

MIRROR



Aid to the Church in Need



www.acnirl.org



Communion of the Blessed – John Paul II, now Blessed, prays in Fatima in remembrance of the little seers.

“Let us ensure that our organisation remains a refuge of love. For only if we do so can consolation, hope, encouragement and a spirit of reconciliation go out from it into the whole world, to the glory of God and the joy of millions of suffering souls, and of your grateful friend, Werenfried van Straaten.”

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

Dear Friends,

Good and evil are contending in a struggle ever more fierce and rapid. The attacks on the Church are increasing in brutality. Deep and painful wounds have been inflicted, and media manipulations and half-truths are constantly repeated. More and more are falling as martyrs to a fundamentalist Islam. Meanwhile, in Africa there are more and more baptisms, while in Latin America a new biblical and Marian pastoral apostolate is increasingly eliciting a response. In many traditionally Catholic regions, dwindling resources are having to be reassigned. This is necessary, but not the decisive factor for the dawning of a New Spring. When water is scarce, it is not enough to renew the pipework; instead one has to dig deeper, discover new wellsprings. There will be no new evangelisation “without the fervour of the saints” (Paul VI). Pope John Paul II had this fervent faith; this was a Pope who authentically lived his uncompromising motto: *Totus tuus*: All yours, O Mary. She inspired in Karol Wojtyła the most profound and total hope, together with an en-

ergy and ardour that only true love can instil. She complemented his manly strength with her tender sensitivity and moulded him into a loving and attentive father. This universal Pole not only found in her a faithful Mother but also showed her to us as a Sister and helper in the struggle of faith on our pilgrim way to the Father. She too saw



There can be no new evangelisation “without the fervour of the saints”.

and lived the contradictions of life. As the recently beatified John Paul II wrote, after the Annunciation in Nazareth, Mary was conscious of the contradiction in what the angel Gabriel had just told her. “How shall it be...?” (Lk 1:34). St Luke the evangelist tells us that Our Lady “did not understand” (Lk 2:50) the words of her growing Son, and St John describes the seemingly harsh rebuttal at Cana: “Woman, what is that to you and me...” (Jn 2:4). It was heroic faith that enabled Our Lady and the saints to go beyond the bounds of mere rational thinking. In love lies the mystery. The young

Teresa of the Andes, a Latin American Carmelite Sister who was canonised by Pope John Paul II, once wrote, “Jesus, in the folly of your love, you have filled me with folly”. Once, when some of the priests of his diocese told his bishop that the Curé of Ars was “a strange and crazy one”, the bishop replied, “How I wish that some of my other priests had just a grain of his foolishness!”

Evil tried to kill the Pope. The bullet entered his body, but “the hand of Mary” shielded his heart and saved his life. In gratitude the Holy Father had the bullet mounted in the crown of Our Lady of Fatima. So once again Mary’s promise to the shepherd children re-echoes, “In the end my Immaculate Heart will triumph”. The task of ACN is to strengthen this spirit of faith in us all. We count on your help in this!

With my priestly blessing,

P. Joaquín Alliende

Father Joaquín Alliende, President



“The Tools of Evangelisation”

“How long have there been Christians?” a young boy asked in an African village. “For 2000 years”, the catechist replied, not without a touch of pride. “So why didn’t you come any sooner?” Hard to fault the logic. The only possible answer is, we had to be able to reach you first.

And so, for catechist Beatrice Nsabimana in the archdiocese of Gitega in **Burundi**, the consequence is equally clear: “A vehicle is a tool of evangelisation for us.” In practice it means that without bicycles there will be fewer Christians. For it takes time to walk dozens of miles on foot to the next village, where the people are waiting. Time that cannot be recaptured. And if the catechist cannot get to the next village, the gospel will not be expounded there either. Or put another way, without a bicycle it will not be possible to teach in all 120 primary schools and 30 secondary schools of the diocese. Then in only a handful of the 35 parishes and 118 outstations would it still be possible to encourage the faithful to live and practise their faith. Catechists are a vital part of the life of the Church in Burundi, and indeed in the Church



Now they can get to work – bicycles for catechists in Africa.



