

# Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard

### NEWS LETTER

No. 21

Christmas 2001 New Year 2002



When he came to us as man, the Son of God scattered the darkness of this world, and filled this Feast of Christmas with his glory.

May the God of infinite goodness scatter the darkness of sin and brighten your hearts with holiness.

God sent his angels to shepherds to herald the great joy of our saviour's birth.

May he fill you with joy and make you heralds of his gospel.

When the word became man, earth was joined to heaven.

May he give you his peace and good will and fellowship with all the heavenly host.

May God bless you on Christmas and on every day of the New Year 2002!

### **Breaking News!**

# Our President will be exclusively available for service in the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard

On the 28<sup>th</sup> October 2001 the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard celebrated the 9<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its foundation. We began nine years ago with five founder members and today we have more than one thousand members scattered around the world.

When we began we had just five projects to serve the poor and the needy in our area. As the needs of the local community have changed, so we have grown and developed new projects according to their needs. The Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard now runs twelve projects, which cover a whole spectrum of emergency aid and self-help needs.

It is with great joy that we inform you of a most wonderful development: Father Gérard Lagleder, approached his Abbot to consider allowing him to work full time in the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard. In November 2000 his monastic superior, the Abbot of Inkamana, Gernot Wottawah O.S.B., agreed in principle with his request that he may consider his service in the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard his main missionary assignment.

After some consideration and discussions the Bishop of Eshowe relieved Father Gérard from his duties as the Parish Priest of Mandeni. On 26<sup>th</sup> July 2001 Father Sipho Titus Gamede, a young Zulu diocesan priest, who has also been a member of our Brotherhood since 1998, was appointed the new Parish Priest. Father Gérard will remain in Mandeni. His time will be devoted to the pastoral and charitable service of the church, caring for the sick and needy in the greater Mandeni area, but he will help the parish priest as and when necessary.

Father Gérard had asked to be relieved from his position as the parish priest of Mandeni because his priestly and administrative duties in the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard demanded increasingly more time and energy. As he did not want to neglect his tasks as a parish priest he took on a workload of up to 20 hours per day for many years, but it would not be responsible to do so on a permanent basis. Now, after more than 10 years of service as parish priest of Mandeni, he can be totally, undividedly and exclusively available for his service in the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard.

Taking into account that we work in the area with probably the highest AIDS rate worldwide, the Church in general and the Diocese of Eshowe and Inkamana Abbey in particular, have put their pastoral and charitable

responsibility for the sick into practice by allowing Father Gérard to dedicate his undivided energy to the service of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard. Father Gérard says: "In my eyes it is of even greater significance that my monastery and the diocese have, by this action, acknowledged that our brotherhood has matured to an extent, which warrants the full-time assignment of a priest. I truly consider it a heavenly indication, that both authorities, my abbot and my bishop readily agreed to my request. Therefore I can reassure you now of my continued loyalty to my vocation as a Maltese-Missionary-Benedictine-Father and I am boundlessly grateful that the Lord has called me to this his special service which I consider the centre of my life. I am happy and content to be totally available for my service in the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard and for those in our care."

At this juncture we would like to express our very sincere and happy gratitude to Abbot Gernot Wottawah for understanding and recognising the special and multifaceted vocation, which Father Gérard has been called to.

### Welcome to the Archabbot of the Missionary Benedictines Most Rev. Father Jeremias Schröder O.S.B.

The month of October 2001 saw the first visit of Father Gérard's major superior to the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard. It was a great honour for us to welcome Father Archabbot Jeremias Schröder of St. Ottilien Archabbey in Germany and Abbot Basil Ngaponda of Mvimwa Abbey in Tanzania, to Mandeni and we were grateful that they could spend a whole day with Father Gérard during the canonical visitation of Inkamana Abbey. The day after he left, Archabbot Jeremias wrote in an e-mail to the archabbey: "Yesterday I was in Mandini to meet Fr. Gérard and I got an excellent impression. ...this is surely amongst the best of what we have to offer in our congregation." The Archabbot was so impressed by what he saw that he was gracious enough to apply for membership of our organisation.

