

LWR News Release

In this news release:

1. BAGHDAD CHURCH SHELTERS: FRIGHTENED NEIGHBORS UNDER THE ROOF, SPAGHETTI IN THE CUPBOARD AND A WELL IN THE YARD
2. LWR REPORT CARD HAS "A+" AND OTHER GOOD GRADES
3. IRAQ AID READY TO ROLL - \$3 WILL HELP KEEP ONE CHILD HEALTHY FOR SIX MONTHS
4. READERS: CALL YOUR NEWSPAPER AND ASK FOR LWR TO BE LISTED FOR "HOW TO HELP" IN IRAQ

For more information contact Jonathan Frerichs at (410) 230-2800 and visit our website at [www.lwr.org](http://www.lwr.org).

#### BAGHDAD CHURCH SHELTERS: FRIGHTENED NEIGHBORS UNDER THE ROOF, SPAGHETTI IN THE CUPBOARD AND A WELL IN THE YARD

Amman, Jordan, March 27, 2003 -- A string of churches in Baghdad have emergency wells out in their yards and neighbors sleeping under their roofs. The local relief net, in preparation for months, is getting busier by the night as civilians cope with an intensifying war.

"More people are now coming to the churches at night hoping that it may be safer to sleep there," a Middle East Council of Churches representative reported today from the Iraqi capital. "Both Christians and Muslims are coming. In one church I know of, 150 people are sleeping there and in another 80." MECC is a Lutheran World Relief partner organization.

"Today, I have distributed canned fish, spaghetti, juice and about 300 blankets to the centers and churches and tomorrow we'll distribute more things," the MECC worker said in a phone call to the Jordan office of Action by Churches Together, an aid alliance that includes LWR. Church volunteers have stocked 52 parish relief centers in four Iraqi cities with bedding and food and supplied water tanks to go with freshly dug wells. ACT members support the work.

"Food is becoming scarce in the markets and the prices are going up. It is very difficult to find transport now, because of the danger of moving about but we're still succeeding," he said.

"When the bombing starts, my own son and daughter are terrified. They cry and cry and I can see the fear in my son's face. He does not want to eat and he holds his hands to his ears to try to keep the sounds of the bombs out. He's doing that right now because they have just started bombing again," he told Nils Carstensen of ACT. "You can hear it."

## LWR REPORT CARD HAS "A+" AND OTHER GOOD GRADES

Baltimore, March 27, 2003 -- Lutheran World Relief continues to be ranked near the top of U.S relief and development agencies in program effectiveness, leadership and financial management, according to independent ratings organizations.

Charity Navigator, for example, rates LWR as "4 out of 4 stars--exceeds industry standards and outperforms most charities in its cause."

The American Institute of Philanthropy gives LWR an "A+" -- the highest-ranking category among international relief and development agencies given by the institute. LWR's Iraq emergency work also receives an "A+" from AIP.

The Maryland Association of Non-Profits is a national leader in assessing its members. Since moving to Baltimore in 1999, LWR has earned the association's top rating -- Seal of Excellence -- for, among other things, "responsible stewardship of all donations."

For more information, visit the three ratings organizations' websites.

## IRAQ AID READY TO ROLL--\$3 WILL HELP KEEP ONE CHILD HEALTHY FOR SIX MONTHS

Baltimore, March 27, 2003 -- As soon as the road is somewhat safe, 11 tons of soap and detergent for pediatric wards in Iraq will leave by truck from Amman, Jordan. The cargo is a gift of "All Our Children," a special campaign to raise \$1 million for Iraqi children with critical health problems.

Three dollars worth of the soap in this shipment will help keep one child healthy for six months. The \$47,000 hygiene project is aimed at nearly 15,000 sick and malnourished children. More soap, plus pamphlets to teach mothers about hygiene, is already in Baghdad for the project.

Trucking costs to Iraq have more than tripled in two weeks and insurance is no longer available, but CARE Iraq, the agency overseeing distribution in Iraq, says the items are urgently needed now. A small group of faith-based agencies including Lutheran World Relief manage the campaign and have raised \$130,000 so far. They are seeking public donations to mount more projects.

Cleanliness is critical for children malnourished or suffering from diarrhea and related diseases which are widespread in Iraq and cause most infant deaths there, according to UNICEF. Since the last Gulf War, Iraq has seen the steepest rise in infant mortality in the world.

[Support "All Our Children" or all LWR emergency work for the Iraq crisis (mention "Iraq/Mideast Crisis") on-line, by phone or by mail. Send donations to:

Lutheran World Relief  
P.O. Box 17061  
Baltimore, MD 21298-9832  
1-800-LWR-LWR-2  
[www.lwr.org/giving](http://www.lwr.org/giving)

LCMS World Relief  
P.O. Box 66861  
St. Louis, MO 63166-9810  
1-888-930-4438

ELCA World Hunger Appeal  
P.O. Box 71764  
Chicago, IL 60694-1764  
1-800-638-3522

**READERS: CALL YOUR NEWSPAPER AND ASK FOR LWR TO BE LISTED FOR "HOW TO HELP" IN IRAQ:**

LWR requests that individuals who support and appreciate its work call their local newspapers and ask that Lutheran World Relief be included in lists of aid agencies providing humanitarian assistance in the Iraq crisis.

LWR is among the approved agencies from which editors make their choices when they publish such lists. In a crisis of this nature and magnitude, LWR's capacity to respond is greatly enhanced by contributions from members of the public. Calls to editors from readers (and viewers of TV news) who are informed about LWR's effectiveness are important. [See second story, above, for independent ratings of LWR.]