



The Holy See

**MESSAGE OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE PRESIDENT
OF THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL "COR UNUM"
FOR THOSE AFFECTED
BY THE TSUNAMI IN SOUTHEAST ASIA**

*To the Most Reverend Paul Josef Cordes
President of the Pontifical Council "Cor Unum"*

The enormous devastation and loss of life associated with the recent earthquake and tidal wave in Southeast Asia has been followed by a remarkable outpouring of sympathy throughout the world, together with a massive mobilization of humanitarian aid. I am deeply grateful for the efforts of the Pontifical Council "Cor Unum" and numerous international Catholic charitable agencies to contribute to the relief of the peoples struck by this immense natural disaster. As you depart for a visit to that region, I would ask you to convey the assurance of my concern and my closeness in prayer to all affected by the tragedy and its aftermath.

In particular, I join my fellow Catholics and all believers in commending the victims of this terrible calamity to the infinite mercy of Almighty God and in imploring divine consolation upon the injured, the grieving and the homeless. I pray that the solidarity shown by our brothers and sisters throughout the world will prove a source of encouragement, perseverance and hope to everyone in the great work of rebuilding that lies ahead. I likewise urge the followers of the different religions to work together in offering comfort and assistance to those in need. May this catastrophe lead, by God's grace, to a future of greater generosity, cooperation and unity in the service of the common good on the part of individuals, peoples and nations.

As I hold up to all the light of the Gospel, I express my fervent hope that the Christian community will be led to a deepened trust in God's mysterious providence and an ever closer union to the Lord Jesus in the mystery of his suffering and resurrection. Upon the civil authorities and all engaged in the relief efforts I invoke the divine gifts of wisdom and strength. To you, dear Brother,

and to all the clergy, religious and lay faithful of the communities you will visit, I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing as a pledge of grace and peace in the Lord.

From the Vatican, 22 January 2005

IOANNES PAULUS II

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