

Archbishop's Letter for CHARIS Humanitarian Aid Fund

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The protracted crisis in Marawi, Philippines, has resulted in more than 360,000 people being displaced from their homes. They need food and shelter. Their children need nutrition and education. In the drawn-out refugee situation along the Thai-Myanmar border, nine refugee camps are currently home to more than 103,000 refugees who have fled conflicts in Myanmar in search for safety.

In Nepal, two years since the devastating earthquake, more than 46,000 homes have been rebuilt. However, over 115,000 families are still reconstructing their homes and lives. The earthquake took place in April 2015, but the rebuilding takes several years and are still on-going.

There continues to be many humanitarian disasters around us that media has stopped reporting but the human suffering is still there and continues to be dire.

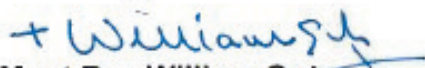
CHARIS, the Church's overseas humanitarian arm, its affiliates and partners, with the overwhelming support of the Catholic community in Singapore have responded to these situations by providing money and supplies, working with partners on the ground. In the last year, such support have brought hope and restored the dignity of numerous lives and communities.

Just as in the parable of the tenants, we are reminded that the farmers are only stewards of the vineyard that the landowner had lent to them. Similarly, may we never forget God's blessings, and always recall that we are called to be responsible stewards and not masters of God's gifts and blessings. As stewards, what do we do with the produce of the land tenanted to us?

This year, CHARIS invites you to be partners in our efforts to make an IMPACT as it launches its annual appeal for the Humanitarian Aid Fund, which provides support to organisations undertaking disaster relief and humanitarian work. An appeal flyer and envelope is being distributed to all parishioners. We urge you to join us in building a better world with your generous contribution.

In case some of you are thinking of doing more than contributing financially to our humanitarian efforts, such as extending on-ground assistance to our brothers and sisters in areas that are in the midst of armed conflict and internal strife, I would strongly caution you against taking such inordinate risk. Such endeavours also unnecessarily endanger others who may be called upon to ensure your safety or well-being in the event of a goodwill gone wrong. This could also seriously complicate any efforts to address the on-going crisis in these areas. The exercise of charity should be properly discerned and not be pursued wantonly without due consideration for the greater good of the community.

Devotedly yours in Christ,



Most Rev William Goh
Archbishop of Singapore