



*My Dear Brothers & Sisters,*

*Greetings in the Lord from Sri Lanka!*

*I am sure you heard of the terrible tragedy that befell us with a tidal wave on Sunday 26th December morning, while some of our people were still attending church services.*

*The death toll has now exceeded 22,000 and is expected to rise to 30,000 in the least. The tragedy is simply beyond our comprehension and it was all a matter of less than half an hour when the wave dashed and receded. The coastal belt of the whole Island is affected, with the southern end of the Archdiocese of Colombo, being among the worst. The loss of property can hardly be estimated. One nun was killed in the diocese of Galle and two of our priests in the Archdiocese fortunately escaped death. Nearly ten of our churches . . . are completely devastated.*

*At the moment we are compelled to harbor over 150,000 refugees in our churches. A large number of our Catholics are also harbored in Buddhist temples as much as we have persons of other faiths in ours. Our urgent need is food, milk food for children, medicine, bedding and temporary shelter (tents) to have them back in their original land sites. Eventually, we will need a lot of housing material and money to put up houses for them as at the moment they are penniless. It is tragic to think that those who have escaped are just left with only themselves and the clothes they were wearing at the moment of the tragedy. Even where the houses have been spared there is nothing left in them. All that has been carried away into the sea or destroyed and they have to begin from scratch. In the circumstances may I appeal to you, for whatever possible help.*

*We would deeply appreciate every little contribution in this moment of crisis.*

*We are very grateful to you for the concern and solidarity with us in our moment of grief and helplessness.*

*Permit me to thank you on behalf of our people as they look forward to your for your generosity.*

*With our prayers and best wishes for the New Year.*

*Yours sincerely in Christ.*

**+ Oswald Gomis**  
*Archbishop of Colombo*



**SOLENNE APPELLO  
DELL'ARCIVESCOVO  
DI COLOMBO  
(SRI LANKA)  
S.E.R. MONS.  
OSWALD GOMIS**



### **MINISTERO DEGLI ESTERI**

Il Ministero degli Esteri non ha reso nota alcuna lista di nominativi di italiani dispersi "per doveroso rispetto della privacy e per l'esigenza in alcuni casi di ulteriori riscontri. Circa le liste pubblicate autonomamente da organi di stampa, gli elenchi disponibili localmente nei Paesi colpiti non sono attendibili, in quanto costituiscono solo una delle varie fonti d'informazione" dell'unità di crisi. Tali liste vengono integrate con i dati provenienti dai contatti, con quelli dei tour operator, con le segnalazioni delle Prefetture e quelle ricevute tramite messaggi internet e telefonici.

### **GIORNATA DI LUTTO**

In accordo con la presidenza lussemburghese dell'Unione Europea, il 5 gennaio si osserverà una giornata di lutto per le vittime del terremoto nel sud-est asiatico.

### **RITROVATI 90 DISPERSI**

Si è ridotto da 660 a 570 il numero degli italiani non ancora rintracciati, la maggior parte dei quali erano concentrati nello Sri Lanka e in Thailandia..

### **IL CAPO DELLO STATO**

"Bisogna stare vicino alle popolazioni locali, cercando di aiutarle. Bisogna lavorare tutti insieme per l'Asia. Bisogna lavorare insieme nell'Onu tutti quanti".