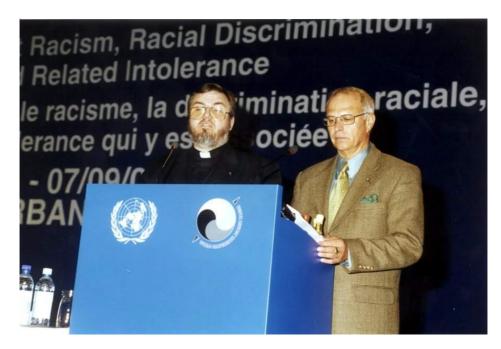
We welcome you, Father Archabbot Jeremias, and thank you for the acknowledgement, support and help which you are giving us.







The Sovereign Military Order of Malta at the United Nations
World Conference Against Racism,
Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance
Durban, South Africa,
31 August - 7 September 2001



The Delegation of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta at the World Conference:

Father Gérard T. Lagleder O.S.B. and Professor Dr. Mark J. Wolff, K.M.

### Intervention of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta to the General Assembly of the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance

3 September 2001

<u>Introduction by</u>: Rev. Father Gerard T. Lagleder, M.Th., O.S.B., Magistral Chaplain of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, President of its Relief Organisation in South Africa and Representative of the Order to this World Conference.

Madam/Mr. President of the World Conference, Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Governments, Distinguished Heads of Delegations and Delegates, Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Allow me to start our address in Zulu as a reverence to the mother tongue of most of the inhabitants of our hosting city: Durban.

Ngiyanibingelela nonke! Ngokusebenzisa ulimi lesiZulu ngifuna ukukhombisa ukuthi sihlonipha abantu bakwaZulu. Bayasimukela njeng' abangane, hayi njeng' izihambi nje.

Uma sifuna ukunqoba ubuhlukaniswa babantu, sifanele ukuphenduka, sifanele ukukhuluma ulimi lwabanye abantu, hayi ngomlomo nje, kodwa ezinhliziyweni zethu futhi.

Ngaphezu iminyaka 900 inhlangano yethu yasiza izihambi nabantu abanezinkinga eziningi ezisweni eziningi emhlabeni wonke.
Lapha – khona manje - sikhuluma indaba yokusiza abantu abahluphekayo, ngoba abantu abaningi abahloniphi ubuntu

Inhlangano yethu iyathembisa ukuthi sizoqhubeka umsebenzi wokunakekela labo bantu namandla

wabanve abantu.

I greet you all!

Through using the Zulu language I want to signify that we honour the people of Zululand.

They receive us as friends, not just as strangers.

If we want to defeat the separation of people (i.e. racism and apartheid) we have to repent, we have to speak the language of the people, not just by mouth, but also in our hearts.

For more than 900 years our order (the Sovereign Military Order of Malta) has helped strangers and people with manifold problems in many countries in the whole world.

Here at this conference we are talking about how to help those people who suffer, because there are many people who do not respect the dignity of others.

Our Order pledges to continue our work to help these people with all our strength.

ethu onke.

EnangisimuAfrika sinezinhlelo ezishumi nambili yokusiza abantu nengculazi nezinye izifo, abantwana abangondlekile kahle, nabampofu. Umsebenzi wethu ufuna ukunikela amandla kubantu ukuthi abantu bangazisiza.

Sicela abahulumeni nabantu emhlabeni wonke ukuthi nizohlangana nathi ukuthi sizovuselela ubuntu phakathi kwabantu.

Ngiyanibonga kakhulu! UNkulunkulu makanibusise! We run twelve programs in South Africa to care for people living with AIDS and other diseases, for neglected children and the poor.

(http://bbg.org.za)

Our work is intended to empower the people to help themselves.

We ask the governments and the people in the whole world to join us in our quest to revive "ubuntu" (the ancient African principle of mutual respect) amongst the people.

Thank you very much!

Thank you very much May God bless you!

# <u>Intervention by</u>: Professor Dr. Mark J. Wolff, B.A., J.D., LL.M., Knight of Magistral Grace of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta and Representative of the Order to this World Conference.

Madam / Mr. President,

As we conclude this year the twentieth anniversary of the 1981 "Declaration on the Elimination of all Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief", and approach the international consultative conference on school education in relation to freedom of religion and belief, tolerance and non-discrimination to be held in Madrid November 23rd to 25th, 2001, it is disheartening to observe the increase of religious intolerance in many regions of the World.

