



DOMANDE ALL'ARCIVESCOVO DI COLOMBO - VII

Relations between the Catholics and others of other faiths

The Buddhist community and the Hindus have been complaining long of the attempt at “unethical conversions” by these groups, and this is a fact that cannot be easily dismissed.

This accusation and reaction reached a climax around Christmas 2003 with the death of a popular Buddhist monk (Rev. Soma) in the Island, whom some Buddhists alleged was a murder caused by Christians. With the elections around the corner this was made a political issue and a new political party of Buddhist monks emerged fielding 8 members in parliament. This group of extremists has influenced public opinion heavily by its propaganda.

The Buddhists and others do not easily distinguish between the Catholics and other Christian groups. The fact that the Catholics count the large majority of the Christian community has made them to think that all those who display the symbol of the Cross and talk of Christ is Catholics. Thus the misdeeds of the Fundamentalist groups are laid on the whole Christian community.

However, this situation began gradually changing due to the very tolerant and peaceful attitude of the Catholic community. The present disaster improved it further when people began treating each other as human beings without any consideration of caste, creed or race. This we consider as a good omen of the future. In fact many religious leaders appealed to the people to forget all differences and work to rebuild the country.

However some Christian Fundamentalists are nevertheless being accused of trying to exploit this situation to influence people and the Buddhists are alert to it. A national newspaper last Sunday (23.01.2005) carried a full-page article with photographs on this subject and naming some of these Fundamentalist organisations under the title – “Mix of tsunami aid and preaching stirs concern.” The article states – “A dozen Americans walked into a relief camp here, showering bereft parents and traumatized children with gifts, attention and affection. They also quietly offered camp residents something else: Jesus.”

It is our opinion that this type of activity totally blemishes our good efforts to help our people in disaster in genuine charity and sincerity. As the Lord said – “They may see our good works and praise the Lord.” But exploiting misery is not Christianity.

Conversion legislation

There have been two attempts already to bring legislation to check what is termed “unethical conversions.” We are against such legislation. So are the majority of right thinking people. The reason is that this is not going to be an effective solution to the problem. On the contrary it will create further religious dissension besides affecting a fundamental right of the people.

(- segue)

800.086808

E' il numero verde dell'unità di crisi al quale devono rivolgersi i parenti di coloro che inizialmente erano stati segnalati fra i dispersi e che invece successivamente hanno dato notizie certe di sé.

286.000 MORTI

Sono già state censite 286.000 vittime, tra le quali 54 italiani. I nostri connazionali ancora irrimediabilmente ammontano a 53. La gestione della lista dei dispersi è di competenza del Viminale.

PARTECIPATE ALLA SOTTOSCRIZIONE

A FAVORE DELLE VITTIME
c.c.p. n.n. 12071411, abi 07601, cab 12900, intestato “Association Internazionale Reine Helene”, causale: “terremoto in Asia”.