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‘Bear fruit worthy of penance.’

Mt 3:8



Enestina Muyeye, aged 9, Malawi

FOREWORD BY BISHOP WILLIAM CREAN

Our Lenten journey can truly be a refreshing time. The Lenten call to prayer, fasting and almsgiving, is an opportunity to do a check on our way of living. In Lent we have shared time to assess our priorities and refocus our energy and spirit.

For 40 years now Trócaire has become an integral part of the Lenten journey for many Irish families as the Trócaire box serves to remind us of the importance of sharing from our relative wealth with those who have little. It is a tradition of giving from the heart of our families that expresses our solidarity with families facing injustice and poverty in the developing world.



As we go about our daily life this Lent it is worth considering the people of Malawi and their daily struggles to get water. I was struck by the words of Steven Muyeye, father of Enestina the little girl on this year's Trócaire box. He spoke about how precious water is, "We are thirsty a lot. But we don't drink to quench thirst. We have to be very careful". In the countries across Africa where Trócaire works 51% of people do not have access to clean water. This daily struggle for water highlights the inequality and injustice in our world. Lent is a time to examine our own lives and consider the difference we can make to the world, through our thoughts, prayers and our actions.

The election of Pope Francis, with his evident love for the poor, has given a new impetus to the whole Church to realign our efforts to reach out to those in greatest need. His Lenten message "*he became poor so that by his poverty you may become rich*" (2 Cor. 8:9) captures succinctly the reality for all followers of the Lord Jesus that his ministry is now our ministry.

Despite recessionary times our consumption and living can be spiritually off kilter. Lent, if embraced in a wholesome way, can open the door of renewal. Through that open door the Lord may be welcomed into our lives again with the offering always of his being "*the Way, the Truth and the Life*" (Jn. 14:6) for us. My prayer is that it will be like that for you this year.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge that for twenty years this foreword was penned by Bishop John Kirby in his capacity as Chairman of Trócaire. As Bishop John moves in to retirement we wish to convey our heartfelt gratitude for these years of commitment to Trócaire and its mission.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Wm Crean". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Bishop William Crean
Chairman of Trócaire & Bishop of Cloyne

INTRODUCING LENT 2014

WATER CHANGES LIVES

Lent challenges us to seek changes in our lives so that we may come closer to God and each other. We take stock of our interconnectedness as human beings made in the image and likeness of God. We challenge ourselves on a human level each Lent to bring about a better life, not just for ourselves but also for our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, that they might have the opportunity to live life to the full, with clean water to drink.

“Those who drink of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty.” (Jn 4:14)

Water scarcity is a major human rights issue in our world today. People need water to drink, grow food, farm livestock and for health and sanitation. It is a basic human need, and yet in large parts of the developing world, namely sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and Latin America – people do not have adequate access to clean water for life to flourish.

The focus for this year's Trócaire Lenten campaign is on the **global water crisis** and on

how **Trócaire is working with communities to help them gain access to clean water** for domestic consumption and agricultural use. Water has a huge significance upon the lives of human beings and on all creation. This Parish Lenten Liturgy resource will help you explore how the water crisis in East Africa is particularly affecting families in Malawi and the community of Kanyera.

MEET ENESTINA

Enestina is 9 years old and lives in central Malawi. Although she is only 9 years old, **Enestina collects water twice a day for her family**. It is a kilometer round trip. This high volume of manual labour can be very stressful on a child of Enestina's age. It forces her to carry up to 15 litres of water at a time, leading to agonising back and neck pains. The time that she spends walking to and from the river collecting water leaves her with less time to study or to attend school. During the dry season the queue for water can sometimes take hours and she is tired when she eventually reaches school.



Enestina Muye, aged 9, Malawi

Enestina says “I don’t like carrying water. It’s very far and very heavy to carry. I have neck pains. When I have to get water in the mornings, there is a queue so I am late getting to school. I go early in the morning to get the water at 5am.”

ONE VILLAGE, ONE RIVER, ONE PROBLEM!

Despite the major advancements of medicine, technology and science in our world, **Malawi remains one of the world’s poorest countries** with over ¾ of the population living

on less than \$2 a day. 80% of the 14.9 million people live in rural areas and rely solely on what they grow on their small farms. Therefore if water is lacking, crops fail, food shortages arise and people go hungry.

Drought persistently affects over 4 million people (1 million children) in Malawi each year. This can have a devastating impact on people’s lives and can lead to situations of chronic malnutrition and an increased risk of disease.

Rain-fed agriculture is predicted to **DROP BY 50% BY 2020**



According to UN figures **1.1 BILLION PEOPLE ARE ‘WATER INSECURE’** with no access to clean water



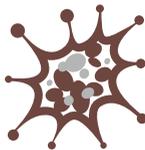
In Ireland the average Irish person uses **150 LITRES OF CLEAN WATER** a day, which is pumped into their house



In Kanyera the average person uses **24 LITRES OF DIRTY, UNTREATED WATER** a day that’s over a kilometre from their home



The main **WATER-RELATED DISEASES** in Malawi are bilharzia and cholera



The **DRY SEASON** in Malawi runs from **APRIL TO OCTOBER**



Famine and drought are a constant threat in Sub-Saharan Africa. In 2011 Trócaire reached out to over **450,000 PEOPLE FOR LIFE-SAVING AID** during the food crisis there as a result of water shortages

