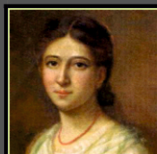


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Founder – Miss Jeanne Bigard
(2) Pontifical Society of St. Peter the Apostle awakens adults and youth to the problem of training of local clergy, men and women religious, and catechists in Mission Churches



Founder – Bishop Charles de Forbin-Janson
(3) Pontifical Society of the Holy Childhood promotes missionary zeal among children so as to lead them to a sharing of spiritual and material resources with other children



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For more details regarding the PMO Mission visit us at www.pmoindia.org

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TO:

Vol 39, No. 4

July - August 2016

PROCLAIM

A magazine for Missionary Animation

Mother Mary
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Should we or should we not?

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ Jesus,



I would like discuss with you the question that is pertinent today: “Should the Pontifical Mission Societies (PMS) support emergency situations where lives and properties are in danger?”

One among the various ways in which the missionary commitment of the Church is practised is “reaching out to the marginalized and the concrete service of love” [statutes n.3]. Notwithstanding that the main objective of the PMS is “the support of evangelization in the strict sense” [statutes n. 19], involvement in such areas as human promotion and development and collaboration with other Catholic bodies devoted to social and health assistance is not excluded [statutes n.19].

A major humanitarian disaster affects communities in various ways and frequently results in the destruction of Church infrastructure and the dislocation of communities and the church personnel who serve them. *A humanitarian disaster is an event, or series of events, that causes major destruction or disruption of a community's capacity to function.* [Humanitarian disaster due to causes Geophysical --- earthquakes, volcanoes, tsunami, landslides/ avalanches; Meteorological --- storms, cyclones, hurricanes, typhoons, blizzards; Hydrological --- floods, storm surges; Climatic --- droughts, extreme temperatures, wildfires; Biological --- epidemics, infestations.]

It is likely that many supporters of PMS will make spontaneous donations with an expectation that these will be directed to those in needs due to the disaster. It revolves around the pastoral presence and services that the local Catholic Church community immediately provides irrespective of any coordinated UN or other NGO response. It fits the particular charism and mandate of the PMS which is outside the scope and mandate of both Catholic and non-Catholic international NGOs. Some such areas that need our attention are;

1. Pastoral care and support for the sick, injured and dying in a manner that affirms and protects the dignity of the human person.
2. Emergency repatriation for the sick, injured, dying and dead in a manner that respects and prioritizes the dignity of the local community with which they are identified.
3. Emergency support for the work of local pastors (which includes the episcopal leadership) and pastoral care workers in accompanying, caring for, protecting and advocating on behalf of traumatized communities, individuals and unaccompanied minors.
4. The small but significant infrastructure and resource cost of converting local Church buildings and premises into makeshift shelters, emergency hospitals, clinics and feeding centers, as well as emergency schools and day- care centers.
5. A small capacity to address the immediate and basic needs for those few who do fall through the cracks of the general overarching international NGO/UN humanitarian response.

I request you to respond to this question through a 'Letter to the Editor' and suggest whether the PMS should involve in such emergency situations or not. If yes, what are the ways in which the PMS should respond?.

Fr Faustine L Lobo
National Director (PMO – India)