



OUR SOCIAL MISSION

BY CARITAS SINGAPORE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

YOUR GIVING HELPS

DURING Lent, the Church encourages us to fast, pray and give alms. In his Lenten message, Archbishop Nicholas Chia emphasises the importance of charity in our faith and the need for every Catholic to identify with those who are less fortunate. Almsgiving implies a material service rendered to the poor for Christ's sake.

Every year, the Church conducts its annual fundraising campaign in support of the poor and needy. Charities Week 2010 began on Feb 27 and is led by Caritas Singapore Community Council.

Proceeds from Charities Week 2010 will help the work of Caritas Singapore and the Catholic organisations under its umbrella. Collectively, they reach out to many in need including the poor and destitute, migrant workers, families and children, people with HIV/AIDS and prisoners. They serve more than 50,000 people regardless of race, language or religion.

There are now more than 70 social service programmes run by Catholic charities and organisations. Improvements to existing programmes and new services are being planned in response to changing and increased needs.

Your giving will contribute to their work in reaching out to those in need. It will enable these organisations to provide a decent meal to someone in need; shelter the homeless and marginalised; care for the young and youth at risk, befriend and counsel the lonely, among others.



Jesus cared deeply for the poor and outcasts. He fed the hungry, healed the sick and welcomed the marginalised of society. It is in this spirit that each of us is called to love and serve – the foundation of our outreach to the community as one human family.

Charities Week 2010 supports the programmes and services of organisations such as the Archdiocesan Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People (ACMI), Boys' Town Singapore, Catholic AIDS Response Effort (CARE), Catholic Welfare Services, Family Life Society, Marine Parade Family Service Centre, and the Roman Catholic Prison Ministry.

Please give generously. Your giving can make a difference in the lives of those in need, and help them regain their God-given dignity.

To donate, pick up a Charities Week 2010 appeal envelope from your parish. You can drop your donation envelope in your parish offertory box or mail it directly to Caritas Singapore (cheque only). Kindly indicate if you would like tax exemption for your donation, and provide us with your NRIC number for our processing.



Foreign workers can be sure of nutritious meals, thanks to the Soup Kitchen of the Archdiocesan Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People (ACMI).



At the Villa Francis Home, elderly residents not only have a roof over their heads but also care and attention from staff and volunteers.

And now abideth faith, hope and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity. (1 Corinthians 13:13)

Have you ever wondered why every Catholic is called to charitable work? Has there been a time when someone you know needed help but you did not know where to direct him to? Is there a difference between Catholic charities and secular ones, in the way we reach out to help the poor and needy?

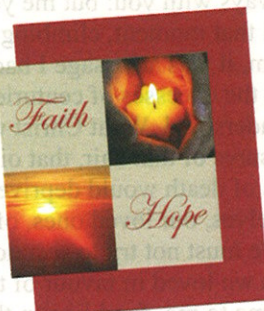
The booklet, *Faith, Hope and Our Catholic Charities*, provides an insight into the work of Catholic charities and community groups in Singapore. From befriending a prisoner to helping his family while he is in jail, to caring for a dying old person, to providing basic education for a dumpsite child in the Philippines, *Faith, Hope and Our Catholic Charities* provides a glimpse on the work of Catholic organisations. The booklet also sets out the

programmes and services currently offered. These include support for couples (such as pre-marriage counselling, marriage enrichment, help for troubled marriages, etc), families

(aid for the needy, student care, residential services, etc) and the marginalised (befriending, shelters, etc).

The booklet also shares true accounts of those whose lives have been given new hope. It highlights how the Catholic Church has been instrumental in responding to the call of Jesus Christ to "love one another as I have loved you". It reminds us that as "one body in the name of Christ", all of us must be a part of the Church's charitable works.

Faith, Hope and Our Catholic Charities is available at your parish. Be sure to get your copy. You can also contact Caritas Singapore at 6337 3711 or email: info@caritas-singapore.org for a copy.



When a helping hand means hope Excerpts of stories from the booklet, *Faith, Love and Our Catholic Charities*

Andrew was a drug addict who shuttled between prisons for over 20 years. He felt he had reached rock bottom when he tested positive for HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

Without the proper medication, the outlook was bleak. "The medical worker told me bluntly that I would die when he gave me my results," Andrew recalls.

He has found a sanctuary in CARE, where he draws strength and dignity from the unconditional love of the staff and new friends.

"This is only a temporary shelter for me to rest and recuperate," he says. "HIV has been a big wake-up call. I want to prove that I can stand on my own feet before I see my family again."

Andrew, 52,
a beneficiary of CARE

Given just six months to live, Mr Wong was determined not to be placed in a hospice. He was making his getaway in a cab when he received a call from the hospice staff asking why he was off and inviting him to come back when he was more ill.

"How is it there's a place that actually welcomes the sick and dying? Other people tell you if you are sick, don't come home. But here, people want me when I'm ill," he says.

The invitation was probably the first act of kindness and gentleness he had encountered in a long time.

"I've learnt not to be scared and I feel hopeful here. The Chinese say 'You may have a house, but not a roof over your head.' And here, I know it's one place I can truly call home."

C F Wong, 58,
a beneficiary of St Joseph's Home