Since 1987 special Rapporteurs of the Commission on Human Rights have been examining the problem of religious intolerance. Since 1987 reports have been submitted each year to the Commission and since 1994 to the General Assembly. While some progress has been made the studies and reports reveal a disturbing trend exacerbated by additional factors complicating and compounding the issues and practices of religious intolerance.

The right to freedom of religion is a fundamental human right. It is an inherent right of every human being and is an essential expression of the human spirit, protecting and enhancing the dignity and individuality of each person created in the image of God. Yet as we begin the Third Millennium religious intolerance remains an increasing and pervasive problem with historical roots in social,

cultural and religious traditions. Today religious intolerance is co-mingled with new and alarming phenomena.

Extremism in any manifestation is incompatible with the elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance; particularly when combined with extremist religious and political organizations. History and unfortunately our contemporary world are replete with holocausts and ethnic cleansings that have occurred in the name of religion and perpetrated by extremists utilizing religion as a scapegoat. According to the excellent report submitted by Special Rapporteur Mr. Abdelfattah Amor on Civil And Political Rights, Including Religious Intolerance to the Commission on Human Rights minorities and women are predominantly vulnerable to extremist religious organizations. These extremist organizations utilize a variety of means of intimidation including, aggressive proselytism, harassment, threats, direct or indirect legal restrictions on religion and beliefs, physical violence and murder as has tragically occurred recently in many parts of our world. But extremist organizations do not operate effectively without active or tacit support from local or state governmental authorities.

When both religious intolerance and discrimination against already vulnerable minorities intersect, the offences are not merely cumulative but rather create a new and even more devastating violation of human rights.

Our delegation believes that in order to achieve the elimination of religious intolerance preventative long-range measures must be implemented, in particular through education. The youth of the world must be educated, at the earliest levels, to respect the rich diversity of genuine religious beliefs held by mankind. The beauty of a quilt is comprised of the unique and genuine nature of each thread – an appreciation of the diverse religions of the world enhances the fullness and completes the potentialities of the human being – religious intolerance and discrimination reduce, confine, subjugate and degrade civil society and human dignity.

As recently stated by Wilfred Cardinal Napier of Durban: "We must take upon ourselves the sins of world racism and religious intolerance."

We call upon all leaders of institutions, governments, religions and civil society to engage in a respectful dialogue with a view towards achieving the goals of this World Conference to end racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

We must take positive action to assure that every human being will reach his or her divine destination in dignity, freedom and peace.

### Blessed Gérard's Feast

13<sup>th</sup> October 2001

This year's great celebration of the Feast of our patron Saint was a wonderful occasion. Our member, Father Albert Herold O.S.B. of Mtunzini, was the main celebrant and gave an impressive sermon. Concelebrant, Father Michael Eich of Mainhausen, Germany, and all the new members could receive the medal of our brotherhood and those who have been members for five years received their jubilee certificates.





A special honour, which is awarded annually, was conferred on Mr. Qinisani Wiseman Zulu for his outstanding service and loyalty.

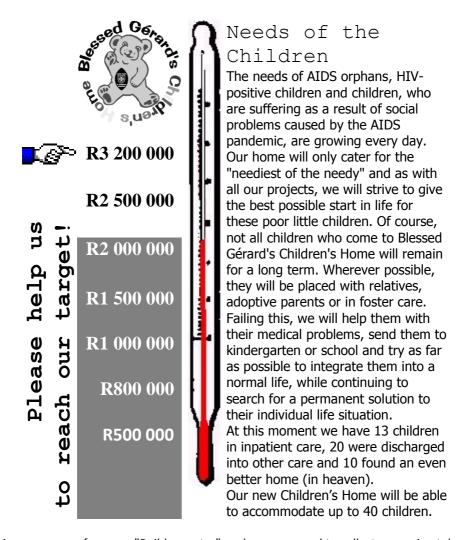
#### **President's Council inaugurated**

Our statutes provide for an advisory body of experts to facilitate the decisions of the President and Executive Council of our brotherhood. The first two members who were appointed to this position were Dr. Peter Martinez, who is an internationally renowned capacity in Astrophysics from the South African Astronomical Observatory in Cape Town and has a wide experience in international relations, administration and fundraising, and Dr. Roux Martinez, who practises trauma and transplant surgery in Cape Town. Although they live in Cape Town they have frequently come to Mandeni and spent more hours of service in our projects than many of our local volunteers.