Mooring up – Without a boat, this missionary would get nowhere here in the Amazon.



Mobile at last – Sisters in Vietnam.



These sisters in Ukraine are also delighted at their new “pastoral tool”.

altogether, for the catechists are “excellent assistants to missionaries, sharing their labors and relieving them,” as Pope John XXIII wrote. In Gitega they will soon be able to reach still more people, because ACN has promised to supply them with at least four bicycles for each parish – or 165 in total. Each of these “tools of evangelisation” costs about 100 Euros. What a wonderful example it would be if Paul, the catechist, could tell the children in the villages, “You see that bicycle there? That was given us by your brothers and sisters, the friends of ACN, so that we could talk to you here about Christ and our shared love for God.”

Elsewhere in the world bicycles and muscle power alone are not enough. For one convent of nuns in a mountainous region of **Vietnam** it would be a dream come true to have a small motorbike. In fact they have already identified one; it is called the “Dream”. That is surely something we

If they don’t reach them, the sects will.

can afford ...? It will mean that the sisters can meet more young people, visit more sick people in the remote village communities. People are calling for them, and it is a call to us as well. It is a similar story for Father Maciej in the archdiocese of Lusaka in **Zambia**. He needs a pickup because no other vehicle is tough enough to cope with the rough tracks; so do the nuns in **Angola**, who feel terribly restricted in their work without a suitable vehicle. And for the missionaries in **Brazil** a boat is essential to reach the villages on the shores of the Amazon, where the people have been waiting often for months for the sacraments. If they don’t reach them, the sects will. And if Father Juan Emilio, high up on the **Russian** Kola Peninsula inside the Arctic Circle (with seven months of snow and ice), doesn’t have a car, then his scattered Catholic flock in the vast parish of the Archangel Michael will wait in vain. Repairing the old vehicle is no longer enough – so here too there is a cry for help. All of them are appeals for vehicles to spread the Good News. Thanks to your generosity, we can set the wheels in motion.



A mission of charity

You can see it in their faces – a new courage in the downtrodden, a new sense of purpose in the refugees. The Salesians in Istanbul are faithfully responding to the words of St Francis of Assisi, “Where there is hatred let me bring love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is sadness, joy”.

Their words are backed by deeds. Ever since the Gulf War in 1990/91, a growing number of Christian families have fled Iraq and ended up stranded in **Turkey**. Most spend several years there, seeking either work, a new country to live in, or return home. Their legal situation is precarious in the extreme, and their children are at risk. Without supervision, and without a chance of schooling, they face the perils of drugs, neglect and crime. Father Rodolfo

“Your help is bringing back a smile to their faces”



Safe again – blankets and medicines for these refugees from Sudan.

understands that his work and that of his fellow Salesians of Don Bosco is vital. They teach the children English, mathematics, science, history, music, art and the catechism. “Whenever I get a letter or a phone call from America, Canada or



Registering in their new homeland – refugees in Cairo.



What does the future hold? Two Iraqi Christian girls in Istanbul.

Australia from one of my former pupils, telling me that he is now studying or has found a job or is preparing to start a family, it fills my heart with great joy and helps me to forget my own exhaustion and personal health problems,” he writes. Father Rodolfo sees himself as “an instrument for fulfilling this mission of charity”. And he adds, “But the real instrument, inspired by the Holy Ghost, is you and all the other good people whose help is bringing back a smile to so many unhappy faces.” But the smiles come at a price, which the children do not perhaps see. Teachers have to be remunerated (albeit a token fee), school books purchased, rent

paid, clothing obtained. It is far beyond the resources of the Salesians in Istanbul. And so it is down to us.

In many other parts of the Islamic world there are similar problems. We were reminded of the words of St Francis by no less a person than the Pope himself, when he visited a refugee camp in the Middle East. Whether it is **Syria, Egypt, Sudan** or **Iraq**, anyone who is helping these fleeing Christians today is sowing the seeds of charity.

What matters in life

YOUCAT is the title of the new Youth Catechism – short and snappy, as one would expect for young people.

