



carmelito

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"We are motivated by the Gospel of Jesus Christ to cherish, preserve, and uphold the sacredness and dignity of all human life, foster charity and justice, and embody Catholic social and moral teaching."

Catholic Relief Services
Mission Statement



www.dioceseofraleigh.org

Philippine Carmel Relief Service Ministry Brings Help to Many

Still repeating daily: "Enough is enough," thousands of people are evacuating their places and homes in a fresh occurrence of rising floods caused by the low pressure, Agaton, threatening the south of the Philippines and dumping unbelievable quantities of water, causing the death of already 41 people. Still conscious about the happening in the beginning of November last year when the super-typhoon "Yolanda," international name "Haiyan," struck the Visayas region, precaution is observed everywhere. Schools and offices are closed, emergency teams stand by and thousands of candles are burning in small chapels and parish churches in front of the different patron saints, keeping hope alive for the calming hand of the Lord of creation, to silence the wind and stop the waters coming down. "In the shadow of your wings I take refuge, till the storms of destruction pass by."

For millions the "shadow of your wings" was a reality in November last year, but for still too many, about ten thousand, children, men and woman, it was a forced coming at "home of the Father." In less than one hour time, the beautiful and peaceful city of Tacloban, several other cities, towns and villages were turned into rubble. Huge waves of the normal friendly and calm Leyte Gulf, swallowed hundreds of houses, their unaware inhabitants and furniture and buried them in the deep waters off the coast. An unbelievable chaos, cutting off all lines of prepared emergency assistance of government and private enterprises. All those coming alive out of the rubble, were looking for missing love ones, relatives or remaining left overs of their property and belongings.

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Zimbabwean Bishops Propose National Agenda for Restoration and Peace

The Catholic bishops in Zimbabwe have written a letter in the months following the national elections calling for the nation to work toward restoring the country as a peaceful, productive nation.

The bishops note that “the elections have left Zimbabweans more polarized than they were before and during the years of the Inclusive Government (2009-2013). The political fault lines and their impact on all aspects of the lives of Zimbabweans are set not only to deepen, but also to stand in the way of progress and ultimately in the way of peace.”

The bishops call for 1) Full re-engagement with the international community; 2) Restoration of the national economy, particularly the manufacturing sector; 3) Restoration of the public services sector which includes health, education, water, sanitation, transport and energy; 4) Restoration of Zimbabwe’s historical status as the bread basket of the Southern Africa region with guaranteed food security for her people.

The bishops cite daily problems like water and power cuts, shortage of medicines, equipment and professional personnel in the hospitals, raw sewage flowing in the streets, all of which reduces the person, their dignity, and their hope for a better life.

Quoting at length from Pope Benedict XVI’s document *Blessed Are the Peacemakers*, the bishops join with the pope’s call for “a new economic model” in which individuals and institutions are inspired by “the principle of gratuitousness, of fraternity” to give “of themselves, their intellectual abilities and their entrepreneurial skills,” their “creativity,” to help their countries, communities to “emerge from the current financial and economic crisis.”

The bishops identified the areas of greatest need in our economy: 1) Full re-engagement with the international community; 2) National economic transformation (land, agriculture, manufacturing, mining, tourism, etc); Social Services (health, water, sanitation, transport, energy, housing, education, food security, national reconciliation, etc.).

“It is appropriate and opportune that we make this call for a new economic model for Zimbabwe” comes in the year the Church has designated as the Year of Faith “because we believe that if we all pray to the Lord for conversion and belief in our hearts and observe the principles of fraternity and gratuitousness ... the new model can work and the Lord will, as he promised, heal our land.

All of the country’s bishops signed the document.

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Websites on the Issues:

Super Typhoon Haiyan Response
crs.org/typhoon-haiyan/

Catholic Relief Services
www.crs.org

Prayer for the Philippines
crs.org/prayers/prayer-for-the-philippines

Catholic Church in Zimbabwe
relzim.org/major-religions-zimbabwe/catholics/

Zimbabwean Catholic Conference
www.lutheranworld.org/lwf/index.php/tag/human-trafficking

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But as sudden and destructive as this natural calamity came to the Philippines, so sudden also did the doors of national and world-wide solidarity swing open with an intensity and effect never experienced before. Local communities throughout the country reacted very fast in shipping food and first aid through all kind of means to the affected areas. Asian countries, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Indonesia were sending plane loads of food, clothing and medicines with experts and volunteers. The United States of America, Canada, countries in Europe, and Africa followed with an unbelievable generosity.

The Carmelite Formation Center in Cebu City was at once converted into a drop-in center of relief goods for Leyte Province. The Carmelite community house in Ormoc City, Leyte, was heavy damaged, having no more roof and destroyed windows, but no casualties. Students and friars of the Formation Center in Cebu City were repacking relief goods and took care for immediate delivery to devastated areas in Leyte and Bantayan Island.

