



Aid to the Church in Need

PO Box 6245
Blacktown DC NSW 2148
Ph/Fax No: (02) 9679-1929
e-mail: info@aidtochurch.org Web: www.aidtochurch.org

BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Sr/Rev:

Address:

.....P/C.....

Ph Email

I/We enclose \$ _____ to support the projects of ACN for the poor & persecuted Church.

I would like _____ Masses offered for my intentions and enclose \$ _____ as an offering to help poor priests overseas. (We recommend - if possible - an offering of \$10 per Mass)

Total enclosed \$ _____

I enclose a cheque/money order payable to Aid to the Church in Need OR please debit my Visa or Mastercard:

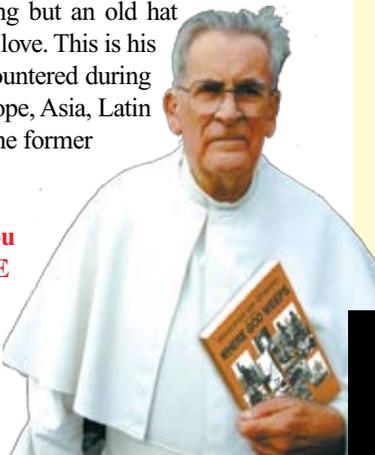


Expiry date:/.....

AI1/1/1

Signature:

Fr Werenfried van Straaten, the founder of ACN, died on the 31/1/2003 aged 90. To celebrate the anniversary of his death we would like to offer our benefactors, a free copy of his much loved book 'Where God Weeps' - the spiritual crusade of a man with nothing but an old hat for begging and a heart full of love. This is his story of the sufferings he encountered during his visits to the Church in Europe, Asia, Latin America, Africa, and behind the former Iron Curtain.



Please tick the box if you would like to receive a FREE copy of 'Where God Weeps'

250 pp, paperback with many historical photos.

Your help for flood victims

Mission of Mercy: Bishop Andrew Francis of Multan distributes emergency supplies from Aid to the Church in Need (Kirche in Not) to remote areas in southern Punjab (Photo: Diocese of Multan)



REPORTS have reached Aid to the Church in Need from across Pakistan of how your support for victims of the summer 2010 floods has brought help and hope to thousands of people.

According to sources including the UN, more than 2,000 people died in the floods, one million homes were destroyed and 21 million were injured or made homeless.

These figures are higher than the combined total affected by the Christmas 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the October 2005 Kashmir earthquake and the January 2010 Haiti earthquake.

Although Aid to the Church in Need's primary focus is pastoral support, not emergency aid, the charity acted quickly to provide urgent help after receiving S.O.S. appeals from bishops in Pakistan.

The ACN aid, which totalled over \$160,000, provided food including rice, sugar and cooking oil, medical and hygiene equipment including water purification tablets, mosquito nets and soap, and blankets and tents.

• **Sindh (province in south east):** Emergency aid for 10,000 people in worst-affected areas including Sukkur, Kandhot and Kashmore. Diocesan aid programmes with key support from Sister Rosie and Sister Nargis in Sukkur (pictured in earlier story)

• **Multan (in Punjab province):** Help for homeless people in the flood plains

• **Quetta (west Baluchistan province):** Support for Salesian brothers helping 800 families including the elderly and very young needing medicine and clean water

• **Nowshera (between the capital, Islamabad, and Peshawar):** Support for Missionaries of St Thomas the Apostle to help 1,500 Christians.

The help came amid reports that flood waters had been intentionally diverted into regions highly populated with minority groups, including Christians.

As usual, Aid to the Church in Need's help was channelled through the bishops.

Bishop Andrew Francis of Multan wrote to ACN after returning from a six-hour journey to provide food, medicine, clean water and tents to 1,500 people in remote areas near the Sulaiman Mountain Range. Seven hundred children each received a special little gift.

He wrote: "On the way, I saw much devastation, destruction and misery. **The Diocese of Multan is very grateful to Aid to the Church in Need for the aid relief you provided.** The flood victims are very grateful."

Hope never despairs

ACN Pakistan Report

JUST when the people of Pakistan thought things could not get any worse, they suddenly did.

The summer 2010 floods that swept the country from north to south left a trail of destruction of unimaginable proportions.