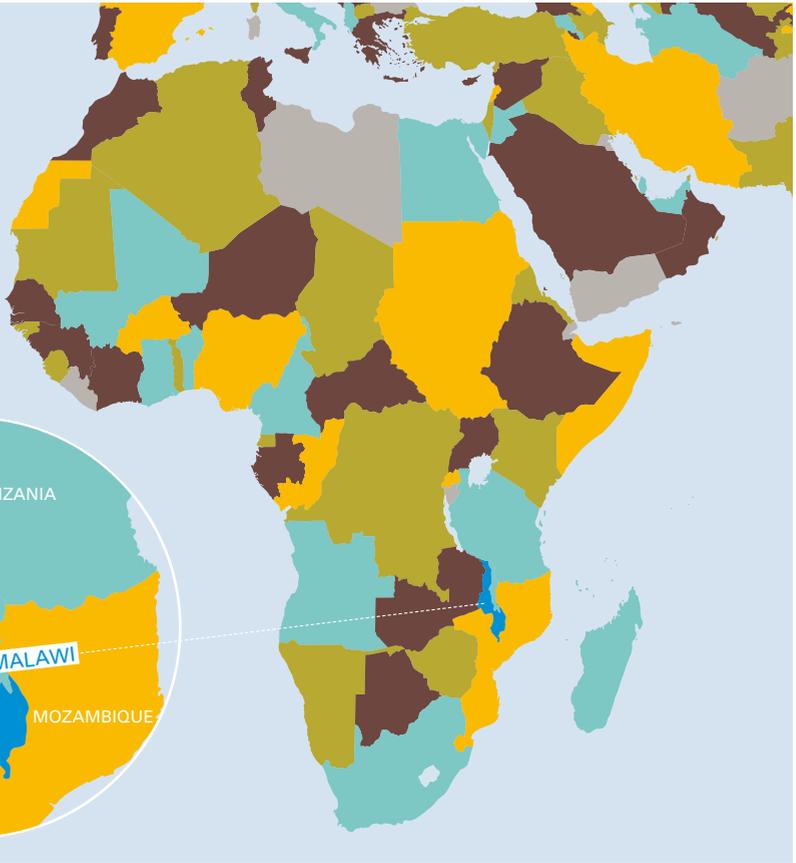


Many believe that the **WEATHER IS** becoming increasingly **ERRATIC** and extreme as a result of climate change





FLAG OF MALAWI



WHAT IS TRÓCAIRE DOING IN MALAWI?

With the support of the Irish faithful, Trócaire is helping communities in Malawi to overcome the devastating impacts of water shortages. Through our partner CADECOM (The Catholic Development Commission in Malawi), we have been able to bring about helpful lasting changes to the lives of people in rural Malawi so that they can secure a better standard of living for their own children and families' futures. Some of our work in Malawi regarding this global water crisis has included:



Reforestation – A lack of trees

can affect the water table. Due to pressure for land for people, trees are being cut for fuel and farming, so the watersheds are no longer there. In some places, where the source of the river lies, trees are

being cut down that would otherwise protect the source of the water. This causes the water springs to dry up and means that there are less rivers flowing. **Trócaire is funding reforestation projects** which will help protect forests and these natural springs of water.



Boreholes – Trócaire has funded

boreholes in the area of Chikwawa and Dedza **which allow communities**

to access water. These boreholes are situated closer to people's homes which means that they can spend more time either farming or in school than walking long distances to fetch water.



Emergency aid – During drought

season it is often difficult for people to harvest. In extreme situations like

these, Trócaire has helped fund emergency aid for communities unable to access food or water.

Even boreholes can dry up during drought.

- ◆ **Agricultural support, seed training & livestock** – Through our partner CADECOM, Trócaire has been able to provide agricultural advice and training to farmers to help them mitigate against the risk of crop failure in the event of drought, train them on water conservation techniques and provide families with seeds and livestock.
- ◆ **Disaster risk reduction** – Collating information from communities and channelling their experience of disaster and drought-related experiences into a new Malawian government Disaster Risk Management Bill.
- ◆ **Community irrigation systems** – Helping communities to work together to set up, build and manage communal irrigations systems which feed water to homes and the land.

THIRSTING FOR CHANGE THIS LENT?

Our Parish is the centre of our community and prayer lives. It is the place where we express ourselves and our love for our neighbour. We gather as the body of Christ to be fed from the table together and all that we hunger for spiritually is nourished.

Having a Lenten focus on water affords us an opportunity to mingle in our baptismal waters and to reflect upon our lives and experiences. It allows us to gather, bringing together our stories and traditions, as well as a sharing of current struggles of our brothers and sisters in the developing world.

A well planned and constructed liturgy has the power to carry one beyond the present, to a place and time that speaks to us of the words and actions of Christ. Therefore, it is fitting that as we begin our Lenten journey together this year, we, as followers of Christ, might express our love and concern for the poor through aspects of the Sacred Liturgy that we celebrate in our parish. This Lenten season, let us challenge ourselves and our parishioners to go beyond the norm and to welcome the call of justice into our parish through solidarity, prayer and discovery.

With 'water' as the theme of this year's Lenten Campaign, it has never been easier to celebrate such a theme amongst a variety of ministries in our Parish. We have no shortages in how we might accentuate this rich symbolism and liturgical action within our communal rituals in order to sustain us, refresh us, teach us and cleanse us.



Pope Francis

"God's mercy can make even the driest land become a garden, can restore life to dry bones (cf. Ez 37:1-14). ...Let us be renewed by God's mercy, let us be loved by Jesus, let us enable the power of his love to transform our lives too; and let us become agents of this mercy, channels through which God can water the earth, protect all creation and make justice and peace flourish."
Pope Francis, March 31, 2013

We invite you to use this resource and to take the liturgical suggestions enclosed as guidelines that you might adapt within your own community. Since lack of water is a condition of life in many parts of the world, the dialogue at the well (Third Sunday) might be a good place for you to concentrate your efforts, as well as the Holy Thursday Washing of Feet ritual. The issues relating to climate change and water shortages might be mortally serious but with hope and positive action this Lenten season, new life can be breathed into the environmental movement to care for the earth from a Christian perspective. Lent is about living in the light of the call of Jesus to change – Let's live Lent! together this season and make a difference in the world!

**‘Let justice flow like a river
and righteousness like an
ever-flowing stream.’**

Amos 5:24



FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

‘ONE DOES NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE’ (MT 4:4)



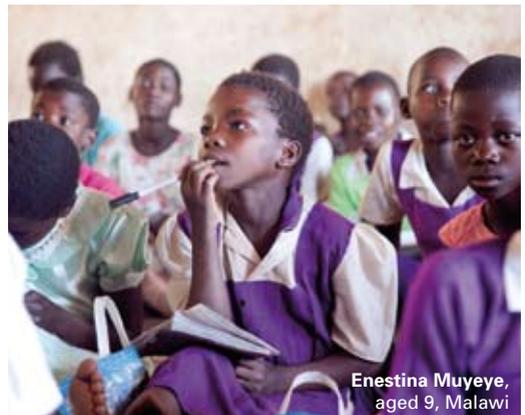
Enestina Muye, aged 9, Malawi

ENESTINA'S STORY - MALAWI

Enestina is nine years old and is from Malawi in southern Africa. It is one of the poorest countries in Africa and has been devastated over time by poverty, famine, drought and AIDS. Every morning, Enestina and her mother Eliyeta make the 1km round trip to fetch water for their family of five. When they get there, there is usually up to six people waiting in line. As the heat rises and the dust sweeps over their village, Enestina and her mother return home two hours later with their precious cargo. It is their only source of water.

