

A REPORT ON PAPAL CHARITY IN 2003 THROUGH *COR UNUM*

Members of the faithful, parishes and religious institutes have entrusted to the Pope tokens of their love for their brethren most sorely tried in mind and body by the consequences of natural disasters, poverty, sickness and underdevelopment. Their donations amounted to: more than \$1,680,000 for emergency relief and human promotion in various parts of the world; \$1,843,200 to support projects for the human advancement of indigenous poor farming families in Latin America; and more than \$ 2,474,000 for the fight against drought and desertification in the Sahel.

"Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me" (*Mt 18:5*) was the "guiding" theme of the Holy Father's Message to all the faithful and people of good will on the occasion of Lent (*L'Osservatore Romano* English edition, 4 February 2004, p. 7), which reaches its crowning point precisely during Holy Week. The Pope writes: "With great admiration I also think of all those committed to caring for underprivileged children and those who alleviate the sufferings of children and their families resulting from war and violence, inadequate food and water, forced immigration and the many forms of injustice present in the world" (*ibid.*, n. 3).

The earliest information to reach *Cor Unum* shows that the Pope's Message was widely circulated and has inspired special projects for children and those who are weakest, whose implementation is still underway. Coordinated charity has a very important role to play in this field: it contributes to formulating and supporting projects which, thanks to the generosity of many benefactors, can actually be realized.

These donations, however, do not constitute the mere delegation of personal responsibility. Indeed, they imply active participation in the various programmes such as, for example, in the case of the lay faithful who have opted to support and are supporting the Building Project of "Nyumbani Village" for orphaned children with AIDS in Nairobi, Kenya, described in the presentation of the Holy Father's Lenten Message on 29 January this year. The motivation behind these donations reveals a readiness to join in witnessing to love.

This is also true of the spontaneous gifts that individual members of the faithful, parish communities and diocesan and religious institutes wished to entrust to the Pope in 2003, as an expression of the universal Church's concern for the most deprived. The following is a summary of all the Holy Father's charitable work through the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* in the past year, to support those who work in this field together with and in favour of those most sorely tried in body and mind due to natural disasters, man-made disasters and poverty.

EMERGENCY AID

TYPE OF EMERGENCY	CONTRIBUTIONS IN US\$	COUNTRY
EARTHQUAKES	162,000	ALGERIA, EL SALVADOR, IRAN, TURKEY, UGANDA
FLOODS	243,000	ARGENTINA, BOLIVIA, FIJI, GUATEMALA, SRI LANKA, VIETNAM
WAR	241,473	DEM. REP. OF THE CONGO, IRAQ, LIBERIA, NIGERIA,
DROUGHT AND FAMINE	59,304	ERITREA, ETHIOPIA, MOLDOVA
REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS	91,688	ALGERIA, ANGOLA, CENTRAL AFRICAN REP., HAITI, UGANDA
HIV/AIDS	25,000	MALAWI, ROMANIA
TOTALI	\$ 822,465	23 COUNTRIES

In some special cases the Holy Father sent as his Special Envoy to the scene of the disaster, Archbishop Paul Josef Cordes, President of *Cor Unum*, to convey to the victims the spiritual closeness of the universal Church and the Apostolic See, and to encourage those involved in the rescue work.

In this regard, missions were led by Archbishop Cordes to Vietnam (14-20 January) after the terrible floods, and to Iraq (28 May-3 June) immediately after the official declaration of the end of the war. In these two Countries, he was able to meet the Bishops, civil Authorities and certain Communities severely affected by the disasters, as well as the representatives of organizations involved in relief work for the population. Archbishop Cordes was able to make an initial contribution to those local Churches to support their actions for the neediest.

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Thanks to the faithful' s spontaneous generosity, *Cor Unum* was able, in compliance with the wishes of the Holy Father, to meet the needs of many communities in developing countries in order to foster their moral and material growth. Additional funds were allocated to the ecclesial institutions involved in providing for street children, lonely elderly persons and the homeless.

HUMAN PROMOTION IN THE COMMUNITY

SECTOR	ALLOCATION IN US\$	COUNTRY
HEALTH CARE	93,260	BRAZIL, INDIA, ISRAEL, UKRAINE, VIETNAM
CHILDREN	205,384	BRAZIL, CENTRAL AFRICAN REP., CHILE, GHANA, INDIA, MONGOLIA, TAJIKISTAN, UKRAINE, UGANDA, VIETNAM
FORMATION	103,200	BELARUS, BRAZIL, COLOMBIA, DEM. REP. OF THE CONGO, INDIA, MOZAMBIQUE, NIGERIA, RWANDA, SUDAN
AGRICULTURE / FOOD	86,364	DEM. REP. OF THE CONGO, NIGERIA, PERU, RWANDA, TANZANIA, UGANDA
REBUILDING AND RESTRUCTURING HOUSING	152,840	ANGOLA, CAMEROON, CROATIA, ETHIOPIA, HAITI, INDIA, JERUSALEM, KENYA, LIBYA, LITHUANIA, ROMANIA
PASTORAL CARE	188,175	DEM. REP. OF THE CONGO, EL SALVADOR, FINLAND, GHANA, JERUSALEM, MONGOLIA, NICARAGUA, VIETNAM
WOMEN	14,000	ANGOLA, CAMEROON
THE ELDERLY	15,000	UGANDA
TOTAL	\$ 858,223	33 COUNTRIES

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Two Foundations operate in the context of *Cor Unum*.

