



God will provide.... The name of this missionary boat in Brazil provides a motto for every mission.

"Whenever we make the effort to return to the source and to recover the original freshness of the Gospel, new avenues arise, new paths of creativity open up, more eloquent signs and words with new meaning for today's world."

Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium, 11

Dear Friends,

In a Brazilian fisherman's village someone asked the question, "Why was it that Jesus chose fishermen as apostles?" One of the fishermen responded, "People who travel on the land build roads, and they continue to use these roads over and over again. But a fisherman goes searching for the fish wherever they are. And so he chooses a different path each day. For it often happens that yesterday's route doesn't lead to the fish of today." It is people who have left behind comfortable lives to become fishers of men, that our charity is there to support. Mission is neither a matter of enlisting members, nor a form of customer service, based on cleverly devised plans and strategies. "Mission is an issue of faith, an accurate indicator of our faith in Christ and his love for us," writes St John Paul II in his encyclical letter *Redemptoris Missio*.

The aim of mission is not to make the Church bigger, nor to boost its income, nor even to increase its influence. It is simply and solely about guiding people's eyes and hearts towards Jesus. For in him alone God

has revealed himself for all time as what he truly is, namely love. Mission means guiding people to become disciples of Jesus. A disciple is a follower of Jesus, someone who lives in friendship with him, believes in him and makes his words the compass of his own life. The fruit of mission is redemption, a new life of dignity and meaning.

The number of people who do not know Jesus is growing steadily. Even in our own Christian lands very few people know why



"God wills to cover the enormous deficit of faith through our missionary zeal."

and how we believe. So our mission is needed in all times and all places. The greater the missionary need, the greater our need for the courage to trust in the word of the Lord and "walk on water". Marcello Candia (1916-1983), an Italian businessman and entrepreneur, who, at the age of 50, sold everything and went as a lay missionary to Brazil, recalled his missionary experience in building a hospital in Amazonia. "My whole way of thinking has changed," he wrote. "As

an industrialist, I first of all made forecasts, plans, projections. I thought about money and banks in relation to the funding of the project. Everything followed according to a mathematical logic, and I was beset with many worries. But slowly I realised that when we are dealing with God, the accounts are settled in an altogether different manner. In Brazil, only around 10 percent of the population are able to pay for medical services, and roughly 40 percent have some form of health insurance, but the rest cannot afford treatment. And so I learned that in order for a hospital for the poor to function properly, it must always be 'in deficit'."

Dear friends, ACN too is always 'in deficit', a shortfall that is constantly being replenished by you. God wills to cover the enormous deficit of faith, hope and love through our missionary zeal. The chances were never better than they are now.

My grateful blessing on you all,

P. Martin M. Barta

*Fr Martin Maria Barta
Ecclesiastical Assistant*



A charitable missionary



*"I see the face of God in them":
Fr Charitable celebrating Holy Mass.*



*Let the children come to me: Fr Charitable
and a confrere visiting the Qeqchi-Maya.*

"Loving God requires an interior freedom from all possessions and all material goods: the love of God is revealed in responsibility for others."

These words of Pope Benedict (from his encyclical letter *Spe Salvi*, 28) are the daily bread of missionaries. Fr Charitable Derisseau of the congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary expands on them from his own experience: "A missionary makes himself small in order to embrace a new culture. In this way, he is constantly being born anew."

After 14 years in Mexico the priest, who is originally from Haiti, went to the parish of

Mount Calvary, in the Diocese of Verapaz, **Guatemala**, where he has been for five years. Most of the 17,000 or so Catholics in the parish are indigenous Indians of the Qeqchi-Maya people. Their culture needs the leaven of the Christian spirit. Fr Charitable has little in the way of money or material possessions – he is inwardly free. And he feels a sense of responsibility for the Qeqchi-Maya people. Together with two of his confreres he travels through the 770 square-mile (2,000 km²) parish, visiting its 132 outstations in strict rotation, celebrating the Eucharist, administering the Sacraments and teaching the people catechism, mathematics, reading and writing. It is a permanent challenge for them. In many cases they can only travel on foot, given the mud-clogged tracks and footpaths, since the old pickup can no longer cope with the rough dirt track roads. "I fall over and get up again, I learn to eat like the people, I learn to be patient, to endure cold and heat – I suffer and laugh with them, I rejoice at their successes and share their sorrows. I go from village to village and don't ask where I am going to eat during the day or sleep at night. Sometimes I am simply

overwhelmed by tiredness, at other times I am enraged at all the injustices done to our brothers and sisters – they have no schools, no electricity, no clean drinking water, no medical services. But it is all worthwhile, for I see in them the face of God."