The Titus Brandsma Center in Manila opened the Open Space at the back of the Titus Brandsma Memorial for relief goods and space for repacking by volunteers. The baptized "AirJuan" relief service of the Titus Brandsma Center, took the initiative to drop relief goods to far away mountainous areas difficult to reach. An airdrop was

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done at six Caluyas Islands along the northern Coastline of Panay Island, Western Visayas region. An helicopter made several flights and dropped small packs with drinking water, some can goods, and t-shirts. About seven hundred people got a package. A second truck load of relief goods left the center a week later, unloaded the goods in the North of Panay and transferred it into a big boat, which took position in between a group of heavy damaged islands along the coast. A helicopter lifted the goods out of the boat and dropped the packages on the islands in front of the amazing people.

A group of mountain volunteers carried heavy loads of goods and basic medicines up to the farthest villages of Batan Island. People could hardly belief what they saw and what happened to them. But also the accompanying journalists could hardly express the chaos they saw in the rural villages. Coconut trees, the major income for those village people, looked like broken match sticks, still standing in a desert like landscape.

Medical missions were held. A team of three doctors and six other volunteers among them some professional nurses, left Manila with boxes filled with medicines and some with toys for children. A lot of children were suffering from respiratory conditions and skin deceases. Children as well as adults needed cleaning the wounds they got from flying roofing sheets, shattered glass, bottles and metal debris. While the doctors were cleaning wounds and examining patients, some of the nurses conducted a short intensive training for local volunteer "health workers" in wound cleaning, knowledge of basic medicines for fever, infections, how to apply gauzes and skin ointments to adults and children. Medicines were left to the trained group. Five units of Solar Cooker with ceramic pots and one unit of "Lifstraw"-- a water filtration system good for 18,000



China's New Stricter Environment Law Submitted to Parliament

Amendments to China's 1989 environmental protection law that will mean stiffer punishments for polluters have been submitted to the country's parliament for deliberation and are expected to become law, an official news agency reported.

The National People's Congress (NPC), China's legislature, will consider the amendments during its latest bimonthly session.

The first change to the legislation in 25 years will give legal backing to Beijing's newly declared war on pollution and formalise a pledge made last year to abandon a decades-old growth-at-all-costs economic model that has spoiled much of China's water, skies and soil.

The amendments, now in their fourth draft, are expected to enshrine environmental protection as the overriding priority of the Chinese government.



Europe Treaty on Violence Against Women to Take Effect

A ground-breaking European treaty -- the Istanbul Convention -- on violence against women moved closer to entering into legal force when the 10th country ratified it. It sets our minimum standards on prevention, protection, prosecution, and services. Countries ratifying must also establish services such as hotlines, shelters, medical services, counseling, and legal aid.

One in three women in the EU has suffered some form of physical and/or sexual assault since the age of 15.



liters of water -- was given to the principal of the elementary school. About 235 individuals were served by the team that day.

During the Christmas season, a group of artist went to Tacloban to share the spirit of Christmas to kids from the typhoon stricken City of Tacloban through entertainment and art. A Wall of Hope was created in a collective way, by children and artists, through dreaming on the wall in colors and figures, made by brush or bare hands. This amazing activity was followed by “gift giving“ for the children; toys, books and new school stuff make them feel a little more happy.

The demo-farm in Escalante, Negros Occidental, bought a chainsaw, several hammers, handsaws and other carpenter tools for the community based house repair project. About one hundred houses were damaged and need repairs and about 40 need a complete rebuild-

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ing. Many falling coconut trees could with the chainsaw be cut in building materials for the houses. The carpenter tools were distributed among the community volunteer carpenters and the needed building materials

were provided for by the Carmelite demo farm. Enthusiasts among school youth are proud wearing the hammer hanging on the belt of their working trouser and going from one place to another to show their newly required “skills.” Water to drink and food to eat, was the only compensation they asked.

The blown-off roofing of our house in Ormoc City is on its way to be replaced. We are extremely happy and thankful for the enormous generosity of the international Carmel. We are able to give a substantial help to our Carmelite family, friends and parishioners thanks to the thousands of euros and dollars so generously donated to Carmel Philippines. It enables us even to give a helping hand to those communities heavy damaged and did not know where to go.

Thousands of temporary shelters are build all over the devastated areas. It will cost for sure several years more, if ever possible, to have reconstructed the cities, towns and villages with permanent homes, enough schools, hospitals and health centers, meeting places and other facilities for a more human environment. For the hundreds of thousands of people, for those who migrated to other places and for those who stay and try to rebuild from the left-overs, one thing is very sure as one migrant said: “change remains with us.” For our Carmelite communities: changes in ministry will stay with us.

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