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## **PARRAINAGE TIERS-MONDE, CONGRATULATIONS!**

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Parrainage Tiers-Monde, or Third World Sponsorship, celebrates its twenty-fifth anniversary, this year. On this unforgettable anniversary I join all the generous benefactors in giving thanks for this channel of kindness and solidarity. On behalf of the Church of Edmundston and in my own name I want to express our gratitude to the organisation's founder, Sister Androla St-Onge, to the Filles de Marie-de-l'Assomption Sisters who from the start have been the "sponsors" of the Sponsorship, and to all the volunteer personnel who have been making this miracle real, this past quarter century. Here are excerpts of the homily I gave, on the occasion.

### **SOURCE OF THE MOTIVATION**

"For your sake Jesus Christ made himself poor though he was rich, so that you might become rich by his poverty" (2 Cor. 8:9). It is in this incomparable divine initiative that we can find the deepest motivation for random acts of solidarity, but also for entire lives totally dedicated to others. Looking at our Father in heaven and contemplating the infinite goodness of Him who makes His sun shine on all His creation, and who does not cease to spread throughout creation life's most precious riches, are we not drawn to act like Him who created us in His image and likeness? Are we not invited to share with those around us and those far away, the goods we have received through His kindness? By meditating on the initiative of the Incarnation and pondering the example of Jesus sharing the life of humans, and especially the poor, are we not urged to experience such a level of sharing and solidarity, day after day? By fixing our gaze on Mary the Mother of Jesus, are we not stimulated to give, to share what we hold to be the most precious gifts, not only our material goods but also our faith, love, and hope?

### **BUILDING BRIDGES**

I hope that Jesus, the Word made flesh, continue to challenge and to pursue what was so well begun in our world from the very beginning until today. Parrainage Tiers-Monde is in the line of a great tradition of giving and solidarity. It is part of the very act of creation because we were all created in the image and likeness of God, and because we are all His children. From the time of Babel men and women have attempted to build bridges between people, but have not always succeeded. Only Jesus Christ, the Supreme Pontiff, succeeded in building bridges between humans, and between humans and heaven. Each time we help build such bridges we share in Jesus Christ's sublime mission; in this way we shall reach the Lord of lords, Him whom no one has ever seen and whom no one can ever see, the only one who makes immortality possible. However, thanks to kindness and solidarity, the God of Jesus Christ is better known, better loved, and better glorified. Members of Parrainage Tiers-Monde, be proud of what you have achieved through the grace of God. Each time you have done something for the neediest in the world, it is to Jesus himself that you have done it, as so many messages from your organisation affirm.

### **TRULY HUMAN APPROACHES**

Pursuit of development requires an ever increasing number of technicians, but even more does it require from the wise a power of deep reflection in the search for a new humanism which would enable the modern person to rediscover him- or herself by taking upon oneself the superior values of love, friendship, prayer, and contemplation. In this manner, real development, which is the passage for one and all from less human to truly human conditions, will take place. Less human: the material poverty of those who lack the basic necessities of life, and the moral poverty of those who are crushed under the weight of their own self-love. Less human: oppressive political structures resulting from the abuse of ownership or the improper exercise of power, from the exploitation of the worker or unjust transactions. Truly human: the rise from poverty to the acquisition of life's necessities; the elimination of social ills; broadening the horizons of knowledge; acquiring refinement and culture. Truly human, also: a growing awareness of other people's dignity, a taste for the spirit of poverty, an

active interest in the common good, and a desire for peace. Still more human: acknowledgement by all of the highest values and of God himself, their author and end. Finally and above all, there is faith – God’s gift to people of good will – and our loving unity in Christ, who calls us all to share God’s life as sons and daughters of the living God, the Father of all. May this invaluable teaching of Pope Paul VI, in his encyclical on the development of peoples, continue to inspire our actions on behalf of our brothers and sisters.

#### **THE CRIES OF HUMANKIND**

Parrainage Tiers-Monde is an organisation dedicated to bringing to our attention the cries of humankind. There are already more than one thousand children in over ten countries, who have received a precious aid from the organisation. The initiative of a director of the Diocese of Edmundston’s mission office and some 80 missionaries, Parrainage Tiers-Monde is truly unique in its beginnings and development. The organisation has been generously sponsored by the Filles de Marie-de-l’Assomption Sisters who with volunteers look after the administration of all monies received for the welfare of children in the Third World. In thinking of all these children and youth who are yearning for truly human living conditions, I wish long life to Parrainage Tiers-Monde, and I thank its generous benefactors.

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