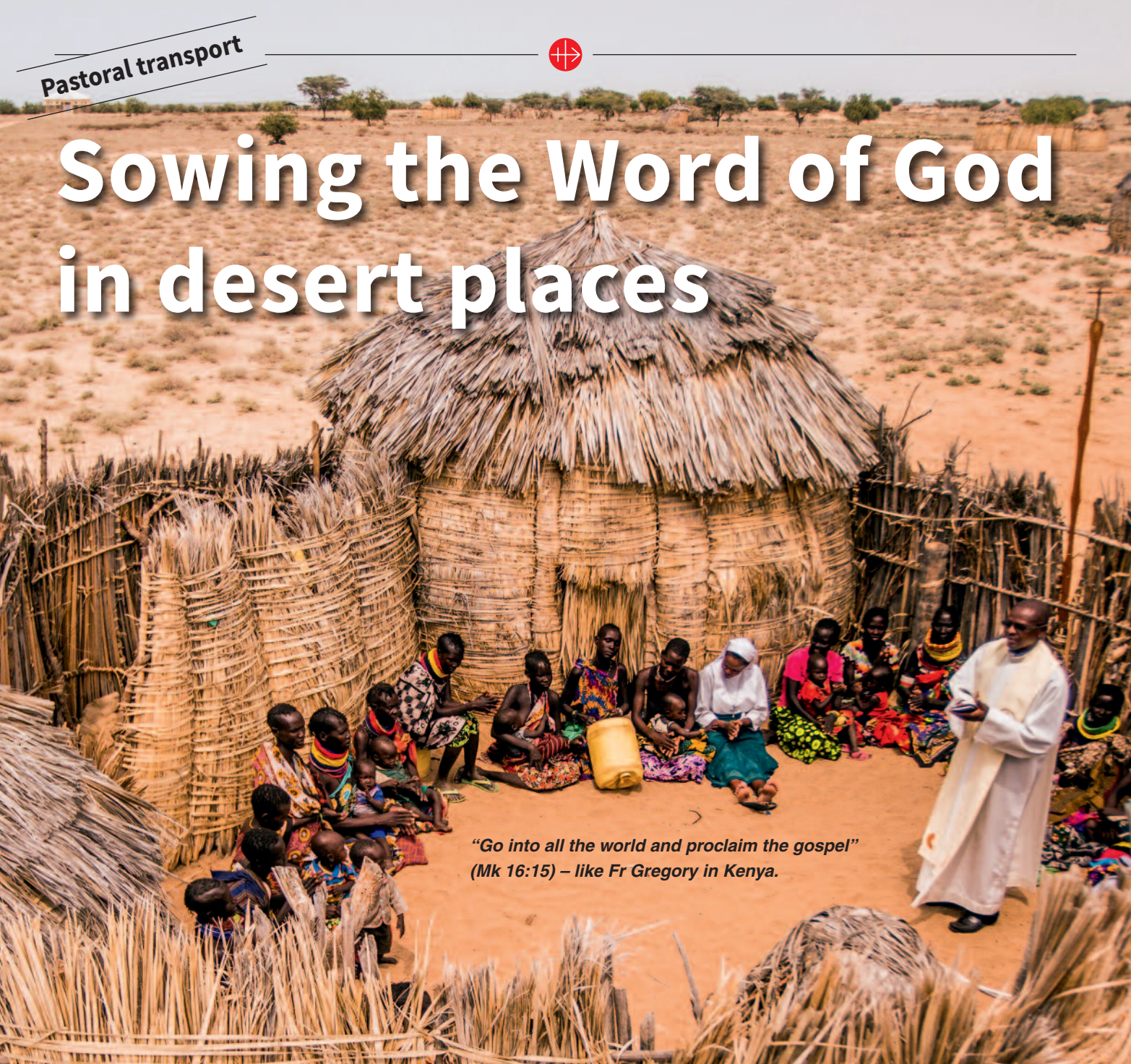
For Fr Charitable all these difficulties are the "loving caresses" of his mission. He loves his flock, and they love him. Through him they can feel the all-embracing love of Mother Church. Three-quarters of them live below the poverty threshold, and violence in the region is increasing. Drug trafficking and organised crime have followed the long civil war that lasted into the late 1990s and which brought particular suffering to the Qeqchi-Maya. For them Fr Charitable is a herald of love. "Wherever we arrive, there is a festive atmosphere." It pains the missionary that he cannot get to the villages more often. With a new pickup truck he could cover the ground more quickly, train up more catechists and celebrate Holy Mass more frequently. We have promised him **£12,400**. It will be money well spent. The Immaculate Heart Missionaries have been in Guatemala for 63 years now. Many of them were abducted, tortured, murdered. Now the seeds of their love are beginning to germinate.



