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April 5, 2010

Mr. John Doe  
123 Any Street  
Your Town, VA 23222-0987

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*SUDAN*

*TANZANIA*

*TUNISIA*

*UGANDA*

*ZAIRE*

Dear Mr. Doe,

“I will bless the Lord at all times; praise shall be always in my mouth. My soul will glory in the Lord that the poor may hear and be glad. I sought the Lord, who answered me, delivered me from all my fears.” (Psalm 34)

I have been a missionary for more than 30 years -- so it is “in my blood” as the expression goes. As a result, whenever I read something or ponder a particular issue -- I think about the people in our missions living throughout the African continent. I think about how they will be affected -- how their lives will be different because of something.

And when I read the above passage from Psalm 34 the other day --  
I again thought about the people in our missions.

Recently I received a letter from Fr. Delphin Bukunguta -- a priest working in the Rwabika region of the Democratic Republic of Congo, near its border with Rwanda. Fr. Delphin has lived and worked in the region for nearly his entire life. And because of his lifetime commitment to the poor of this area, he has seen incredible suffering.

During the past twenty years, the people of the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly called Zaire) have endured famine, drought, invasion, persecution and wars that have claimed an estimated six million lives. Another 200,000 Congolese women and girls have been forcibly raped! And as I write this letter to you, tens of thousands more continue to perish each month -- primarily due to widespread disease and famine.

But their hearts and their spirits have not been broken! And they long to thank God for the simple blessings that still enrich their lives.

“The people of Rwabiki are hoping to reconstruct their lives by rebuilding their community,” Fr. Delphin writes. “One of the ways they hope to do this is by constructing a multi-purpose building . . . which could be used as a school, a chapel and would provide a place for community gatherings!”

“In 2008, we started rebuilding again, but the new construction was destroyed by an

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earthquake. Now we are trying again!”

“In order to construct a permanent, sturdy structure -- we need to use cement, concrete blocks, iron sheeting, insect-resistant lumber and steel reinforcement bars . . . as well as windows, doors, light fixtures, electrical wiring and plumbing materials. We will also need to furnish the building with chairs, desks, tables and other items.”

“It is our hope to use the building for as many things as possible,” Fr. Delphin continues. “Such a facility would offer incredible hope to these poor people who have endured so much suffering. Is there some way you can help us?”

My friend, imagine what a difference this building would mean to the people of Rwabiki! Imagine the hope it would give them! Imagine how their hearts would be renewed . . . knowing that they had a place for their children to attend school . . . a place to come together as a community . . . a place to worship and to pray -- knowing that “the Lord hears the cry of the poor!”

Without a doubt, the total cost of completing the new building will run well over \$20,000. Fr. Delphin writes that the people are willing to do as much manual labor as is necessary to making it a reality. But because they are so poor, they simply do not have the money needed to purchase building materials. That is why I am asking for your help.

Is there some amount you can send to help complete the new building in Rwabiki?

You have been so kind and generous -- especially to those most in need! Your financial support has enabled us to reach out to countless men, women and children. If there is some way you can help us once again, please know that you would be helping to change the lives of the people of Rwabiki -- now and for years to come. God bless you for all that you continue to do.

Your Missionary Friend,

*Fr. John P. Lynch*

Fr. John P. Lynch, M. Afr.

*P.S. These poor people have been through so much!*

*Any amount you can send will help to give them*

*hope for a better future. Thank you again!*