### Blessed Gérard's Children's Home

Funds raised to date

### "BUILD-O-METER"



As you can see from our "Build-o-meter" we have managed to collect approximately two thirds of the money needed. We will continue to fundraise, but we make an urgent appeal to you all, to please help us to help these little children who are so much in need of our care. If you know of anyone who can assist us in any way, please put him or her in touch with us, or vice versa.

On behalf of the children who are being cared for at present in Blessed Gérard's Children's Home, we would like to express a very heart felt gratitude to all of our members who have responded to our plea for funds, to build a home for them.

We would especially like to thank those people who have organised fund raising events in their home parishes e.g. Victor Claudius, Pat Grimbeck, Hans & Albertine Sporer, Mrs. Mechtilde Hirmer-Lagleder, Mr. Anthony Ordona and his family who live in the USA, the Rosenheimer Christkindlmarkt, Miss Elena Schmidt, Barbara Ruhland, Silke Sehling and Beatrice Neher from Germany, to name but a few.

# The winners of the **Buy a Bear for a Baby** competition are: In South Africa:

1 <sup>st</sup> Prize	Air ticket to Germany sponsored by Lufthansa	Mrs. Kay Wong of Port Alfred
2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize	3 piece Lounge suite sponsored by Loungefurn	Dr. Peter Martinez of Cape Town
3 <sup>rd</sup> Prize	Double door fridge/freezer sponsored by Whirlpool	Mrs. N. Ramposhard of Mandeni
4 <sup>th</sup> Prize	Sleeper couch sponsored by Loungefurn	Mr. Sbonakaliso Thabethe of Sundumbili
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5 <sup>th</sup> Prize	cell phone & accessories	J. Sukdeo of Mandeni
6 <sup>th</sup> Prize	cell phone & accessories	Fr. Michael Austin S.J. of Northlands

#### In Germany:

Return air ticket to South Africa and a night in Shakaland for two (sponsored by StyleLife Travel): Frau Hildegard Grulich from Mainhausen.

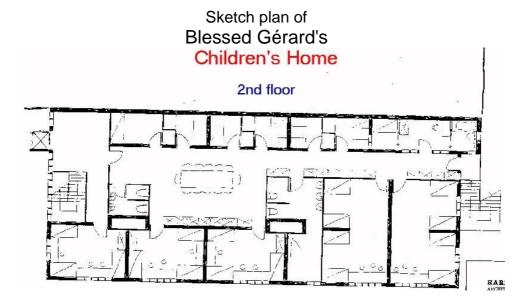
### Thank you!

We would like to thank all the sponsors of the prizes: Lufthansa, Loungefurn, Whirlpool and StyleLife Travel! In addition to this Whirlpool (Italy) has also made a financial contribution towards the building and the local branch donated two washing machines. Other significant donations were received from CAFOD in the United Kingdom, Aktion Dreikönigssingen in Germany, Newmans Own Inc. in the U.S.A., Nedcor, the South African Sugar Association, the Richards Bay Chamber of Commerce and Loungeweave in South Africa.

#### **Architectural Plans**

The Children's Home will be built above the ward wing of the Care Centre & Hospice, which was originally built with a concrete slab over it. It will be the most cost effective and practical method of adding on, with minimal interruption to the running of the Care Centre & Hospice.

The plans for the addition to our Care Centre in Mandeni have been submitted to the local authorities for approval and if the rate of funds received accelerates and increases in amount, we would like to begin building at the end of February 2002, with a view to completion by September/October 2002.



### Blessed Gérard's Care Centre & Hospice

### A heartbreaking documentary on German TV

In March 2001 Philipp Hahn from ProSieben Television of Munich in Germany spent some time visiting the Care Centre & Hospice in Mandeni and filmed a documentary on our work. The camera team managed to capture the true necessity and impact of our care, which we give to the sick, especially in our hospice. The film was broadcast on 18 April 2001 and shows in shocking openness the reality of the AIDS pandemic in our region.

# We thank the foreign Volunteers who help(ed) us during 2001.



### Blessed Gérard's Bursary Fund

Mr. Peter Dunn, whose studies were paid for by our Bursary Fund, graduated at the end of 2000 with a bachelor's degree in Chemical Engineering. He wrote this letter:

Dated 26/03/2001

"It is only through the help of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard that I am now able to respond with such whole hearted happiness. Without the help of the Brotherhood, I would not have been able to extend my appreciation and gratitude.