Enestina frets when she talks about collecting water. "I don't like carrying water. It's far and it's heavy to carry. I have neck pains" she says pointing to the lower part of her neck. This routine of collecting water began for Enestina at the age of six and is undoubtedly mapped into her future whether she likes it or not. It is a dangerous and tiresome routine for a young girl her age as it is dark and there are lots of snakes.

Parents across the village worry that by the time young girls like Enestina arrive at school, they are often too tired and overburdened to study. Enestina agrees. "When I have to get water in the morning, there is a queue so I wait and I am late for school. I love school but I've been failing my exams because I don't know how to read and write. The time I spend getting water would be better used to study."



Enestina Muye, aged 9, Malawi

THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX –
REFLECTION ON GOSPEL FOR FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

“Thirst for Wilderness”

Lent is a really special time, a gift, where we can step back and take a look at our lives and ask ourselves, ‘How am I doing?’ Our first stop on this Lenten journey is the ‘wilderness’. Why? We need to remove ourselves from our hectic lives in order to **BE STILL**, to **STOP**, to **BREATHE**. It’s a bit like a stock take. What’s here? What’s here that shouldn’t be? What’s missing? And so we journey today with Jesus into the ‘wilderness’. We should not be afraid of this. It is a ‘Spirit led’ wilderness; God is in control here.

Lent calls each of us to transform our lives and our relationships with those we love and cherish; our relationship with the planet; with the global community; our relationship with God. They all need a chance to be aired out, to be explored, refreshed and renewed. This Lent we are asked to especially **think about the global water crisis** through Trocaire’s Lenten Campaign. This is an urgent call. The wars of the future will be fought over water. This is hard for us to imagine, especially when we live in a country with so much rain. This coming week, as we journey more deeply into the wilderness, focus on how you use water. How many times a day? How much? What is wasted? What is shared? What do you use water for? Where water is concerned how can you serve God more fully? You can find out ways you can reduce your water consumption by going to www.trocaire.org/uptous

Lent has begun! We won’t automatically wake up on Easter morning transformed. But we are Kingdom people, building, transforming, and working in solidarity with our sisters and brothers who thirst for justice in so many parts of the world.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

We pray for those who do not have proper access to water for drinking and sanitation; And for those who suffer greatly from illness as a result of using unclean water.

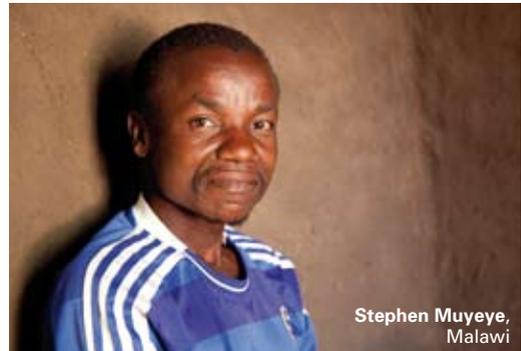
Lord in your Mercy

We pray for the people of Malawi who we journey in solidarity with this Season of Lent. In Malawi, over 2 million people are suffering the effects of hunger due to water shortages and crops failing.

Lord in your Mercy

LITURGICAL SUGGESTIONS

This week you might introduce your parish community to the **Congregational Lenten Hymn**. A suggestion might be to have a cantor introduce the hymn to the congregations and to teach it to them before mass. It would also be good to include the words of this hymn in the parish newsletter.



Stephen Muyeye,
Malawi

Introduce your parish to this year’s **Trócaire Lenten Campaign** based upon the theme of ‘Water: A Global Crises’. Draw upon the personal testimony of Enestina provided.

Have a **Sprinkling of Holy Water** ritual and a **Renewal of Baptismal** promises to bring a focus upon the theme of water and solidarity centred in Christ this Lenten season.

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

'THIS IS MY SON THE BELOVED, LISTEN TO HIM' (MT 17:5)



Enestina Muye, aged 9, Malawi

JACINTA'S STORY – KENYA

I am Jacinta Mwendu Mutemi. I am 25 years old and married to Daniel. We have two sons, Brian (4) and Cosmos (2). I am expecting my third child in two months. We live near Mwingi in a very dry part of eastern Kenya.

I left school early, but I can still clearly remember the many times I had to miss school because I had to go and fetch water. I went twice a week for my mother, taking the goats and cows to water and a donkey to bring back jerrycans for the household. The journey was 20km each way. I would leave at 7am and not get back until the late afternoon. My brothers used to help as well. Sometimes when we went there was no water at all – the river was completely dry. We would have no water to cook with and had to go hungry. The goats would die sometimes.

Things are very different now with the new water sources that have been installed by Trócaire and the Catholic Diocese of Kitui. Now we only have to travel 4km to the water kiosk. The water is high quality. We are able to water the animals

Jacinta Mwendu Mutemi,
with her son, Kenya



and will lose no more goats during the droughts. My husband and I have more time to work on our farm. We have been able to clear and prepare more land. Our harvests are much better and we can sell some of our surplus harvest.

This extra money will help us buy uniforms, books and pay for school fees when our son Brian starts school next year. I found it very hard when I was young and at school to catch up on the lessons I missed because I had to get water. My children will not have to skip school. I am very hopeful for the future now.

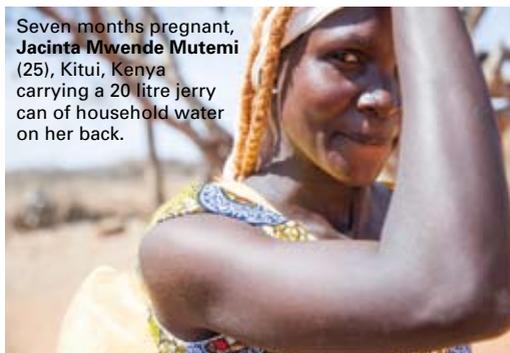
PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

In today's Gospel, God invites us to listen to Christ. We pray that we might also listen to the cry of the poor and the injustices that they face in our world. May we witness Christ in the poor, hear their calls and answer them.

Lord in Your Mercy

We pray for those who live 'upstream'; Those who have access to water and other comforts; those who control most of the earth's resources, and for those who hold the economic and political powers in our world. May they rule with fairness and work towards sharing the earth's resources equitably.

