

## A TRE MESI DALLO TSUNAMI L'ARCIVESCOVO MALCOLM RANJITH VISITA LE AERE COLPITE NELLO SRI LANKA



“It was in a way a nostalgic moment when His Grace Archbishop Malcolm Ranjith, currently Apostolic Nuncio in Indonesia, having seen at close quarters the damage inflicted by the Tsunami in northern Sumatra in Indonesia, visited his homeland Sri Lanka, to observe for himself the areas affected by the Tsunami. Having been involved in fisheries and village development during his ministry in Sri Lanka and having been responsible for the construction of many houses for the coastal fishermen, accompanied by Rev. Fr. Damian Fernando, the Director of SEDEC, Rev. Fr. Neville Joe Perera the National Coordinator for Apostolate to Migrants in Italy and others, His Grace visited some of

these same villages along the southern and eastern coast where the very houses he had constructed were now in ruins with little or nothing remaining of the houses and the very area itself, the poor people there having lost everything to the devastating waves on that fateful day in December.

Paiyagala parish scene of many years of his pastoral ministry, Mutwal, Kalamulla, Galle, Matara, Kalametiya, Hambantota, Mulaitivu, all areas that were brought to their knees having borne the brunt of the wind and waves in December were sites visited by His Grace.

In response to the needs of the people in the places he visited, and with the ability to translate words into deeds, Archbishop Malcolm Ranjith made arrangements for three hundred houses to be constructed in Paiyagala, eighty units of nets and boats for the fishermen in Mutwal, twenty five houses with land in Kalamulla, boats and nets for thirty seven families in Kalametiya, twenty five houses for Mullaitivu as well as necessary aid according to the needs spelled out by the Parish priest of Hambantota. The donations, amounting to many millions of Sri Lankan rupees will be channeled through Caritas Sri Lanka, which is already involved in those areas through the local offices, under the overall direction of Rev. Fr. Damian Fernando. The parish priests and other persons involved in the reconstruction of their zones will ensure the steady and responsible progress of the work undertaken.

His Grace also called on Her Excellency Mrs. Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, President of Sri Lanka and discussed matters relating to the welfare of the people in the coastal areas in the reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts, pointing out the immense difficulty the fisherman will have to undergo in the application of a 100 meter no-construction zone.

*Fr. Leo Perera from Rome”*

