

PRESS RELEASE

A Word that Nourishes and Warms

On Sunday evening, at the end of the Mass, Pope Francis will give copies of the Gospel of Luke to five families from five of the world's major cities: Hanoi (Asia), Havana (America), Marseille (Europe), Sydney (Australia) and Kinshasa (Africa). In the coming days, 750,000 copies of the Gospel will arrive in these cities for distribution to local families, especially to those living on their outskirts.

The Gospel of Luke is the Good News of God's mercy for the human family.

These will be accompanied by a family that has come directly from Damascus, Syria, where the population is suffering from one of the greatest humanitarian tragedies of our time. Such a significant presence could not be lacking; it intends to remind everyone, in these days of celebration, of the situation of families affected by war and destruction.

In accord with the Apostolic Nunciature in Syria and thanks to the collaboration of CNEWA, we are beginning a fundraising campaign to support 6,000 families, who do not know how to keep warm during the coming winter, which is particularly harsh in that region. Approximately 350 US dollars per family are needed, for a total of about \$ 2 million.

Donations may be given directly to www.cnewa.org, or to CNEWA's Syria page here <http://www.cnewa.org/donations.aspx?ID=2536&sitecode=HQ&pageno=1>. Gifts via electronic wire transfer may be arranged by calling 1.212.826.1480. Checks may also be mailed to CNEWA, 1011 First Avenue, New York, New York, U.S.A, 10022-4195.

The President of the Pontifical Council for the Family, Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia, announcing the initiative, said:

"The World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia is the starting point of a dream of a more familial world: 5 families from 5 continents will take the Gospel into the peripheries of the world. They are accompanied by a family from Damascus that will return to its war-ravaged homeland with the Gospel that nourishes the heart and with help from families around the world to warm the coming winter."

CNEWA, Catholic Near East Welfare Association, is an agency of the Holy See, founded by Pope Pius XI in 1926, that works through the Eastern churches in the Middle East.

For more information: www.family.va