Lord in Your Mercy



Seven months pregnant, **Jacinta Mwende Mutemi** (25), Kitui, Kenya carrying a 20 litre jerry can of household water on her back.

LITURGICAL SUGGESTIONS

A cantor might lead the Lenten **congregational hymn** before/during mass this Sunday.

Entrance Procession: Have groups/ ministries in your parish (Baptism, Funeral, Readers, Eucharistic ministers, RCIA, Social Justice, SVDP, Family Mass/ Childrens Ministry) carry symbols of their Lenten Journey relevant to each of their ministries and place them before the Altar. Eg: Poster, banner, Bible, Water, Leavened Bread, Images of Malawi from Trócaire website).

THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX – REFLECTION ON GOSPEL FOR SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

“It is wonderful for us to be here.”

We can sympathise with Peter in today's gospel as he wants to remain on the mountain in this amazing, euphoric experience. We can recall those events in our own lives – we didn't want them to end. But Jesus' way involves coming down from the mountain top. Often we can be content in assuming that our serving God is sufficient at a Sunday mass. We must awaken that call within each of us to be active in our Gospel living; to listen to the cry of the poor and the oppressed and the challenges that they face in this world.

In a special way this Lent **we think about water**, we think about Enestina from Malawi, who journeys with 15 litres of water every morning before school. What do we have to say to that situation? What do we have to say to our governments about Enestina? How far can you carry 15 litres of water? Or even 5 litres of water? Who has the power in these situations? Who controls the earth's resources? What can we do about it? Wash clothes at 30 degrees; spend less time in the shower; fix those dripping taps; reduce the amount of bottled water we buy. How can such small acts make a difference? They raise consciousness, restore relationship and help us to live more fully in communion together. **Through small acts we live in solidarity and we challenge those with power to work for transformation.** “Transformation... begins with the people of God who start turning the things of death into things of life. And the kings and presidents and nations will follow”.

Shane Claiborne

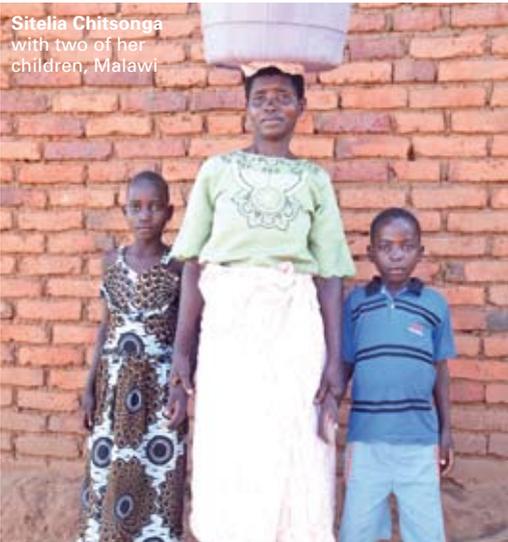
THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

'GIVE ME THIS WATER SO THAT I MAY NOT BE THIRSTY' (JN 4:15)



Saare Muni, age 6, son of Gamo Muni drinking clean water from a water supply developed by villagers and a partner organization – Action for Development in Borana Zone of Southern Ethiopia with the support from Trócaire.

Sitelia Chitsonga
with two of her
children, Malawi



scoop water into their buckets. They then make the long walk home, balancing unwieldy 15 litre buckets of water on their heads. The daily hustle for water has begun.

Sitelia Chitsonga knows this struggle all too well. This gathering of water is part of her daily ritual. She is a mother of eight and a widow. “I do worry about my children. What they eat and what I can give them,” she says. Sitelia’s routine is similar to other women in the community. She adds: “I go and fetch water three times a day. The children go twice a day. The water is used for cooking, drinking and washing. Sometimes I go and bath in the river. The water looks clean but it is not. It is not treated water” Sitelia doesn’t have breakfast, preferring instead to go straight to her farm after collecting water. Her farm consists of two acres where she grows nuts, sweet potatoes, maize and cassava as well as a goat, a pig, three chickens and a duck. Like others in the village, between January to May Sitelia struggles to provide food for her family. Despite all of her responsibilities, she still manages to find time to be a member of the

SITELIA’S STORY – MALAWI

It’s 5am in the Dedza region in central Malawi and the first thing on everyone’s mind is ‘water’. Women and girls arrive at the Kamboni river, buckets in tow, young and old, to queue and wait for water. When their turn comes, they hunker down barefoot on the muddy river bed and

THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX –
REFLECTION ON GOSPEL FOR THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

“Give me this water so that I may not be thirsty”

Today’s Gospel is a beautiful story of **Jesus’ encounter with the woman at the well**. It is full of metaphor and you can approach it from many positions: the woman having an encounter, a spiritual experience, direction from God. Or Jesus, a spiritual guide, a teacher, a comforter, challenging. Jesus meets her where she is at. He shouldn’t even have acknowledged her as she is clearly an outcast, a Samaritan woman with a reputation. This woman experiences conversion and growth at this well, not just physical quenching of thirst, but a spiritual one.

Today we can think of the millions of women and girls who make the hazardous journey to wells every day in search of water. According to the UN 1.1 billion people are ‘water insecure’. Trócaire is working in Malawi with their local partners to provide water security for many communities. By 2020 it is estimated that water available for agriculture in the region will drop by 50%. We all have a part to play in this with climate change one of the biggest contributors to water shortage. This is a problem that requires more than charity giving to solve. We need to radically change how we use the resources given to us; we need to be more conscious of how much we use; how we recycle; how we can walk or cycle more instead of driving. The woman in today’s Gospel experiences conversion at the well; we too are in need of conversion so that we live more in solidarity with those who are suffering and thirsting for justice. *“Give me this water so that I may not be thirsty”* (John 4:15).

local water committee which was set up in her local village by Trócaire’s partner CADECOM. Water shortages are a shared burden amongst this community. Together, they are hopeful of resolving this issue and that their needs will be met. Their needs are immediate; a borehole and irrigation, clean water and food that lasts a year. Until these basic human rights are met, the people of Dedza will continue to worry, continue to walk and continue their wait for water.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Give me this water so that I may not be thirsty...

We pray for those in our world who thirst for their basic human rights. We ask for courage Lord to play our part in having people’s basic needs met, and their dignity restored.

Lord in your Mercy

We pray for our own dead. We pray also for the 3.4 million people who die each year from water related diseases. May the Lord grant them eternal rest.

