

FIFTH REPORT: Easter Monday, April 09, 2007 6:30 PM

A fifth message sent out by Archbishop Adrian Smith sm, Archbishop of Honiara

EASTER UNDER THE TREES

It was good to get through to Bishop Bernard last night (Easter Sunday) and to hear the ring of joy in his voice.

They had their Easter Sunday Mass under the trees near to the Cathedral in Gizo. The Cathedral is not safe to use. The people found courage to come down from the high ground to the sea level and join in their Easter Sunday Morning Liturgy. They lit their Easter Candle and rejoiced in proclaiming Christ as their Light. There is so much hope about Easter. They cast aside their fears.

The ugly statistics continue to tell of an increase in the number of those dead, it is now over 40 persons. There are still those unaccounted for.

When I called Gizo at 9 pm last night Adam of Caritas Solomon Islands , Adam is seconded to us by Caritas Australia , answered the phone. There were sounds of laughter in the background. The arrival of the Salesian/Caritas joint venture charter was a good up lift for Bishop Bernard and the people Gizo.

When I got through to Bishop Bernard on Holy Saturday he said to me Hosea in the Holy Saturday Morning Prayer summed it all up for him. Bishop Bernard repeated that again to me on Easter Sunday Night. I could see where he was coming from.

“Come, let us return to the Lord. He has torn us to pieces, but he will heal us; he has struck us down, but he will bandage our wounds; after a day or two he will bring us back to life, on the third day he will raise us and we shall live in his presence.” (Hos 6:1-3a)

It must have been so painful for them to have had to miss the Holy Thursday, Good Friday and the Holy Saturday Vigil Liturgies. But they did come together for Easter Sunday Morning!

Now the long road of rebuilding confidence lies ahead of them. Twisted and flattened homes will have to be searched to see what can be saved and used in the rebuilding process. It becomes clearer to me the need to have a support set up here in Honiara so that the needed materials can be bought and shipped to them. It will be a logistic headache and a slow process.

The great sadness is for those who have lost their loved ones. They will have to adjust to their loss and get on with life. I am convinced that all the sleeping out at night in all kinds of makeshift shelter has given malaria a wonderful opportunity to gain more victims. Old

people who have survived must be weakened, small babies who have been exposed to the cold nights trying to find a comfortable place to sleep will have lost their resistance to sickness which lurk in the dark in such situations.

Food gardens that have been covered by the waves will not produce; vegetables are scarce; mothers face a stressful road as they care for their children. There is such a need for Easter Hope.

For myself I am experiencing an “email” cyclone, many are asking what is the best way to send funds. The banking system is I expect is up and running again in Gizo. I have just checked on that with Bishop Bernard, I got through on the first dial, that’s worthy of an “Alleluia”. Any one wishing to send funds can ask their bank to make a bank draft payable to the DIOCESE OF GIZO, forward it by Air Mail to Bishop Bernard O’Grady OP, Bishop of Gizo, P.O. Box 22 Gizo P.O., Solomon Islands . Please give sufficient information so that Bishop can send you a receipt. I am willing to act on behalf of GIZO DIOCESE and receive any Cheques you may wish to send. If sending the to me please make them payable to: DIOCESE OF HONIARA. I will immediately deposit them in our Special Purpose Account DIOSE OF GIZO TSUNAMI FUND. That account belongs to Bishop Bernard O’Grady OP. Again please make sure you give me sufficient information so that I can receipt you.

It is not all about money, please pray for courage and hope for all the people of the Western Solomons as they try to rebuild their lives.

We had a wonderful Easter Celebration here in Honiara . I continue to think that the Tsunami made us all hungry for a Hope Story, and Easter is that.

+Adrian Smith sm

Funds for the tsunami relief can be sent to:

Bishop Bernard O'Grady op via a bank draft made out to:

Diocese of Gizo

and sent by Air Mail to Bishop Bernard O'Grady op, Bishop of Gizo, P. O. Box 22 Gizo P. O., Solomon Islands

or

The **Diocese of Gizo Tsunami Account** at the Chancery office, Archdiocese of Honiara. It is discretionary fund to be used by the Bishop of Gizo.

The details of the account are:

Name of the bank: **National Bank of Solomon Islands Ltd.**

Address of the Bank: **P. O. Box 37, Honiara G.P.O., Solomon Islands**

Name of the Account: **Diocese of Honiara Special Purpose A/C**

Account Number: **01-902 456 - 0301 3**

We shall appreciate that you send in your remittance details giving as much details as possible. Please follow up your donation with an e-mail.