

From Your Servant Leader

January 22, 2015

When the world cries, it counts on America to help wipe away the tears.

Our Society thrives in 150 countries, large and small, across the globe in parishes just like ours. This gives each of us – through the worldwide Society family – the ability to respond to need in local communities right away. If a storm devastates one parish community, the Society in the parish next door can work on behalf of all of us to help both quickly and effectively.

I'm using my column this week to ask for your help. The worldwide assistance program operated by our Society through its Commission for International Aid and Development (CIAD) has exhausted its general operating account by providing \$7.3 million dollars in direct assistance, in 82 different countries in the last eight and half years. Anywhere in the world, when a National Council's Society needs assistance with disaster relief or for development projects, CIAD is the group that activates an assessment and response. Large-scale disasters might result in special worldwide campaigns. But what happens when a small-scale disaster happens? Or when a community needs basics like food and water, or shelter, or educational assistance, outside of a disaster? CIAD uses our donated funds to help each of us reach out and help the world's neediest.

If you attended the 2014 National Assembly business meeting in Atlanta you heard our Irish friend Brian O'Reilly, the CIAD Chair, show us how funds are used in faraway places such as Mozambique, Uganda, Dominican Republic, Togo, Syria and the Philippines. Just in the last year, CIAD has built homes and schools, operated feeding programs, provided scholarships and education programs, and developed agriculture. Some of this help is meeting basic human needs and some of it is systemic change and long-term development, just as we aim to do here in the United States. One thing I hear often from world travelers is that poverty is so much deeper and dangerous in other countries. CIAD is our Society's tool to help stem the tide of poverty's devastation.

Your gift to this international General Disaster and Solidarity Fund appeal will help in several ways. Some monies will provide direct disaster and development support where the need is urgent but there is no separate major appeal. Other funds will be used for the necessary, efficient administration and support of the CIAD operations and the larger international Society.

Why now? The WORLD is large place! Fifty-eight million square miles, seven continents and thousands of islands. The Society could careen from one disaster to another, from continent to continent, from country to country, using up the international disaster funds very quickly for the smaller scale aid projects. However, the Society always values donor intent, and so funds given to a major disaster or projects are not used for the many smaller and no less urgent needs worldwide. Only the CIAD's General Disaster and Solidarity Fund can be used for the many, many projects worthy of Society support either before or after a disaster strikes. When a flood or tornado hits we can't tell the victims that we will get back to them after we go and raise some money. The



David W. Barringer, CEO

need is urgent. People need shelter, food, medical supplies and other basics right away. A strong CIAD helps all of us to assure that immediate need is met with immediate assistance through the Society of St. Vincent de Paul around the world.

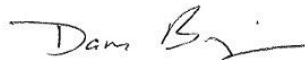
Here's where we come in as the United States members of the Society. Of the 150 countries that proudly have Society National Councils, fewer than 20 are financially strong enough to fund more than half of the worldwide Society's operations. Their economies and their funds pale in comparison to ours, and often their needs are even greater than our own. That may be hard to comprehend when we operate on a shoestring and God's providence to keep up with our need at home, and when the line for our services seems never to end. Let's remember how truly blessed by God we are to live in our country, to put food on our table in a real home, and to be able to share our blessings with others.

You may receive an email about this campaign from our national office, or this column and eGazette news may be all you see about this request. Please copy this and discuss with your conference and council. Give what you can in the assurance that your donations will help people you will never meet, to provide for needs you may never experience, in times you may never suffer.

Please click the link below to donate or send a check for what you can give to our national office in care of "International Disaster Campaign" and send a prayer of thanks to God for blessings and the ability to give to the world's most needy.

We will announce campaign results at our Midyear meeting in April. Let's once again show the world how much we are blessed in the United States, and how large our hearts can be for our friends in need around the world. Thank you.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave" followed by a stylized flourish.

Dave

[Click here to donate](#)

Go to the "Donation Programs" line and select "International Disasters" from the drop-down menu.