For a country increasingly beset by political turmoil, corruption and religious extremism, the cataclysmic disaster which affected more than 20 million people was surely too much to bear.

But hope never despairs.

Thanks to the huge generosity and compassion of the friends and benefactors of Aid to the Church in Need, you have provided succour to a people crying out for help.

This report highlights both Aid to the Church in Need's help for Pakistan flood victims and the charity's ongoing work in support of the Church's pastoral priorities, enabling the message of Christ to reach out beyond division and hatred. In response to your ongoing kindness, priests and people in Pakistan have made clear their gratitude.

But of all the messages we have received, one stands out. It is from a 25-year-old catechist you are helping to train.

He told us: "We have suffered so badly. How much more can we take? In spite of it all, I know that the Holy Spirit is working through Aid to the Church in Need.

"God knows what you are doing; may he give you his countless blessings."



Catholics in southern Punjab Province celebrate the half-way mark as work continues on the enlarged St Martin des Porres Church, Hasil Pur, a project supported by Aid to the Church in Need



Aid to the Church in Need

PO Box 6245 Blacktown DC NSW 2148 Tel/Fax 02 9679-1929
Email: info@aidtochurch.org Web: www.aidtochurch.org
Report by John Pontifex (2010) Photographs by John Pontifex/ACN except where stated



Aid to the Church in Need

Raising the roof for the Sisters

STANDING up for the poor and the downtrodden is what Sister Nargis and Sister Rosie have devoted their lives to doing.

Based at St Mary's Church in Sukkur, south-east Pakistan, the Franciscan Missionaries of Christ the King played a crucial role in calming the people and returning parish and school life to normal after vicious anti-Christian attacks in 2006.

During the riots, St Mary's was reduced to a blackened shell. Thanks to you, ACN has recently helped to restore and extend it.

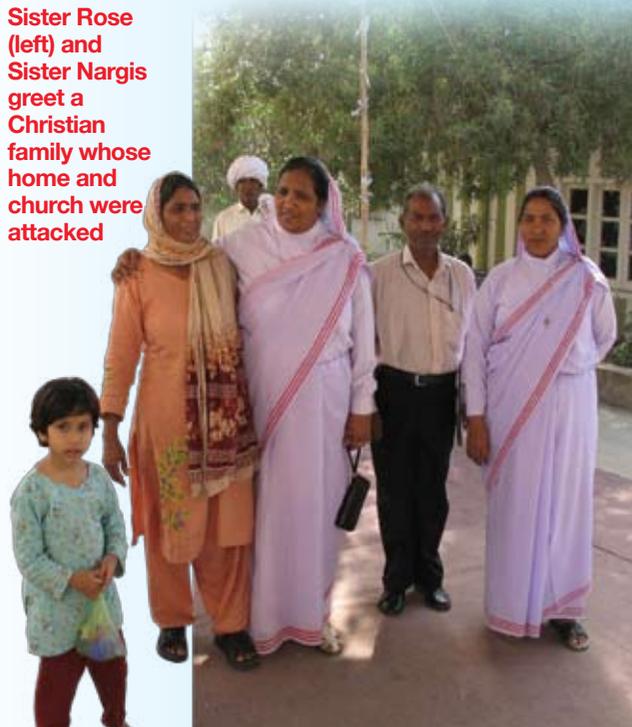
When floods came to Sukkur in the summer of 2010, again it was the Sisters who helped provide a semblance of order by spearheading the aid relief effort.

Meantime, the Sisters have had their school to run, supporting 500 or more students of all ages.

Now it is they who need help.

The Sisters have asked ACN for support for vital repairs to the roof of their convent in Sukkur, which is becoming dangerous. Sister Nargis told ACN recently: **"Thank you so much for the support you have given to the people of Sukkur. You can count on our prayers."**

Sister Rose (left) and Sister Nargis greet a Christian family whose home and church were attacked



Spreading the Good News!

"PEOPLE have a hunger and a thirst for the word of God."

So says Father Emmanuel Asi, director of Pakistan's National Bible Commission, who adds that it is ACN friends and benefactors who have helped to satisfy that yearning.

Fr Emmanuel's role is to develop programmes across the country to encourage the faithful's knowledge of and love for Sacred Scripture.