The Pope himself has written the preface to this officially sanctioned youth catechism and he explains why young people and the young at heart should read this book. “You must know what you believe; you must know your faith with the same precision with which a programming specialist knows the operating system of a computer;

you must know it like a musician knows his piece,” he writes. The book is written in a style that is accessible to the younger generation and will be published in time for the World Youth Day in August in Madrid, in at least 13 languages. It will be distributed as a gift from the Pope to the 700,000 or so young people attending there. “The youth of today ... are not as superficial as they are accused of being; young people want to know what life really is about,” the Pope writes in his introduction. They will find



YOUCAT – your gift for the 700,000.

the answers here – thanks to your help. For ACN has promised to contribute at least a part of the printing costs for this gift edition.



The diocese of Sagar is one of the poorest, and also one of the largest, in India. Father Michael Palampampil had literally come to the end of the road. His old car was just a heap of scrap and he could no longer visit his parishes. You have helped him to obtain a new car. He writes, "Without a car, all my pastoral and catechetical work was paralysed, stone dead. I was at my wits' end." Now he can once more set out at weekends, together with his diocesan team for Bible, Liturgy and Catechesis, and travel the hundreds of kilometres into the villages, to support the local priests. "When I say thank you, it is just a mere word. But it comes from the depths of my heart. In the villages they will pray for you", says Father Michael. For the people are overjoyed that their priest can visit them once more.



Photo: Roman Koszowski / Gosz Niedzielny



**Saint
Maria Faustina
Kowalska**
(1905 - 1938)

Helena Kowalska, who later took the name Sister Faustina in the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy, died at the age of 33. She spent her last 13 years in the convent at Cracow –years filled with prayer and simple, unostentatious domestic tasks. Yet during this time she described mystical experiences in which she conversed with Jesus. She recorded these in her diary, where she wrote that it was her life's mission "proclaim that Mercy is the greatest attribute of God".

At her canonisation on 30th April 2000 Pope John Paul II described her simple witness as "a gift of God for our times". He quoted these words she heard Jesus speak to her: "Humanity will not find peace until it turns trustfully to divine mercy". Each one of us can express this confidence through the simple and comforting exclamation "Jesus, I trust in You".

Sister Faustina grieved over the sufferings of mankind. Blessed John Paul II taught that mercy is made manifest in: empathy with those suffering, selfless generosity of heart, and forgiveness. He added: "It is this love which must inspire humanity today, if it is to face the crisis of the meaning of life."

Need, love and thanks – Your letters

They laid me in the manger

Thank you for remembering the friends of ACN on your pilgrimage to Bethlehem. It is a place very dear to me – because my parents took me there to be baptised. They laid me in the manger as they prayed over me. It was at the end of World War II when my parents fought with the Allied Forces in the Middle East, after escaping from their homeland – Poland. We too had to escape into Egypt, from where we were shipped to England to begin our lives as refugees. Thank you very much for your prayers from the Holy Land. I in turn, pray daily for the work of ACN.

A benefactor in London, England

Help and solidarity in hard times

My heartfelt thanks to you for the temporary church, which is a great help to our parish. We could no longer use our old chapel for the Liturgy or for other activities, since the roof is in danger of collapse ever since the earthquake of

27 February 2010. The whole parish of Christ the King is grateful for this great gesture of help and solidarity in the hard times we have undergone. It has enabled us to keep going in our work and our vocation.

Father Gustavo, Chiguayante, Chile

Inspiring her to give and pray

Just been reading the Mirror all through again and enclose \$100.00 cheque for your wonderful work. The whole paper delights me (apart from the tragedies, of course, still so common in our world) but there is such a lovely message running through the current edition. I am inspired when they come, not just to send a donation, but to pray for all ACN's organization & distribution of funds & the kindness & the love of those helping children & adults in pain & trouble in so many parts of the world, including the refugees.

A benefactress in Australia

Where to send your contribution for the Church in Need:

Please use the **Freepost** envelope.

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



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.

Editor: Jürgen Liminski

Publisher: Kirche in Not / Ostpriesterhilfe, Postfach 1209, 61452 Königstein, Germany.

De licentia competentis auctoritatis ecclesiasticae

Printed in Ireland - ISSN 0252-2535
www.acn-intl.org

