

G.P.O. Box 50,
Kathmandu, Nepal
21 February 2016

Dear Mission Possible Friends,

Thank you for the generous gift of \$870 you sent to Canadian Jesuits International in December. I will see that the funds are put to good use for the poor of Nepal. We are specially trying to meet a little of the construction challenges after last year's earthquakes.

The last year was challenging for Nepal. The earthquakes did much damage but could have been much worse. We were blessed that the largest quake came at noon on a Saturday, when schools and offices were closed. Many of the Jesuits and other religious were in Okhaldhunga District, to the north-east of Kathmandu, for the ordination of our first Nepal-born Jesuit priest, Fr. Tek Paudel. The village people were all at the ceremony and *After-Mass* entertainment was about to start, when the quake struck. No one was at home when many houses collapsed. Getting back to the city was a challenge. International help was a blessing, thanks to the airport and main highways remaining usable. We are now in the long, slow stage of getting schools, hospitals, and homes built again.

Political woes add to the people's suffering. The saga is long, but the main problem seems to be with officials bent on gain rather than service.

I continue to enjoy guiding six young men busy with grade 11 and 12 studies. They are interested in becoming Jesuits. Our staff of three priests, Cap Miller, Etienne Degrez and I, help them through this discernment process, while overseeing their studies. I continue to be the secretary to our Regional Superior, Fr. Boniface Tigga.

We enjoyed the Christmas break, this time subdued because of fuel and electricity shortages, and pending term exams. With the exams out of the way, five of the youngsters joined me on a ten day trip to Tipling, our mission at the north end of Dhading District. A dusty day in vans, and a day's hike, got us to the mission, where we spent six days with Fathers Norbert D'Souza and Anil Beck. We shared their table and home, such as it is. The earthquake destroyed their rented quarters. We spent five days helping construct the new Jesuit residence on land we have bought. On our last day at the village, our young men joined Fr. Norbert on a picnic for parish youngsters, while I rested before facing the trip home!

Now we pray through Lent, following the tradition of more prayer, some fasting, and almsgiving. I hope that before Easter we can find ways to quickly rebuild homes. The shacks the poor now use will not stand up to the April and May brief but powerful thunder storms. That, for now, is my prayer to our Risen Saviour.

I'm looking forward to being with you on the July 16-17 weekend. Thanks again for your continued support.

May Easter bring good answers to your prayers. If mine can help, please count on them.

Bill Robins

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