

ARCHDIOCESE OF HONIARA

P.O. Box 237, Honiara, Solomon Islands
Tel: (677) 22387 Fax: (677) 22869

EMAIL ahonccsi@solomon.com.sb

June 7 the 2007

Dear Alena,

Greetings from Holy Cross, Honiara and thank you for your generous gift towards the Gizo Diocese past earthquakes and tsunami relief and reconstruction programme, please find enclosed our SPF Rec # 18477/07 and a copy of my memo #07/133, you can see that your gift has been put into the Diocese of Gizo Tsunami Account. Your gift of SBD 20,549.92 is a great help. To put things into context, a carpenter here in Solomon Islands is happy with SBD 50,00 per day, your gift gives Gizo 410 working days! Of course the other side of the situation is all imported building materials are very expensive.

The hottest news here in the Church in Solomon Islands is we have a new Bishop Elect; he is Luciano Capelli SDB, born in Italy 1947, only a child! I don't have to sing his praises for you. You know him so well. He will bring so many of his personal gifts to Gizo with him.

Bishop Bernard O'Grady OP must be relieved, for the past two years he has been fighting cancer, he is now cancer free, being seventy-five years he handed in his resignation and was waiting for the evening to come gently. April 2nd came with a terrible series of earthquakes and a sweeping tsunami, now what you could call a gentle evening event.

The Diocese of Gizo is small, only 9,500 Catholics, it is scattered over many islands and lots of open sea to tend with. Each bishop in Gizo puts up very high canoe with outboard engine hours. As the evening sets the canoe does not become more enjoyable!

Over fifty were lost during the tsunami devastation, thank God it all happened in day light, if not the numbers would have been so much higher. The damage to property because of the earthquakes and the tsunami has been extensive. Complete coastal villages were wiped out. It will take years to rebuild and there are lots of questions as to where to rebuild.

The Diocese of Gizo celebrated a short while ago fifty years of Dominican presence. In many of the parishes there will have to be a total rebuilding programme. Bishop Elect will need all the buzz he has in him!

The people of Gizo celebrated Easter under the trees, the first time for many of them to come down from the higher ground. Fear is very strong. I paid a short visit to Gizo a few

weeks ago and I can tell you that when you feel one of the tremors they are having regularly, you can understand why all the fear.

Life goes on, right after Easter in Honiara, Gizo and Auki our youth welcomed with energy the World Youth Day Cross and Icon. We had from South Africa a team of young people leading our youth in workshops: Education for Life aimed at HIV and AIDS prevention. Since then I have been to Papua New Guinea for our Bishop Conference Meeting and then we had a host of meetings here in Honiara. I must say they are not my favourite pastime, but they are necessary if we are to move forward. Planning while a lot of our plans fail, set the road we want to walk even we don't get where we want to go as quickly as we would like.

In our part of Solomon Islands cyclones are our ugly visitor, since the tsunami in Gizo I have experience and email and administration cyclone. We try to keep ahead of it all, but it is hard work. I am not complaining, when I think of what they have to face in Gizo, I realize our situation is much more gentle.

That's our story from this side of the world village. I hope life is being kind to you. Rodo doku!

In Christ,

Adrian Smith sm
Archbishop of Honiara