By Father Ramon   *January 25, 2020*

THE SHEPHERDS WALKING STICK

Some of you have been inquiring about how to send financial aid to victims of the Taal volcano eruption in the Philippines. You may channel it through the parish office or give it directly to Jewel White who will send your donation to the Local Government Unit (LGU) of the town of Balayan, Batangas where there are about 11,000 evacuees currently being …….. Somebody asked me, "Why do calamities happen, Father?" There is no simple answer to that question. But, for the sake of brevity, I can say that calamities may be caused by moral evil committed by man. As man abuses nature, he is surely doomed to suffer consequences. For example, if he cuts all the trees in the forest because of greed, nature can strike back by way of floods that will destroy his life and property. Earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, on the other hand, can hardly be attributed to evil done by man. They are what we call as physical evil. They happen because the world we live in is imperfect. As scripture portrays it, "For we know that up to the present time all of creation groans with pain, like the pain of childbirth" (Rom 8:22). Earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and the like are labor pains before a perfect world can be born. But, why did God not create a perfect world where these calamities don't happen? Well, it's a mystery. We trust in the wisdom of God. The Catechism teaches, "With infinite power God could create something better. But with infinite wisdom and goodness God freely willed to create a world in a state of journeying toward its ultimate perfection… In time we can discover that God in his almighty providence can bring a good from the consequences of an evil… 'We know that in everything God works for good for those who love him' (Rom 8:28)" (CCC, 310-313)…….. On this last Sunday of January, we will start the practice of giving a special blessing to all those who celebrated their birthday within the month. We will be doing this every last Sunday of the month just before the final blessing in the Mass.