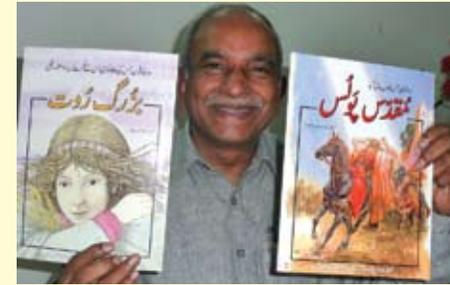
Thanks to you, Fr Emmanuel has printed and distributed:

- 50,000 Catholic Bibles in Urdu, Pakistan's national language
- 70,000 ACN Child's Bibles in Urdu
- 10,000 ACN Child's Bibles in Sindhi, a local language
- Picture books and other children's literature including 'Sixteen men and women from the Bible' (pictured right)

In a country where literacy – even among Christians – is well below 40 percent, simple Scriptural literature is essential.

That is why ACN is helping Fr Emmanuel publish the New Testament in large print, as well as a further 50,000 Urdu Bibles.

It is all part of the '100,000 Friends of the Bible' scheme, whereby the faithful pledge to read the Scriptures daily, discuss them with friends and relatives and give a copy to a named individual. Fr Emmanuel is also planning a 'Bible Marathon' in which thousands of people come to Pakistan's national Marian Shrine of Mariamabad to take turns reading the Scriptures from start to finish, a task accomplished without a break.



Father Emmanuel Asi shows off the latest books you have helped him to publish

The Scriptures are also brought to life through music, dance, mime and design. ACN continues to support catechetical ventures of an artistic kind, fostered by organisations including Dar-ul-Kalam Catholic Sunday School groups (left), and the Joti Cultural and Educational Centre in Mirpurkhas, in Sindh Province.

Thanking ACN friends and benefactors for your continuing help and support, Fr Emmanuel said: **"The fact that we can do so much is because of the help you are providing. We feel very inspired and supported."**

In search of forgiveness

THE deaths of eight people – including seven from one family – during an attack on Christians sent shock-waves far and wide.

Local businessman Almas Hamid lost his father, brother, wife and two of his four children in the violence in the Punjab's city of Gojra.

Thanks to you, Almas and his two surviving children, 13-year-old Anosh and Kasia, eight, have received special care and support, at the request of their bishop, Joseph Coutts of Faisalabad.

A year later, in August 2010, Bishop Joseph presided over memorial events in Gojra.

In an interview with Aid to the Church in Need, Bishop Joseph described how a senior police officer apologised to the assembled faithful for a security breach

which he said had prevented the violence from being nipped in the bud.

Meanwhile, senior Muslims condemned the attacks as "un-Islamic".

Noting the faithful's calm response, Bishop Joseph spoke of his "huge relief" that at last forgiveness was beginning to take root.

A month later, however, tension returned amid reports of Muslim outrage at plans in the US for a public burning of copies of the Qur'an. Thankfully this event did not take place.

Appealing for continued prayers, Bishop Joseph explained: "Muslims have huge respect for the Qur'an and there is always the risk that the emotional reaction of people here would be to hit out at the nearest Christian."

Lighting the way: Bishop Joseph Coutts of Faisalabad lights a candle at the summer 2010 memorial service for those killed in anti-Christian violence in Gojra (Photo: Diocese of Faisalabad)



Fr Wasseem - a heroic priest

FOR Father Wasseem Walter and his community of 500 faithful, the shadow of extremism looms large.

Their city of Jhang, in the Punjab province, is reportedly the base of two militant Islamist groups, which are linked to violent attacks against so-called 'non-Islamic' forces.

Fr Wasseem's Church of the Sacred Heart has an armed security man at the door and he travels with a bodyguard.

Over his eight years in Jhang, Fr Wasseem has worked hard to build up the Christian community.

Soon after he arrived, he set up a hostel which now has 35 students, and more recently he started up a small school and a play group.

He said: "When I came here, I found Christians had not been sending their children to school because they were being discriminated against.

"They were not allowed to use school cutlery and cups, so they stayed at home."

Essential to his support for young people is nurturing them in their faith, with catechism, retreats and regular Mass and Confession.

"People here are very strong in their faith," he said. "As well as attending Mass on Sunday, they like to come on Fridays.

They identify very closely with Christ's passion and cross. They share his suffering."

ACN is committed to providing Mass offerings to help support priests in Pakistan.

A father to his people: Fr Wasseem Walter

