Jesuit Refugee Service a Deserving Recipient of Tsunami Aid Donations

Several Traits of the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) make it an especially worthy recipient of charitable contributions to aid the victims of the disastrous earthquake and tsunami that struck much of South and Southeast Asia on December 26, 2004. These are:

I. 0% deduction for administrative overhead costs.
II. Long-standing presence in affected areas.
III. Expertise in dealing with displaced persons.

I. 100% of a donation to JRS goes directly to aid efforts.
JRS is one of only a few organizations that achieve this amazing rate.¹ It is able to do so because of its relationship with the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits), a religious order of the Catholic Church, which subsidizes all administrative costs of the JRS. Because of the Jesuits’ sponsorship, a donation to JRS delivers as much aid to the disaster zone as does a larger donation to most organizations.

II. JRS has had a lengthy presence in all of the affected countries except Myanmar.
The tsunamis hit Sri Lanka and the Indonesian province of Aceh hardest. Death tolls in each country stand at 29,650 and at least 95,000 respectively.² Because civil strife in both areas created a high number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) before the tsunamis, JRS has had workers and infrastructure in place for a significant period of time. This experience gives JRS knowledge of local customs, culture, and needs. Thus, JRS can respond more quickly and appropriately to the recent disaster than can many other organizations. JRS will also continue its presence in the area well after the disaster has left the public eye.

III. Past work with refugees and IDPs gives JRS special expertise at coping with the conditions of displaced persons camps in the affected countries.
The widespread physical devastation wrought by the tsunamis has created vast numbers of IDPs who currently occupy countless camps, large and small, throughout the affected areas. The situation of the refugees and IDPs from wars and political violence with whom JRS usually works is a close analogue to that on the ground in the disaster area. Thus, JRS has particular experience in managing the problems related to such conditions and can provide effective aid to the victims of this disaster.

These characteristics suggest that JRS will be an efficient, compassionate, and productive component of the international aid response to the tsunami tragedy. The organization is, therefore, deserving of private charitable donations aimed at aiding the victims of this disaster.

Donations to JRS can be channeled through JRS/USA. Credit card donations can be made at www.jrsusa.org/donations_cc_form.htm. To identify the contribution as

¹ Others include the American Red Cross and the Lutheran World Relief.
intended for the tsunami victims, select “Asian Earthquake and Tsunami Aid” in the scroll menu marked “Gift Destination.” Check donations should have “Tsunami Aid” in the memo line and should be sent to:

Jesuit Refugee Service/USA
1616 P Street NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20036.

Sources
http://www.jrsusa.org (January 8, 2005).
http://www.jesref.org/ (January 8, 2005).
http://www.lwr.org/news/04/122904.asp#tsunami
http://www.redcross.org/tsunamirelief/donationsatwork/