



## **OCEANIA/AUSTRALIA - Increasing awareness among the faithful and donations for Mission Month of October, gathering inspiration from Fr. Damien**

Sydney (Agenzia Fides) - "Reach Out, Give Life": with this invitation to reach out to all those in need and give one's own life out of love, the Pontifical Mission Societies in Australia (also referred to as "Catholic Mission") have launched a campaign for World Mission Sunday, celebrated this Sunday, October 18. The poster with the slogan shows an Indian man and his daughter, which in the area near St. Joseph's Care and Support Center in Tindivanam, in southern India. The Center, where people with various difficulties are cared for, including those with leprosy, is among the projects supported by the PMS of Australia. Martin Teulan, the lay National Director of the PMS, told Agenzia Fides that "This year, the celebration of the WMS finds great inspiration in the figure of Fr. Damien of Molokai, who was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI on October 11."

Reflecting on the meaning and foundations of the mission, Teulan told Fides: "As Christians, we are called to move in two senses: reach out to help those in need, share and witness our faith. This is what Jesus Himself has done."

WMS will be celebrated in all the parishes and the awareness campaign has displayed the missionary projects supported by the PMS, where their donations will go, for instance Our Lady of Refuge Boys' Home in Uthukottai (India), a home for children off the street and many other initiatives.

In the parishes, there is also an emphasis on the need for support in both a spiritual (prayer) and material (economic donations) sense and this is also expressed in the schools, to help children join in the effort as well. Thanks to the awareness of the directors and teachers, each class has received a poster and a coin box for the children to put in their savings for those in need, thus developing this sense of solidarity with other children their age in far-off countries. (PA) (Agenzia Fides 15/10/2009)