The faith and confidence the Brotherhood has had in me is unimaginable. The constant burden I have laid upon the Brotherhood's shoulder, they have accepted. For this and all the assistance I have received, I am most wholeheartedly grateful. The helping hand has not only been offered to me, but also to my family and many other families with which I am familiar.

Once again I would like to take this opportunity in thanking the Brotherhood for all the good work it has done for others and me.

May our faith in the Lord be strengthened always. Thank you!

Peter Dunn"

Peter Dunn has excelled in his studies and we wish him every success in his future. We are sure that his family are very proud of him and will benefit from his wonderful achievement.

### Thank you!

Mr. Dunn is really expressing his gratitude to **you**, the donors, because it is only through the donations, which the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard receives, that we are able to assist people who have the potential, but no means to pay for their education.

### 11 September 2001

It is with utmost sadness, shock and disbelief at the terror attacks against the U.S.A. in New York, Washington and Shanksville, that we want to express our fraternal condolences and heartfelt sympathy to all of our members in the U.S.A. and their fellow countrymen. This was not an attack against the U.S.A. only, but an attack against mankind and we watched the news with shaking heads and sore hearts. Our most sincere prayers are with all of you.

### A new film about the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard

Fr. Martin Trieb O.S.B., who heads the Media Centre of St. Ottilien Archabbey (Father Gérard's home monastery), came to Mandeni during October 2001, on our request. He videotaped many hours of material in order to make a film about the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard, which should help us in our public relations and fundraising. He is busy with the editing and we shall inform you as soon as the film is available. There will be an English and a German version of this film



#### Congratulations to

- Rev Father David Musgrave on his Silver Jubilee of priestly ordination.
- Miss Melanie von Wolff, Miss Silvana Bothur and Mr. Fernando Blanco on their marriages.
- Mr. Ben & Sr. Sanet van Zyl , Frau Renate Bailer,
   Miss Beauty Ntshangase, Mrs. Sheida Barlow and Miss Nelisiwe
   Mpanza on the birth of their children.

We wish a very fond farewell to Mrs. Dorothy Dlamini, who has retired at the end of August. May God bless you and reward you for your loyalty and hard work over the last ten years.

Our sincere condolences to the families of

- Qinisani W. Zulu on the death of his mother
- Our members Hlengiwe Mabasa, Severina Mthembu, Sandra de Vries, Hilda Goodwin, and Schaultow Geswindt who passed away in 2001.

#### WELCOME to all our new members:

Hochwürdigsten Herrn Msgr. Alois Frischholz, Mr Leon Marius Van Rooyen, Mr John Michael Mackin, Mr Paul Seville, Mr Patrick Ordona, Rev Fr Heribert Ruf O.S.B., Frau Elfriede Fries, Miss Faith Gcinile Biyela, Miss Princess Nonhlanhla Mkhize, Miss Bonisiwe Patricia Dlamuka, Mrs Doris Philile Mzimela, Frau Maria Triebsch, Mr Dumisani Patrick Mlambo, Mr Wilson Mduduzi Ndlovu, Miss Atoinette Reddy, Miss Tholakele Joyce Ngcobo, Mrs Zodwa Pricilla Masango, Miss Sheida Carmen Barlow, Miss Londiwe Magnificent Hlatshwayo, Miss Nana Danile Sibiya, Miss Pretty Smangele Sibiya, Miss Monica Nonzuzo Booi, Miss Ntombiyenkosi Anna Ndlangamandla, Miss Virginia S'bongile Zwane, Miss Princess Ntombi Khumalo, Mr Dumisani Robert Dunn, Miss Primrose Duduzile Biyela, Miss Makhosozana Nelly Xulu, Fräulein Kristina Jatsch, Frau Kaye Sprenzel, Dr. Alexander Maria Mickel, Mr Roger Darrin Hartline, Mr. S'yabonga Thember Zulu, Fräulein Beatrice Neher, Fräulein Silke Sehling, Mr Siyabonga Henry Vani Dube, Miss Pretty Lindiwe Ntuli, Miss Nozipho Sylvia Mthethwa, Miss Zama Emmerentia Jabulile Zulu, Miss Venencia Cebisile Makhathini, Miss Tholakele Dlamini, Miss Sindisiwe Angeline Sithole, Miss Nozipho Pretty Dube, Miss Eunice Winile Sithole, Miss Nompumelelo Precious Zama Zwane, Rev. Father David John Thomas Musgrave, Mr Victor Bertram Marie Claudius, Mr Mzobanzi Blessed Zikhali, Mr Njabulo Dennis Zikhali, Miss Nonhlanhla Ntando Emmeldah Msomi, Professor Dr. Mark J. Wolff, BA., J.D., LL.M. K.M., Mr David Ashley Pritchard, Dr. med. Andreas Christian Michael Heinze, Signore Domenico Coco, Rev Miguel Angel Espinoza Soria, Herrn Karlheinz Schmidt, Mr Slawomir Nieciecki, Contessa Donna Giuseppina Sacchi, Senora Herlen Catherine Villegas Pinero, Herrn Norbert Berrens, Frau Elsa Schützenmeier, Mrs Donna Conlin, Fräulein Jenniffer – Jane Neumann, Señor Enrique José Sacanell Ruiz de Apodaca, Herrn Manfred Eich, Hochwürdigen Pater Martin Trieb OSB, Herrn Karlheinz Schmidt, Frau Valerica Schmidt, Frau Micaela Racky, Mrs Doreen Dudu Manqele, Senor Roberto Angulo Vilar, Hochwürdigsten Vater Erzabt Jeremias Schröder OSB, Fräulein Melanie Weiß, Mr David Nkosinathi Shandu, Professore Dottore Eugenio Caligiuri, Frau Miriam Katrin Lawitschka, Mr Johannes Nkosiyapha Nkwanyana, Herrn Idahosa Charles, Mrs Moira Botha, Miss Anne Roberts, Miss Numpumelelo Precious Myeza.

