

Out of the Ruins Springs New Hope for Sri Lanka

Volunteers responded to Sri Lanka in its time of need, helping it forge an era of trust and friendship.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, September 1, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Scientology Volunteer Ministers](#) Goodwill Peace Tour responded to the devastating Easter Sunday terrorist attacks in Sri Lanka. An international team led by experienced Volunteer Ministers (VMs) from India and Nepal reached out to the country to help in its time of need.

On April 21, Jerome was in church at Colombo's St. Anthony Shrine. Stepping outside for a moment, he was jolted by a deafening explosion. "I got to the door and was engulfed in black smoke. Inside, dead bodies and severed limbs were everywhere, and among the victims, many were my friends."

Anticipating another blast, he began hauling people out.

"We helped ambulance staff take the injured to hospitals and I used CPR on some who were unconscious. I also managed to control bleeding by applying techniques I had learned as a Scout and a member of the Red Cross Society."

Within an hour, he and his friends had helped pull all the dead and wounded from the scene of the explosion. But it was only then that the real work began.

To many, the Easter Sunday bombing seemed to turn back the clock to the 26-year Sri Lanka Civil War. Jerome's



Scientology Volunteer Ministers reached out to the victims and their families to help them recover from the terrorist attacks in Sri Lanka.



The Easter Sunday Sri Lanka terrorist attacks were an act of violence that left the country reeling.

greatest fear was that the terrorist attacks would rekindle distrust and prompt renewed inter-religious and inter-cultural violence among Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim and Christian communities.

"As I saw it, we were greatly at risk of becoming another Syria. But under the wise leadership of our archbishop, we worked in harmony with other religions to protect the Muslim community from potential backlash."

The country's immediate response was to establish martial law: mandatory curfews, the banning of group meetings. And while these were viewed as necessary to prevent further violence, there was also the potential of their creating an even greater rift among people in this highly factional nation.

Jerome is no stranger to the tensions that divide his country. His Sinhalese father, now a retired army brigadier, and his Christian Tamil mother had drawn censure when they married. Both families sought to drive a wedge between them, and it was only their love for each other and their son that kept them together.

It was two weeks after the terrorist attacks that Jerome found the tools he needed to help ensure lasting peace in his country. He learned that a Scouting friend from Nepal had arrived to provide humanitarian relief as part of the Scientology Volunteer Ministers disaster response team. His friend was a member of the team of Scientology Volunteer Ministers from Nepal, India and America, operating under the guidance of the Scientology Volunteer Ministers International Coordinator and sponsored by a grant from the International Association of Scientologists.

A lifelong volunteer himself, Jerome immediately grasped the significance of finding a technology that is both practical and spiritual, capable of dealing with the disorientation, trauma and tremendous loss experienced by his friends and the entire nation.

Jerome began training on the 19 chapters of the Scientology Handbook to learn this technology and use it in his outreach to spread calm.

Humanitarian and Scientology Founder L. Ron Hubbard founded the Scientology Volunteer Ministers program more than 40 years ago in response to escalating crime and violence in society through the 1960s and 1970s. This program was designed to provide practical tools for encouraging human understanding and compassion. Mr. Hubbard expressly designed these



Volunteer Ministers join Buddhist monks in Sri Lanka in lighting candles for peace.



An international team responded to the tragedy in Sri Lanka to bring calm and promote peace and cooperation.

tools for use by Scientologists and non-Scientologists alike. From his vision was born a broad-based movement of individuals from all walks of life. These individuals, known as Volunteer Ministers, dedicate themselves to delivering on-site assistance to communities around the world in times of need.

The VM team reached out to every segment of Sri Lankan society. They formed a partnership in the Muslim district of Kinniya with the Child Education and Social Development Association, through which VMs are working in 66 schools reaching some 20,000 students with three of the chapters of the Scientology Handbook on the technology of study, communication and Scientology assists—techniques developed by Mr. Hubbard that speed healing and provide relief by addressing the emotional and spiritual aspects of stress and trauma.



Reaching out to Buddhist leaders with a program to calm the nation and restore hope.

In the Buddhist community, which represents some 70 percent of the country's population, the Volunteer Ministers formed a partnership with a Buddhist society that provides higher education to Buddhist communities across the world. One seminar they delivered trained 40 teachers from 15 countries including Viet Nam, China and Myanmar, on the Scientology technology of communication and study. The society wants to incorporate Volunteer Ministers technology into their curriculum going forward.

A very spiritual nation, every segment of Sri Lankan society has welcomed the help of the Volunteer Ministers and the new VM groups springing up across the country. Among the many new friends made were those who remembered the bright yellow shirts and the unconditional help of the Volunteer Ministers who arrived in 2005 to help Sri Lanka recover from the devastating Indian Ocean tsunami.

The Church of Scientology Volunteer Minister program is a religious social service. Anyone of any culture or creed may train as a Volunteer Minister and use these tools to help their families and communities.

Watch an episode on the work of the Volunteer Ministers who responded to the 2011 Nepal earthquake on the [Scientology Network](#).

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