

Medjugorje International Relief



A Tribute to Brendan McGrath RIP

A bit shy of the limelight, I hope he won't mind being on the front page while we honour his memory in this newsletter. There are many yardsticks people use to measure success in life, but for true Christians I suppose it's the degree to which we seek to open our hearts to God. And that was his priority in life, fuelled by his experience of Medjugorje. It's easy to see the effects of grace in the fruits it bore, an authentic understanding of charity and a consistent generosity to his brothers and sisters in need over the 12 or so years he worked with the appeal, even during the years when he was ill.

My most treasured memory is from the day we met. At the time we were preparing for the 1st aid convoy to Bosnia, we had a mountain of food, a bit of petrol money, but no vehicle to get it there. He put his head round the door and said "I've got my eye on a few vehicles at the airport", words which were to begin a long friendship and launch an exodus of heavily laden old vans and trucks across Europe to the war victims in Bosnia.

Not one for red tape, He approached the Chief executive of the airport and simply asked him to give us some of their vehicles for the convoy; and he said "yes". I am reminded of the scripture, "you will stand before governors and kings", the Holy Spirit led him, and he followed, and that produced victory.

Within a couple of days we had the keys, the log books and full petrol tanks (and drove them out quick in case they changed their minds!!). He put the wheels under that trip and there were many that benefited from it; as when we arrived a few weeks later the refugees we took the food to had arrived the day before with nothing to eat, one man's good deed is another man's miracle!

There were many other examples where he went the extra mile, not surprising then that he is perhaps the most loved and respected member of our team, for me because whilst he raised his heart and mind to heaven he wasn't content to stand around looking holy, his feet were on the ground and running, in the service of others in need. Compassion wasn't just a concept to him, it was a driving force, the action of the love in his heart.

He is still with us of course, just a change in job, from a mighty worker, making the transition to our intercessor.



A couple of pictures of Brendan on one of the convoys to Medjugorje in 1993.



I'm sure our many rosaries and Masses offered for him will make it a speedy journey on his Convoy to Heaven.

The only way to sign off is to give Bren the last word, with one of his trademark expressions that's very fitting.

"Job Done"

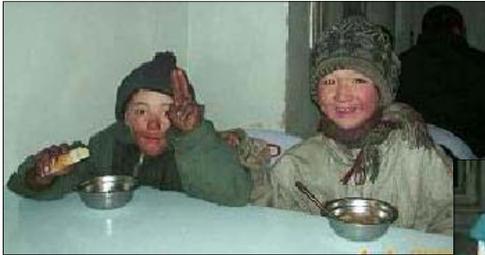
Eternal rest grant unto Brendan O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him, may he rest in peace, Amen.

A Good story.... Sister Rosalie (SVP) described a dream she had once "One night I dreamed that I stood at the judgement seat of God. God received me with great severity and was about to pronounce my sentence when, suddenly, I was surrounded by an immense crowd of people carrying old boots, shoes and hats. They presented all these things to God saying "she was the one who gave us all these things" Then Jesus Christ turned towards me and said "Because you gave all these second hand clothes in my name, I open heaven to you. Enter for all Eternity"

Sudan ..Christian Solidarity International.. ..Slave Redemption Programme

Since the last report in January , you have given a further **£350** for this, which will bring the total to **104** people freed from slavery by you, thanks to all the prayer groups and individuals who have supported this over the last 3 years, **please keep it going !**

Ulaan Baatar...Outer Mongolia



A total of **£910** has been sent so far to Mongolia to the CICM Fathers for their work



with the street children, partly from donations given for the prayer cards of the Icon, which is still on its travels, the rest from individuals and prayer groups, thanks for your generosity. It is making a difference as these pictures from the Verbist care centre illustrate.

SIR's Backpack Appeal

This year's shoebox appeal was slightly different, the focus being on education. Our Partners this year are SIR, another Medjugorje inspired charity, who have come up with the BACK PACK project, where rather than a shoebox the children filled a backpack .The lack of items we take for granted like pens and pencils and notebooks are the main obsta-



cle in preventing children from getting an education which in turn could enable them to escape poverty. SIR

combine this with their "Mary's Meals" initiative where-by they ensure every child gets at least one meal whilst at school, its hard to learn on an empty stomach ! (costs about **£5** per child per YEAR)



Loading the backpacks

About **180** backpacks were given by schools in Manchester and **£150** was sent also towards their transport costs/ Mary's meals. A DVD which explains the project in more detail will be sent to participating schools. We have some spare if you know a school that might like to join in next

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Romania

The toothbrushes and some spectacles have been sent out now to prisons in Romania with FGBMFI, a Christian Businessman's organisation

India

Thanks to all who continue collecting aluminium cans/foil and printer cartridges and old mobile phones as this has now put.. **13 people** through college through the SVP Student scheme.

Niger A couple of donations came in for the famine in Niger and we forwarded **£50** via the Little way association, who in common with ourselves make no deductions so 100% goes where its needed.



Our Lady's Message

(25th December 2005)

Dear Children, Also today, in my arms I bring you little Jesus, the King of Peace, to bless you with His peace. Little children, in a special way today I call you to be my carriers of peace in

this peaceful world. God will bless you. Little children, do not forget that I am your mother. I bless you all with a special blessing, with little Jesus in my arms. Thank you for having responded to my call