*Going out to the margins of society:
Fr Charitable with a local catechist.*



Sowing the Word of God in desert places



*“Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel”
(Mk 16:15) – like Fr Gregory in Kenya.*

“Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your spirit, and they shall be created. And you will renew the face of the earth.”

There can be few places on earth where the prayer to the Holy Spirit feels more concretely relevant than in the arid, desert-like region of northern **Kenya**. The diocese of Malindi is particularly dry, isolated, and underdeveloped. There are no paved roads, only dirt tracks, no watercourses, merely boreholes here and there. No one can guarantee your security, as the arm of the law does not reach into this

region. And yet, here of all places, the Holy Ghost Fathers, or Spiritans, are striving to renew the face of the earth. For the people here are hungering and thirsting not only for physical food, water and medical help, but they are also thirsting for God and yearning for the fire of his love.

To keep “spirit and soul and body” (1 Thess 5:23) together, the Spiritans need a vehicle. “In fighting poverty, we are also sowing the Word of God,” says Fr John Mbinda, the provincial Superior in the region. They are doing so by transporting gear for drilling the boreholes and by ferrying sick people and expectant mothers to the nearest clinic. By bringing

schooling materials and essential food for schoolchildren, they are laying the groundwork for an enduring programme of “eradicating poverty and planting the Word of God in human hearts”.

Many people in this region are hearing about the God of love for the first time. They are also bearing witness to the truth of faith in God. This is a mission to the ends of the earth. Fr John is asking us to help with the tools he needs – in this case, a four-wheel-drive truck, costing **£21,300**. It will help the Spiritans in their mission to renew, if not the face of the earth, then at least the hopes of many people.



Hitting the road for God – in Siberia

In a parish the size of one of the larger dioceses in Western Europe, three Redemptorist priests, Fr Anthony from Ireland and Frs Pawel and Andrzej from Poland, work, supported by four religious Sisters. In an outlying part of the parish, Leninsk-Kuznetz, where once Catholics could only meet in secret to pray, there is now a centre where people can meet openly and deepen their spiritual lives. In another outstation, Kolionm, Fr Pawel is working with the young people, creating a shrine to Our Lady at the church. Of course, their work would be impossible without a vehicle. We are contributing £10,700, to keep the show on the road in this Siberian vineyard of the Lord.



The parents go hiking, the children do handi-crafts. Sister Susanna with the girls' group.



Thomas Heine-Geldern,
Executive President,
ACN (International)

Dear Friends,

Ever since my youth I have known about the Bacon Priest and his charity, ACN. In fact, for some years I have also been able to help ACN in Austria. Now I will be using my energies in support of this Pontifical Foundation worldwide. I ask your prayers in this endeavour, as without prayer nothing can succeed.

It is and remains our foremost duty to help the Church wherever she is unable, materially speaking, to fulfil her pastoral vocation and wherever she is embattled, oppressed, persecuted or silenced. Thanks to your generous support, dear friends, it is possible for us to be signs of the love of God for his world and for our threatened sisters and brothers, and so bring light into the darkness. My heartfelt thanks to you all for this!

However, the darkness of this world is all around us in our own environment too. If we are to live up to our responsibility for the Church in need with credibility, then each of us must be ready to pass on the light of our faith as a small beacon for Christ. And so my heartfelt plea to you all is this: let us not be reluctant or embarrassed followers of Christ, but let us rather give courageous witness to him!

Sincerely,

Need, love and thanks – your letters

United by the Cross

Thank you to ACN for all the help that you are bringing to suffering Christians. You have indeed understood the words of St Paul that “If one member suffers, all suffer together”.

This is precisely what ACN is asking of us Christians who are still living in freedom – to share what we have with those who hang on the cross on account of their faith. As it is their faith and their cross which carry us. And so, through you, we are intimately united with these Christians.

A benefactor in France

Child's Bibles for Nigeria

Speaking to a member of ACN, I discovered that the Child's Bible you produce has been published in over 185 different languages, including Igbo. I told my friends in Nigeria about this, and just

before Christmas I received information that the 5,000 Child's Bibles have now arrived in Nigeria. I am overjoyed to hear it!

A benefactor in Switzerland

An offer of free airtime

Thanks to ACN, I have now found a way of fulfilling my duty and striving to help many people in many different places with their problems, people to whom I otherwise have no personal access. I have known about ACN for some years now and I would like to offer you a free slot on the radio channel “Romántica 1380 de AM” in Mexico City, on which I have a weekly programme entitled “The beauty of being Catholic”. And I am also sending you a regular financial contribution, which I hope to increase if my circumstances permit.

A benefactor in Mexico

Where to send your contribution for the Church in Need

Our address is Aid to the Church in Need, 12–14 Benhill Avenue, Sutton, Surrey SM1 4DA. Please use the Freepost envelope – it saves you money and helps us. 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.

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