



ABBÉ PIERRE'S APPEAL

RADIO APPEAL ON 1 FEBRUARY 1954

My friends, your help is needed!

At 3am this morning a woman froze to death on the pavement on Boulevard Sébastopol. She died clutching the eviction order used to turf her out onto the street the day before yesterday.

Every night, more than 2,000 people huddle out in the frost, with no shelter, no bread, some almost naked. In the face of such horror, the emergency campsites we have set up can no longer cope.

Listen - in the last three hours, two emergency aid centres have been set up. One is under the tent by the Pantheon, on Rue de la Montagne Sainte Geneviève, and the other in Courbevoie.

They are already full – we must open more centres everywhere. Tonight, in every city in France, in every district in Paris we need to be putting signs up, a light in the dark of night, we need open doors to places with bedding, straw and soup, and where beneath the sign "emergency aid centre" are these simple words: "if you are suffering, whoever you are, come in, "eat, sleep and regain hope. Here, you are loved." A month of bitter frosts has been forecast. These centres must remain open for as long as winter lasts.

Faced with their brothers dying of poverty, we must work towards one common goal, a common will: to make it impossible for this to continue.

Let us love one another enough to do this without delay. Let one, miraculous thing emerge from so much pain: the common soul of the French nation. With your help, not a single adult or child will have to spend tonight sleeping on asphalt or on a Paris railway platform. Thank you.

Abbé Pierre

Every one of you can help those who are "homeless". By tonight, or latest by tomorrow, we need: 5,000 blankets, 300 large American tents, and 12 catalytic stoves. You can drop them off at the Rochester Hotel at 92 Rue de la Boétie. Volunteers and lorries will meet in front of the tent on Rue de la Montagne Sainte-Geneviève at 11pm this evening.