



The Holy See "has been following with grave concern the terrible suffering of the people caught up in the tragic conflicts intermittently erupting in the Darfur region of Sudan...which shows a horrific violation of human rights: killing of children, sexual rape of girls and women... burning of villages." (December 2006)

Archbishop Tomasi
Permanent observer of the Holy See to the United Nations

The Darfur mother...she has been forced to live in a refugee camp after seeing her village burned. She fears the real dangers of rape and other aggression while she seeks basic necessities such as firewood and water. Often, her child is sick and malnourished.

Catholic Social Teaching calls us to solidarity with all God's children, especially those who suffer. It also urges us to create an option for the poor and vulnerable and to advocate for their rights and dignity.

Fast Facts: Who is the Darfur Refugee Mother?

- She is part of what the UN now calls the "world's worst humanitarian crisis."
- She is one of 2.5 million people displaced in the past four years.
- Her family members and friends are among the 450,000 killed since 2003.
- She is likely to be among the multitudes who suffer from pneumonia, diarrhea, and malaria, conditions accounting for 47% of hospitalizations among the Darfur refugee population.
- She may be one of the 40% of women interviewed in several villages who admitted to having been raped and branded.
- If she has been raped (and therefore branded), she may then be prosecuted for adultery, whipped and imprisoned. If she reports her rape, she may be punished for reporting rape without the required four male witnesses.
- If she becomes a mother due to rape, she confronts a difficult dilemma – abandon her baby or risk community rejection or legal prosecution by caring for the child.

Take Action

The Vatican and bishops have urged the international community to take action. Join them by writing to President Bush to urge action to end the conflict. The Save Darfur Coalition is an alliance of 170 faith-based and advocacy organizations.

Use this online form on their website to take action now: <http://ga6.org/campaign/savedarfurcoalition>

Sources: Oxfam America, Human Rights Watch, UN Office - Humanitarian Affairs, Amnesty International, Physicians for Human Rights.

Next Social Justice Mtg.: Thurs.6/28/07; 7:30-9:30, Rm. 227