Lord in your Mercy

LITURGICAL SUGGESTIONS

A cantor might lead the Lenten **congregational hymn** before/ during mass.

Today you might have a **focus upon water for your homily**, particularly on its importance in our daily lives and in the lives of those with no direct access to it.

Invite a youth group or a school/sacramental group within the parish to **create a drama based upon the theme of water** and today’s Gospel.

Some points to draw upon could include...

- How Enestina, the young girl on this year’s Trócaire box often thirsts for water as Jesus did at the well.
- How people in Enestina’s community are tired, sick and hungry from a lack of access to clean water.
- How Jesus Christ is in fact thirsty for people and life.
- When we become the woman at the well, tiredness becomes vitality, hunger becomes satisfied and the sick become healthy.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT - LAETARE SUNDAY

'I WAS BLIND AND NOW I SEE' (JN 9:26)

Ernestina Muyeye,
aged 9, Malawi



KAILU'S STORY – KENYA

My name is Kailu Tumbo and I am 76 years old. I have been a widow for many years. I live here on my farm in Ngiluni in eastern Kenya with my three grandchildren. Their mother died and I took the three children in to live with me. The youngest is 6 and the eldest is 16. The middle child who is 12 is deaf.

Life here is very hard. It is a very dry place. Getting enough water has always been difficult. The nearest water point used to be 15km away and I could not travel that distance at my age. I had to borrow water from my neighbours. Sometimes they would not have enough to spare any for me. When that happened, all the children would have to eat was some millet flour

mixed with a tiny bit of water. This is why the boys are underweight. The goats went thirsty. We were not able to wash properly. Although my eldest grandson is in school I had to send him to the water point sometimes to get water. He would have to spend the night there as there were queues and he missed classes. This made me feel bad, but what choice did we have?

The installation of the water point by Trócaire and the Catholic Diocese of Kitui has been a God-send. It is less than 2km away and this means we can access water very easily. We have enough to drink now and to give to the goats. We are all healthier. The goats are more valuable now because they are not scrawny. We are able to wash and I am able to clean the children's



Kailu Tumbo with her grandchildren, Kenya

clothes. I don't have to borrow water now and have more time to work on the farm. Because of this I am able to plant more crops, feed the children better and sell whatever is left. There is

a special needs school 30km away and I have applied for them to take my deaf grandson. I may have to pay something and it will be difficult but before the water came it would have been impossible. If the water point had not been installed only God knows if we would still be here.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

We pray for all women and mothers. May God keep watch over them as they carry the burden of the world's water crises on their heads and shoulders; Where women and children in the poorest countries spend up to eight hours a day collecting water, denying them a chance to earn a living, go to school, or simply spend time with their family.

Lord in your Mercy

We remember especially mothers and fathers who grieve the loss of a child. We pray especially for those who have lost a child to preventable diseases caused by either lack of water or polluted water. May our prayers embrace them in their mourning.

Lord in your Mercy

THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX – REFLECTION ON GOSPEL FOR FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

The man in the Gospel story today has had his sight restored. Notice how his sight grows more clearly throughout the account until he finally recognises Jesus as Lord. We can be blind in many ways through our refusal to believe that we can contribute to positive change in the world. Too often we dismiss these realities by thinking we can do nothing about situations such as the global water crisis. This is blindness. We sometimes hide from the evidence before us and take refuge in prayer. **Prayer is important but we must also be open to action.** What we do, what we buy, how we use the plentiful resources at our disposal; these all affect the wider global community. Words attributed to Oscar Romero read: "We cannot do everything and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something, and to do it very well." How can we as parish communities work for justice for our brothers and sisters who are in need? We need to see them, to see their struggle, to see the systems which contribute to this crisis. This week can you gather a small group in your parish and tell the stories used in this year's Trocaire resource? This is one small way in which we can open our eyes and open the eyes of others. It is not simply about giving money. We must open our eyes. Today we pray that we can have our sight restored so that, like the man in the Gospel, we can truly worship Jesus.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." – Margaret Mead

LITURGICAL SUGGESTIONS

A cantor might lead the Lenten **congregational hymn** before/ during Mass.

Have the children in the congregation (or a sacramental preparation group) **gather around the ambo** for the Gospel reading and Enestina's testimony.

Have **a child read Enestina's story** from the Family Mass Resource.

Create the **homily based upon answers to questions that you ask the children**. Include questions about Enestina and her life, the Gospel message and their relationship with their mothers as it is Mothering Sunday.

Include a **blessing for mothers**, remembering especially the mothers of Malawi who journey up to three times a day for many kilometres carrying approximately 20 litres of water.



Eliyeta Muyeye (32) with daughter
Tamara (2), Dedza, Malawi, 2013

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT - PASSION SUNDAY

'EVERYONE WHO LIVES AND BELIEVES IN ME WILL NOT DIE' (JN 11:25)



Enestina Muyeye, aged 9, Malawi

FELIX'S STORY - MALAWI

Felix Mangani is 38 years old and is a husband and father to three children. As a farmer, he knows firsthand the struggle associated with producing enough food for his family. The survival of his crops is completely dependent on having enough water for them to grow. In 2001, Malawi experienced a severe drought, and many people in Felix's community were left hungry, including eleven people that died. To try and prevent this same hunger reoccurring, the community came together to meet with Trócaire's partner CADECOM to see how they could address the problem of water shortages. With the help of CADECOM and support of Trócaire, a water irrigation system was put in place which allowed water to flow from the hills to the fields. He says "Before this scheme we only harvested in May and had no food by August, so we had an eight month hunger gap.



Felix Mangani,
Malawi

Now we have enough, as we harvest we can plant again. Now, in a year we can have up to three plants and harvests". Felix and his family can now look forward to a bright and secure future where the worry of water shortages and having enough food for survival is a thing of the past. "Now, we have access to water. There is food security. Before the canals it was hard to get the water, but it isn't a problem anymore."

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

God of creation, you formed the earth, the moon, the stars, seas and humanity. You appointed us as guardians of all that you had created, and yet today our rivers are polluted and are drying up. Your gift of water is unequally shared between the rich and the poor and our world is threatened by the serious effects of climate change. Teach us the way and renew us as stewards of the earth.
Lord in your Mercy

We give thanks to God for His Holiness Pope Francis who continuously calls us to love the

poor. Like Christ, he models for us an example of how one should love and be loved in our world.
Lord in your Mercy

LITURGICAL SUGGESTIONS

A cantor might lead the Lenten **congregational hymn** before/ during mass.

