Answering Christ's Challenge To Change Our World

'The first time you see a slum can be an overwhelming experience. Your mind, your eyes and your nose can't absorb the slum without it making you tremendously upset and angry. You sort of want to cry out to God, 'Why -why does this happen.'

"But then God looks back down at you and says, 'Why do you let it happen."

When Ferdinand Mahfood says those words, he is speaking from experience. He has seen the Caribbean's worst slums. And, he has responded to God's challenge by becoming personally involved in helping the poorest of the poor.

In 1982, Mahfood formed "Food For The Poor," an organization dedicated to helping the needy in the Third World through a network of priests, nuns and pastors from Caribbean churches. In the 14 years the organization has existed, more than \$200 million worth of food, medicines and other relief supplies have been provided to the poor, and less than 11.5 percent of the funds and goods collected have been used for administrative expenses – nearly 90 percent going directly to those in need.

"I believe God wants all of us to help the Third World's poor, and I know we can answer that challenge if more American Christians will become involved," Mahfood said.

Above: For many poor families, "home" is an old mattress tucked into a tin shack or the corner of a condemned building. Very few will ever experience the security or comfort of a traditional house — unless they receive help from Food For The Poor.

At right: Poor children value the opportunity to go to school. With an education, they hope to escape life in the slums.

