

Help to the Needy

BY COLUMBAN GAWLU SAN AUNG

“And the king will say to them in reply, Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me”

Matthew 25:40

It was in the year 2000, the Jubilee year; our community has been active for almost three years at St Anthony's Canossian Convent, Bedok. Bishop and priests from Myanmar came to celebrate the Mass in Myanmar after their course of retreat here in Singapore or from their way back from Sabah.

During those years a fmm sister from Myanmar was attached at Holland Road Convent on her assignment for over two years, whom we met regularly at the Mass. Sister Jecinta was the one who initiated the idea suggesting to take any active part in 'human living' and 'human concern', through our acts of loving sharing and caring.

I was not very convinced to take up the proposal as a regular basis, since our community was made up of 50 to 60 regular members, most of whom are struggling with their jobs and incomes.

But then I wanted to make a try, since it was a very blessed Jubilee year and a very good reason to step up our faith and efforts. We started the first move on July, declaring that a second collection will be made at every Mass to reach out to the less fortunate even though we our selves were not very well off. It was made known that this donation should not be a burden to anyone, and can contribute the least

affordable amount of any value, willing to give.

Since the intention was not well established yet, the collection, whatever we have on the day, was sent out to a designated place being requested by one of our members, or share it to a visiting priest. Normally it was sent random to places or events such as religious institutions, Sunday school development, renovations of churches chapels and grottos, feasts of Our Lady, Priest ordinations, Episcopal Commission on Clergy in Yangon, 'Sabyit New' religious paper in Kalaymyo and for once it went for purchase of school furnitures in East Timor in 2001. Many a times were able to send to the orphanages all over Myanmar such as Pathein, Myaungmya, Mogoke, Taunggyi, Putao, Myitkyina, Banmaw, Thaton, Phaan, Malamyaing, Ye and Falam etc.,

After the community has been able to settle at Church of Immaculate Heart Of Mary, the members increased gradually. It was also by the help of occasional announcement in the Catholic News about regular celebration of Myanmar Mass. The collection was also proportionately increased and became stable. It became a routine contribution at every Myanmar Mass and the amount has been fix for each donation for effective use. The average amount collected for each month is S\$350.00. This may not be an impressive amount in view of a charity organization but it really is precious for the needy when it is converted to the local currency.

From January 2004 the committee set up a decision to send only to the Orphanages in Myanmar, which are being taken care by the priests and the nuns whom we have proper communication and active response over the years, so that the amount of the fund



Sr Jecinta FMM, Initiating Organizer

would be sufficient and effective for the orphans.

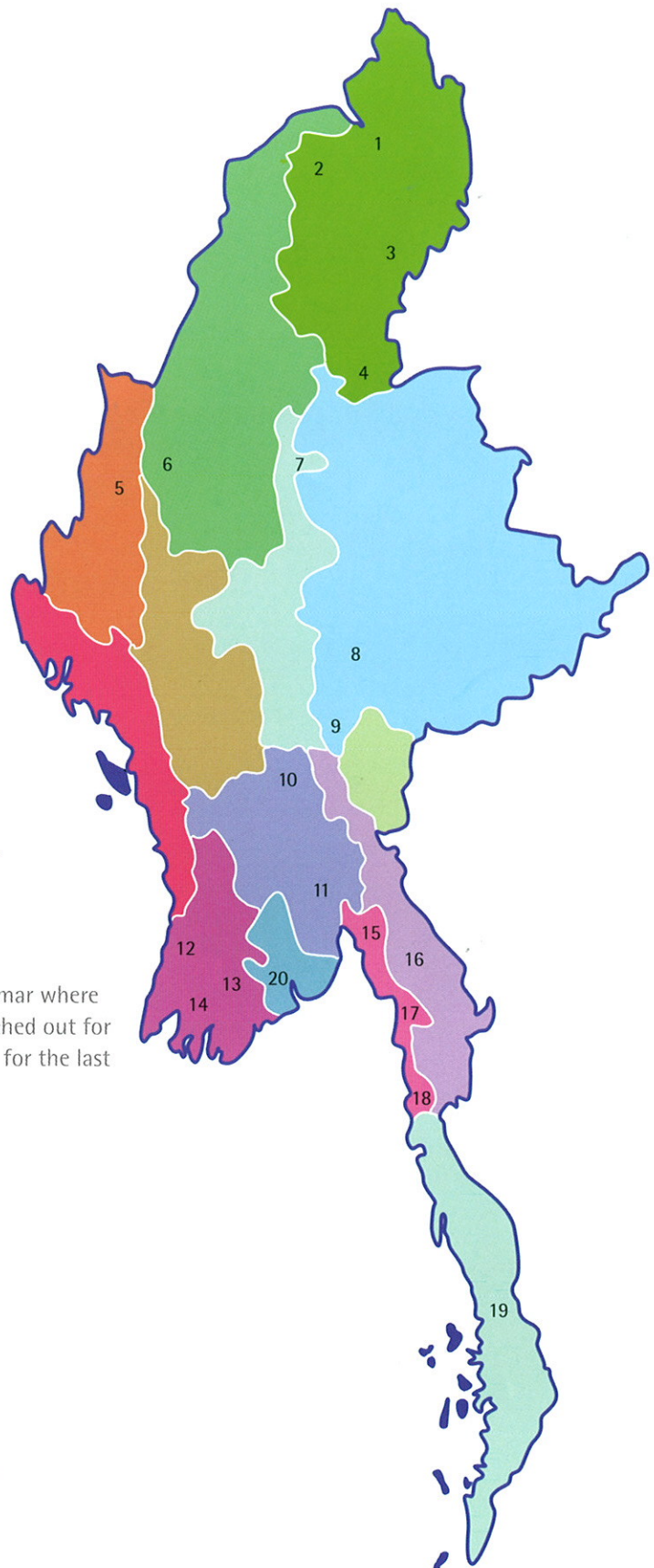
The following are the orphanages which we are in contact regularly for the last four years.

1. Pathein SFX Sisters
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3. Myaungmya (Thayet Chaung)
4. Banmaw, St Briggitte Convent SFX Sisters (Aung Tha)
5. Banmaw, fmm Sisters (Na Hlaing)
6. Toungoo St Anthony's Orphanage
7. Phekon (Sacred Heart of Jesus)
8. Phaen – St Joseph's Orphanage (Kama-maung)
9. Thaton – (Christ the King Church)
10. Nyaunglepin and Phado
11. Ma-U-Pin

There are many out there whom we may not be able to help but we are glad we did able to carry out 'within our scope and scale, with compassion and love to these children which reminded us the commandment to 'love the least of our neighbours'.

Above all these sharing, the community is very much blessed, willing to send the first collection of every year, that is on the 2nd Sunday of January, to donate for the feast of Our Lady of Nyaunglebin, about 130 miles north of capital Yangon, a well known shrine to every Catholics of Myanmar, which is a replica to Our Lady of Lourdes. The feast day falls on 2nd Sunday of February. This is to honour Our Lady and to ask for her protection and help throughout the years.

Mother of Perpetual Help!
Pray for us!



Locations in Myanmar where our donations reached out for any means of help for the last 7 years.

1. PUTAO
2. TANAI
3. MYITKYINA
4. BAMAW
5. FALAM
6. KALAYMYO
7. MOGOKE
8. TAUNGGYI
9. PHEKON
10. TAUNGOO
11. NYAUNGLEBIN
12. PATHEIN
13. MA-U-PIN
14. MYAUNGMYA
15. THATON
16. PHAAN
17. MAWLAMYAING
18. YE
19. MYEIK
20. YANGON