Membership statistics on 10.12.2001	Active Members	Donors	Spiritual Supporters	Total
South Africa	356	94	41	491
Tanzania	0	0	3	3
Kenya	0	0	1	1
Seychelles	0	2	0	2
Austria	2	1	7	10
Belgium	2	0	1	3
<u> </u>	0	0	1	1
Czech Republic			·	318
Germany	44	194	80	
Denmark	0	1	13	14
Finland	0	0	1	1
France	0	1	0	1
Great Britain	10	1	1	12
Italy	3	22	10	35
Ireland	2	7	2	11
Hungary	0	1	1	2
Malta	0	0	1	1
Netherlands	1	0	1	2
Poland	0	0	2	2
Spain	0	1	1	2
Switzerland	1	0	0	1
Argentina	0	1	0	1
Brazil	0	0	1	1
Canada	0	2	4	6
Chile	0	0	1	1

El Salvador	0	0	2	2
Mexico	0	1	0	1
Peru	0	0	1	1
USA	15	26	22	63
Venezuela	0	0	1	1
Australia	0	3	1	4
Japan	0	0	1	1
Singapore	0	0	1	1
UAE	0	1	0	1
Total	436	359	202	997

NB: Active members outside South Africa are members, who have helped in South Africa as volunteers. These members keep their active status. Many of them continue to support us actively, e.g. through fund-raising and canvassing for membership.

#### Making your donation

It might help our <u>South African</u> members to know that you may pay your membership fees directly into our banking account. The most convenient solution for both sides would be if you organised a stop order on your account. Our banking details are as follows:

Name of Account: Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard

Type of account:

Bank:

Account number:

Branch:

Branch:

Current Account

First National Bank

529 4004 0349

Mandini

Branch code:

22-04-29-43

Please ensure that you put your personal details on the deposit or send the information directly to us, so that we can credit your membership fee account correctly.

Thanks to the generosity of the Benedictine Mission House in Schuyler, Nebraska, we can now offer you a convenient way of making donations towards our work, **inside the <u>United States</u>**, with the possibility of declaring your donation on your tax return.

Cheques should be made out to "Benedictine Mission House"

with a remark "for the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard, RSA"

(Please do not forget this!)

These should then be sent to: Benedictine Mission House

P. O. Box 528

Schuyler, Nebraska 68661

People who have made a donation of more than \$200 will receive a tax certificate immediately from the Mission House and donors of smaller amounts would receive one at the end of the tax year, if they want to declare their donations on their tax returns.

The "Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard Newsletter" is the official mouthpiece of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard and is edited by the Management Committee of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard.

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