

The newsletter from MISSIO Scotland.

This is our fourth newsletter.

Preparing for October—The Mission Month

The month of October begins with the Feast of St. Therese of the Child Jesus, the patroness of the missions. It is our opportunity to focus on the mission work of the Church and our role in it. The Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI invites all of us to pray for the success of the missions throughout the world.

As baptised Christians we are all called to be missionaries—the essence of being Christian. Like Therese, we do not have the opportunity to go out into the far corners of the world to spread the Good News. We can follow her example and assist those in the missions by prayer and personal sacrifice.

Our sacrifice, like that of Therese, can be in the little things that trouble us in everyday life. Our sacrifice can also take tangible form through our contributions to the Mission Sunday Collection on the 19th of October.

Somalia Update

Events in Somalia have not made the news headlines recently. The situation there has become more difficult for Christian organisations working in the region. Davide Bernocchi, the outgoing Executive Director of Caritas Somalia sent us a brief report.

"After a US bombardment that killed one of the most prominent leaders of "Al-Shabab", the Somali Jihadist armed network, the open opposition of the group against the Western paradigm became even more radical as they started considering humanitarian workers as legitimate targets for their revenge against the "infidels".

Between the months of May and July, more foreign humanitarian workers were kidnapped. To a large extent, the fate of most of those hostages remains a mystery. It is also unclear whether all those kidnappings have been perpetrated by Jihad fighters; or instead by simple bandits primarily interested in ransom money.

Unfortunately, rather than this representing the end of the downward spiral, thereafter the position of locals working with the UN or with humanitarian NGOs became increasingly dangerous. On June 30, a group of five Somalis working with "Water for Life" - an NGO established in Merka at the beginning of 1990s by the Italian priest Elio Sommavilla and a long-term partner of Caritas - were kidnapped near Mogadishu. Furthermore, several warnings were spread in Mogadishu, threatening all humanitarians not working for Islamic organizations to quit their jobs or to prepare to die."



Davide Bernocchi

Your prayers are urgently needed for the workers bringing humanitarian aid to the poor people of Somalia.

Gift Aid

One of the best things Gordon Brown ever did was to introduce 'Gift Aid'. It is a simple system that allows charities to reclaim tax paid on money that is later donated to them.

Any U.K. taxpayer can make a simple Gift Aid declaration to a charity. The Government recognises that the donor has paid tax on that money. For every pound you donate the Government allows the Charity to reclaim 28p.

This costs the donor nothing and all the work is done by the charity. It is an excellent way of increasing the help we can give to the poorest people in the world. Despite the fact that tax rates are changing, reducing the return on Gift Aid, the Government is allowing charities to continue to claim the 28p for a few more years.

You can easily make a Gift Aid Declaration for MISSIO. Gift Aid forms will be available in every parish for Mission Sunday and you can download a form from the MISSIO Scotland website; www.missioscotland.org.uk or, if you prefer, call the office and we will send you a form by post.

This year we were able to claim back the sum of £7788.89 in Gift Aid. You can only imagine the good that will do in poor communities where the need is greatest.



Mission Prayer Groups

Thanks to all our Mission Prayer Groups. Your continued stream of prayer is having its effect on the work of the Church. As you can see from the previous page the need for prayer has not decreased. More and more missionaries and aid workers are finding themselves in dangerous situations while simply trying to help poor people in real need. You should have a list of the Holy Father's prayer intentions for 2009 in this mailing.

Society of Saint Peter the Apostle

Our sponsors and benefactors are continuing to support the seminary in Kaduna, Nigeria as well as supporting students in other seminaries.

Our thanks go to the High Schools, Parish Groups and Individuals for their prayers and generosity over the last year. In Scotland we managed to provide

£26,673.76

Extra copies of this newsletter can be found in our website under 'Parish Resources'.