This week you might like to **base the homily on the sacred space and the symbols which have been placed in it** throughout Lent 'Our journey through Lent; A summary through symbols'.

Enestina Muyeye
with her father
Stephen, Malawi



THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX – REFLECTION FOR FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Jesus is being called back to Bethany into a situation of death. We can think of all of those places in the world which Bethany could represent for us today: Malawi, Syria, Afghanistan, **situations of conflict in our own communities**. The tomb and the bandages can represent all of those things which prevent us from being free, which cause situations of despair. We can place ourselves in various positions within this text: the disciples who don't want to go there; Mary and Martha who are crying out to Jesus; Lazarus who has been placed in darkness, bound, restrained. Jesus returns into a situation of conflict and confronts a culture of death. He orders that Lazarus be unbound, that Lazarus come out of the darkness of the tomb and into the light. We too are sometimes like Lazarus in the tomb when we assume that we can do nothing about a situation such as the global water crisis. We can dismiss our own light and remain in the darkness.

This is a story of liberation. When we feel helpless where situations of injustice are concerned, we must remember that we are full of light and are being called out of a culture of death. We are powerful beyond measure. Never forget that. We can do small things; we can help to remove the restraints of injustice instead of sitting in the darkness.

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us." Jesus is calling us out into the light in today's Gospel. Come forth, Lazarus!

Marianne Williamson

'Lent is the time for greater love, listen to Jesus' thirst... Jesus thirsts even now, in your heart and in the poor - He knows your weakness. He wants only your love, wants only the chance to love you.'

Blessed Teresa of Calcutta



Jwakimu Muyeye (11) eating mbeza with nsima (maize meal)

HOLY THURSDAY - ONE PARISH'S STORY

**'THE WASHING OF THE FEET AND THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST: TWO EXPRESSIONS OF ONE AND THE SAME MYSTERY OF LOVE ENTRUSTED TO THE DISCIPLES, SO THAT, JESUS SAYS, 'AS I HAVE DONE... SO ALSO MUST YOU DO' (JN 13: 15)
POPE JOHN PAUL II, HOLY THURSDAY 2003**

Pope Francis kisses the feet of people on Holy Thursday during the washing of feet.



Holy Thursday presents us with a unique opportunity to explore the concepts underpinning Catholic Social Teaching. The scriptures of this day, as well as the action of washing the feet dare us to move beyond ourselves into the freedom and expression of Jesus Christ which is shared in community. It is in communion with one another that we truly flourish as Christians. The Christian community is not a group where some have it and others do not, or a community divided by those in need and those not in need. We are an equal people, part of the one body of Christ. The theme of this approach to Holy

Thursday is about **'Justice and Service; giving and receiving'**.

In the first reading we hear of a God who leads his people from slavery into freedom, from oppression into a new life. We are invited to share in the **Exodus story**, where God gathers his people together into a community. God's promise to the chosen people of Israel ensures that liberation will prevail. Liberation is at the heart of our Catholic Social Teaching. The second reading tells us of the **Passover meal** which Jesus celebrated with his disciples on the eve

Eliyeta Muyeye (32) with daughter Tamara (2) outside their home in Dedza, Malawi



of his death. He invites us to partake in receiving his body and blood, an offering of himself. We are invited to accept this offering, to receive the Eucharist and to become part of the living body of Christ. This expression of unity and solidarity is also essential to Catholic Social Teaching.

CELEBRATING HOLY THURSDAY RITUAL IN PARISH – FR DERMOT NESTOR

Often our parishes resort to the same old habits for ‘surviving’ Holy week. Planning and preparation for the Triduum can become so time consuming, that we often resort back to what is routine for us. This year, renewed by our Lenten sacrifices and promises, and with Catholic Social Teaching as our source of inspiration, let us challenge ourselves to go beyond, and to refocus upon the theme of humble service in Christ.

Fr Dermot Nestor writes about how extending an invitation to engage the whole parish in the ritual of foot washing, brought about a unique humbling experience of love and solidarity

amongst the parishioners of Brackenstown Parish, Co. Dublin.

BRACKENSTOWN PARISH – WASHING THE FEET OF A COMMUNITY

I am happy to share with you how our parish deepened the experience of washing the feet on Holy Thursday. Our aim was to get more people to fully understand how Jesus served us, and how he calls us to serve one another. In the gospel story on Holy Thursday, we are invited to the Passover meal and to witness the profound ritual of foot washing. We follow Christ’s example of bowing before the person in front of us, in humble service and adoration of that individual. The act of service shown here is what being a follower of Jesus is all about. Service, especially to the poor and all those in need, is at the heart of Catholic Social Teaching.

In my first year ministering to the parish of Brackenstown, I found that there was a very low level of participation in the Holy Week and

Easter ceremonies. The 'usual' suspects were rounded up on Holy Thursday and I washed their feet during the Mass of the Lord's Supper. As happens in most parishes, the people who had their feet washed were well known to the congregation, they were drawn from different ministry groups. While this is fine in one way, and I know it is practical too, I desired that some unknown people would become involved in our Holy Thursday celebrations of the Lord's Supper too.

We put out the call, and for the second and third year we got new people involved in the foot washing ritual. These new individuals became multipliers. I asked each of them to find someone else to join them at the ceremony on Holy Thursday so that each of them could in turn wash another's foot. In doing so, they were

putting into action the words of Jesus – ***"I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you"*** (Jn 13:15).

Priests fulfil this mandate yearly when twelve of our brothers have their feet washed by our bishop. In turn, we return to our parishes and wash the feet of another twelve... but why should the action stop there? Priesthood means humble service. It is in a spirit of humble service that we work for social change in the world around us. The ministry of priesthood comes alive in light of the gospel story of the washing of the feet.

What happened here in practical terms was that each of them brought a basin and towel, and while I washed the feet of the last 3 or 4 people, the first 3 or 4 started to wash their partner's

FR DERMOT NESTOR – IN THE HOMILY FOR HOLY THURSDAY I SAID...

"...On the night before he died for us, Jesus gave us the gift of his body and blood to sustain us on our journey of faith. He showed an incredible example of service. An example of service that Peter did not want to be part of. But then Peter changed his mind and had his feet washed. Tonight we will all get that opportunity like Peter

In a few moments I will wash the feet of twelve people. Then each of them are going to wash many other people's feet. By doing this we are saying that we promise to serve one another and allow others to serve us.

