you money and helps us.

In Ireland: Aid to the Church in Need, 151 St Mobhi Road, Glasnevin, Dublin 9, tel. (01) 8377516. (Registered Charity No. 9492).

In Great Britain: Aid to the Church in Need, 1 Times Square, Sutton, Surrey, SM1 1LF, tel. 020-8642 8668. (Registered Charity No. 1097984).



If you give by standing order, or have sent a donation recently, please accept our sincere thanks. This Mirror is for your interest and information.

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