

Paris, January 30, 2005

INTERNATIONAL VINCENTIAN FAMILY

To our brothers and sisters in Asia,

Gathered together near the Virgin of the Rue du Bac and the shrine of Saint Vincent de Paul, we, the Heads of the Vincentian Family are united with you in mind, heart and prayer.

How we would like to be side by side with you — Daughters of Charity, members of the Congregation of the Mission, of the AIC, of the Society of St Vincent de Paul, of the Marian Vincentian Youth and of MISEVI — who are living and serving in Asia at this difficult time, doing all you can to help the survivors of the worst disaster of our times!

However, it is not possible for us to come and be with you! Nevertheless, this simple letter is an expression of our desire to join hands with you in the service of these afflicted people.

If any of you, yourselves, have lost dear ones, be assured that we share your sorrow.

Through these simple words of ours may you recognise the burning love that Saint Vincent has placed in our hearts: a courageous, hope-filled love inspiring us to act in a practical, concrete way among the poorest of the poor.

More than ever, your ministry of charity is essential in order to keep alight the little flame of hope. Only Christ, who died on the cross and rose again, can give meaning to a situation that has no meaning. Your hands, reaching out to hold the hands of the disaster victims, will keep that hope alight.

The whole Vincentian Family is with you. May our solidarity be a support for you in the follow-up to the emergency relief, and in whatever ongoing action you have to undertake, with great courage, once the wave of media interest has subsided and the suffering becomes even more acute.

With you we pray, with you we suffer, with you we love.

Anne Sturm
Marina Costa

AIC

Yvon Laroche, rsv
Yvon Sabourin, rsv

Religious of St. Vincent de Paul

G. Gregory Gay, C.M.
Benjamín Romo, C.M.
Alfredo Becerra, C.M.

Congregation of the Mission

Sr. Evelyne Franc
Sr. Margaret Barrett

Daughters of Charity

José Ramón Díaz Torremocha
Marco Betemps

St. Vincent de Paul Society

Gladys Abi-Saïd
Edurne Urdampilleta
JMV

Charles Shelby, C.M.
Martha Tapia
Miraculous Medal Association

David Sanz
Felipe Nieto, C.M.
MISEVI