How do I wash people's feet in daily life? Sometimes it is through the simplest of things – holding a door open, saying thank you, being polite in the car park, in the queue in the shop. Sometimes it is more difficult to wash another's feet, maybe we have to help people we don't like, maybe we have to hold our tongue when someone is annoying us. Maybe we are called to listen to someone going through a tough time.

For each of us it will be different – but when we come to Mass and receive the great gift that Jesus left us of himself – then we are called to go out and wash someone's feet. You can't have one without the other. There is no point in coming to celebrate Mass if we are not prepared to go out and serve one another.

So let our celebration of Mass lead us out to serve one another, and let our serving of one another lead us back to Mass to thank God or ask his help in that service. We say 'Amen' to – yes I believe in you, Amen to Yes I want to serve you, Yes I will serve you in my brothers and sisters, Yes I want to follow you with all my heart."

feet. For this to happen, it meant that we had 24 people for the washing of feet.

In year four, we pushed the boundaries a little further. This time, each of the twelve whose feet I had washed, took their basin and jug and went to a designated part of the church. An invitation was extended to all present to come forward and to have their feet washed. So there were now 12 foot washing stations around the church and all were invited and encouraged to come and participate in ministering to another.

Like Peter, there were some within the Parish who resisted but in the end, most, like Peter came around to the idea of ministering to another, and an incredible atmosphere and flurry of activity ensued as nearly everyone moved towards one of the twelve “stations” to have their feet washed. The interaction between Jesus and Peter reminds us of the mutuality of service that is essential to our lives as followers of Christ. Peter, along with all the other disciples, was told to go and do the same, but before he can minister first he is told that he too must have his feet washed. The words of St Francis ring true here... “It is in giving to all that we receive” (St. Francis). We all need to serve and we all need to be served. In community we share our needs as well as our gifts, our failings and our triumphs with each other.

The twin themes of both ‘serving’ and ‘being served’ were strongly evident here. I know from talking to people afterwards that this was a revelation for some. It was the first time that they had really thought about the concept of service rather than just gazing on from the pews, detached from both the action and the meaning.

SOME IDEAS

The gift of running water was presumed for the above ritual and we used generous amounts of it. However, in light of this year’s Trócaire Lenten campaign about the **global water crisis** in our world, you might like to **explore this concept** in your parish. You could really challenge yourselves by alluding to the preciousness of water and of



Eliyeta Muyeye watering their farm, Malawi

our responsibilities as stewards of the earth with its various uses.

As people approach the foot-washing stations, a number of phrases or statements could be read aloud by a reader, choir or youth group which **focuses in on the preciousness of water and on how we should conserve it**, even as we serve to wash one another’s feet. Reflections on water for baptism, for life, for survival, for recreation and of how we waste it, could all be used. You might also like to use facts about water and quotes from people whose lives are at the mercy of water shortages which are in this resource.

The above ritual is something which could **breathe new life into a parish ritual** for Holy Thursday, particularly parishes that are open to trying new things and to involving new people. The **themes of justice and service** are great for interacting with young people in particular. It is an entry point for them to engage with the Eucharist on a level that they are comfortable with and passionate about.

PARISH WILDERNESS MEAL

'WE WHO ARE MANY ARE ONE BODY, FOR WE ALL PARTAKE OF THE ONE BREAD' (1COR 10:17)

The Muyeye family gather for meal time in Dedza, Malawi



FASTING

Fasting is an age old tradition for Catholics. It calls us to put on the cloak of Christ and to experience solidarity with one another in a real and tangible way. Through fasting, we share in the suffering of millions of people across the world, who yearn to have enough food to eat and water to drink. Our **voluntary suffering** serves as an example of our human commonality and our awareness that many of our brothers and sisters in the developing world **suffer involuntary fasting** each day. When we fast, we recognise the fragility of human life. Jesus taught us personally the value of this. His most famous fasting experience was his time in the desert for forty days and nights, preparing for his earthly ministry. Christ's suffering and fasting strengthened him to face his ultimate death on the cross. When we fast, we remember his suffering not only in the wilderness but also on

the cross. We do it as atonement for our sins and in preparation for our celebration of his resurrection at Easter.

IN COMMUNION

We often think of fasting as an individual experience. Yet the bible shows many ways in which communal fasting took place. **Adam and Eve** fasted together, **Jesus and his disciples** all prayed and fasted in communion with one another, and everybody fasted in the **Exodus** story. The communal spirit of sharing and fasting together is something powerful; whereby we recognise one another's hunger and spiritual yearnings and share in the common goal of satisfying each other's needs. *"Some gathered a lot, some only a little. But when they measured it out, everyone had just enough. Those who gathered a lot had nothing left over, and those who gathered only a little*

had enough. Each family had just what it needed” (Ex 16:17).

During his time as Archbishop of Buenos Aires, Pope Francis witnessed the suffering of a poor and oppressed people on the streets. His call for Lenten Fasting urged the faithful to make the

connection between their faith and the suffering of their neighbour.

“Today we can only practice fasting by taking the pain and powerlessness of the millions who go hungry. Whoever does not fast for the poor cheats God. To fast is to love.”



The Muyeve family, Malawi

FASTING IN SOLIDARITY – A DAY IN THE LIFE OF THE MUYEVE FAMILY

Eliyeta and Steven Muyeve live in the Dedza region of Malawi. You may already be familiar with their daughter Enestina who is the child on this year’s Trócaire Box. They understand the burden of fasting, although theirs is one forced upon them by the harsh reality of water and food shortages.

“I have half an acre of land where I grow maize and sweet potatoes” says Steven, “I don’t have irrigation but my land is beside a river, so I use a watering can and rely on rain. It is a big field to water by hand but I do this twice a day. The rains are erratic. If there is not enough rainfall we can only harvest a small amount. Between November and March we have no food so I work on other people’s land as a labourer during this time. I get paid maize for this work, if I till one acre I get one bag. Because we don’t have enough food at this time the children eat just one meal a day and usually this is Nsima (maize) and some vegetables, so it is not a nutritious meal. Last year we got food aid for 4-5 months during the drought – maize peas and cooking oil.”