The first foundation is the John Paul II Foundation for the Sahel. It was established in 1984 in response to the Holy Father's pressing Appeal in Ouagadougou on 10 May 1980 on behalf of the population severely hit by the drought and spreading desertification in the Sahel region. In its first 20 years, thanks to the generous and constant contributions from the Italian Bishops' Conference, from individual members of the faithful and from Church institutions, this Foundation funded more than 3,500 community projects in support of the fight against drought and desertification, for an overall total of more than \$30,000,000.

In 2003, the number of projects funded rose to 235, for a total exceeding € 2,474,000.00, distributed as shown in the following table:

JOHN PAUL II FOUNDATION FOR THE SAHEL

COUNTRY	N. PROJECTS APPROVED	TOTAL FUNDING IN EURO
BURKINA FASO	119	953,507
CAPE VERDE	7	165,360
CHAD	36	390,660
GUINEA BISSAU	2	91,376
MALI	13	178,292
MAURITANIA	3	27,074
NIGER	11	100,119
SENEGAL	33	404,126
THE GAMBIA	11	163,791
TOTAL	235	€ 2,474,307

A total of 12.76 percent of the projects approved concerned the environment; 21.70 percent, water; 9.36 percent, agriculture; 8.94 percent, cattle breeding; 24.25 percent, training of community leaders; 10.21 percent, community self-promotion; 8.95 percent, health care; 2.98 percent, technical and professional training; 0.85 percent, allocated to other types of projects.

The second Foundation is the *Populorum Progressio* Foundation to benefit the indigenous, mestizo and African-American poor farmers in Latin America. The Pope established this Foundation in 1992 to mark the Fifth Centenary of the beginning of evangelization in Latin America. Its aim is to foster micro-projects for integral human advancement. It receives special support from the Italian Bishops' Conference through the Committee for Charitable Interventions for the Third World, from individual members of the faithful and from religious institutions.

In its first 12 years, the Foundation has funded more than 1,500 micro-projects for an overall amount of more than \$15,000,000.

At its 2003 assembly, the Council of Administration that met in Guadalajara, Mexico, from 8 to 11 July, decided to finance 221 projects for a total of \$1,843,200, distributed per country as shown in the following table:

POPULORUM PROGRESSIO FOUNDATION

COUNTRY	N. PROJECTS	TOTAL FUNDING IN
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	APPROVED	US\$
ANTILLES	2	20,000
ARGENTINA	3	23,000
BOLIVIA	13	102,700
BRAZIL	24	200,300
CHILE	9	69,500
COLOMBIA	32	270,500
COSTA RICA	6	49,500
CUBA	2	19,000
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	6	49,800
ECUADOR	19	162,000
EL SALVADOR	9	78,500
GUATEMALA	8	69,500
HAITI	11	107,600
HONDURAS	2	18,000
MESSICO	18	134,500
NICARAGUA	11	77,500
PANAMA	5	44,000
PARAGUAY	8	66,000
PERU	29	246,500
URUGUAY	2	17,000
VENEZUELA	2	17,800
TOTAL	221	\$ 1,843,200

The 221 approved projects aim at the integral advancement of indigenous poor farming communities in Latin America; 36.29 percent concern the production sector (agriculture-sheep farming, small industries, community trade); 23.55 percent goes to the sector for community utilities (drinking water, fencing, public lavatories and multi-service halls); 18.15 percent concerns construction (schools, houses, health-care centres); 16.60 percent covers education (vocational training professional formation, communications, equipment and publications); the remaining 5.41 percent is for community health care (training and supply of medical equipment).

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Through this work *Cor Unum* provides a valid witness to Christ's love for the poor. The Lord's special love for the littlest and the neediest is also expressed through the many Catholic Organizations of the particular Churches that are involved in emergency aid and the support of the integral human advancement of the neediest.

It suffices to think of the vast amount of work carried out by the

various *Caritas* agencies, Aid to the Church in Need, the various Lenten Campaigns, the Religious Congregations, lay Associations and volunteer organizations. Their agents do not carry out their service as mere delegates of the community but as true channels through which they encourage the participation and active sharing of benefactors, concretely witnessing to the charity of Christ, who became "obedient unto death, even death on a Cross" (*Phil 2:8*), and took human suffering upon himself and illuminated it with the radiant light of his resurrection" (*Lenten Message 2004*, n. 4).

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