“If we have enough food in the morning we eat porridge, nsima in the afternoon and nsima for dinner” (this is maize, three times a day, usually eaten with ‘relish’ which can be pumpkin leaves or vegetables. When harvest ceases, food shortages become apparent however, leaving the Muyeve family struggling for survival.) Eliyeta says “During drought we eat nsima in the afternoon and evening only. The children complain of hunger and can’t concentrate in class because they have no breakfast and we have to save maize for lunch and dinner.”

WHAT CAN WE DO?

This year why not consider a **re-focusing on the age old tradition of fasting** in your community! You might consider this as a 'parish' commitment rather than just an 'individual' Lenten commitment, whereby a communal event is held or a commitment is made by ministries in your parish to fast. A connection should be made between the service that one brings to their parish community through their ministry, and the service in which Christ calls us to minister to the poor. *"For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich."* (2Cor 8:9)

GETTING STARTED

Organise a basic **Lenten Wilderness Meal** on the Fridays of Lent in your Parish.

The monies saved from fasting could be **donated to your Trócaire box** which will go towards supporting some of the world's poorest people. Base your 'Wilderness Meal' upon the **theme of food and water injustices** in our world as a sign of solidarity with those suffering in the world around us.

WHAT WOULD IT LOOK LIKE?

Step 1: Pick a large room in your parish centre or a person's home to gather in.

Step 2: Make arrangements (in advance) with the group for the preparation of the meal.

Step 3: Reflect on some food and water injustices on our world (use personal testimonies for the Sundays of Lent in this booklet).

DID YOU KNOW?

Feeding everyone in 2050 – including the undernourished and the additional 3 billion people expected – could require 50% more water than is needed now.

Step 4: Pray together – invite everybody in the group to share a prayer and hear the word of God with the group gathered at the table

Step 5: Share with one another and reflect on your experience of the meal, your fasting throughout the day, anything that struck you.

SAMPLE WILDERNESS PRAYER SERVICE

Opening hymn

Choose a hymn that reflects your theme for the evening and the season of Lent. A hymn based upon the theme of water, hunger, mercy or justice would link particularly with this year's Trócaire Lenten campaign.

Opening prayer

"Heavenly father, you promised us that where two or three are gathered you are there in the midst. Lord we welcome you amongst us today, and celebrate the gift of life that you have lavished upon each of us. We gather here as a privileged people to share in the breaking of bread with one another. We have fasted, we have prayed and so let us now come together in an act of unity. We do so in solidarity with the millions of people throughout the world who struggle for justice and who lack the basic needs for survival like food and water. Open our ears to their voices, open our hearts to their injustices and open the door to love and peace in our world around us."

Reading (Short Lectio)

Select a reading from the passages of scripture listed below, or choose an alternative reading that might be more appropriate to the theme of your wilderness meal. In order to fully hear the word of God, it might be a good idea to read the passage of scripture once, allow time for silent reflection and invite people to share a word or phrase that struck them. Reread the passage of scripture a second time (preferably by a different voice), and repeat the process of contemplation and sharing.

Words of reflection

Prepared by a member of the team/ ministry.

Blessing of the food

Invite everybody gathered around the table to hold hands and to pray the blessing over the food prepared. The blessing of the food can be carried out by the priest. If there is no priest present, the following blessing can be read by a team member.

“Heavenly Father, Creator, Sustainer and Life giver, Bless this food to our use, and us to your service. Make us grateful for all your mercies, and mindful of the needs of others, and thankful of those who have contributed to our meal before us today. We ask this prayer through Jesus Christ our Prince of Peace. Amen”

Sharing of food conversation

Invite all who are present to share in the food and drink at the table and to reflect with their neighbours about the concept of fasting. They can base their conversation upon their experience of fasting that day, or upon previous Lenten practices. Later on, invite people to share these reflections with the wider group.

Personal Prayers, Intercession or Petitions for the week ahead**Next week’s fast**

Make arrangements for next week’s gathering. You could pass on some helpful tips to other ministries that will be arranging their wilderness meal in the coming weeks.



Enestina Muyeve,
aged 9, Malawi

SCRIPTURE FOR REFLECTION

- ◆ Exodus 16: 1-30 (Bread from Heaven)
- ◆ Genesis 3: 1-24 (The first sin and its punishment)
- ◆ Luke 6:17-26 (The Beatitudes)
- ◆ Matthew 13:1-9 (Parable of the Sower)
- ◆ Matthew 4:1-4 (The temptation of Jesus in the Wilderness)
- ◆ John 6:22-35 (Feeding the five thousand)
- ◆ Matthew 6:1-18 (Concerning Almsgiving, Prayer & Fasting)
- ◆ Mark 14:12-25 (The Passover with the Disciples)

SOME IDEAS

- ◆ Arrange for a particular ministry within your parish to **host a wilderness meal each week**.

For example:

Week One – Ministers of the Word

Week Two – Ministers of the Eucharist

Week Three – Youth Ministry / Family Mass group

Week Four – Parish Musicians

Week Five – Parish Staff/Volunteers/ Parish Pastoral Council or an open parish invitation

- ◆ Arrange for local supermarkets and restaurants to **donate their surplus foods** to your parish wilderness meal.
- ◆ Invite parishioners to **take on the challenge of doing the ‘Trócaire Fast’** this Lent. It takes place on Good Friday, 18th March. Monies raised will go towards changing the lives of those most in need in our world. You can find more information at www.trocaire.org/fast

KEEP IT SIMPLE!

Remember, **it’s a fast!** Food should be kept basic and to a minimum.

Share the experience! Let the wider parish know what’s happening; show pictures, display notices or peoples reflections/feedback somewhere in the parish that everyone can read about it.

Examples of a meal might include porridge, soup and a bread roll.

TRÓCAIRE LENTEN SACRED SPACE

St Mary's Cathedral Liturgy Group, Killarney

Lenten Sacred Space, St. Mary's Church, Killarney



Having a sacred space in our church allows for an expression of God in our lives in a more creative way. Symbols speak to us, some in an artistic interpretative way, others in a more therapeutic way. People who visit a sacred space can often enter into a deeper sense of prayer as it provides them with a thematic focal point for their prayer.

Lent affords us an opportunity to **prepare a suitable space for contemplation**; an oasis which will allow us to follow Christ into the desert for forty days. We witness Christ in the poor and give alms, we seek a relationship with Christ through prayer and we fast in solidarity and in atonement for our sins. All of these things become manifest in a sacred space in our Church which serves as an example to all of our Christian identity.

SETTING THE SCENE

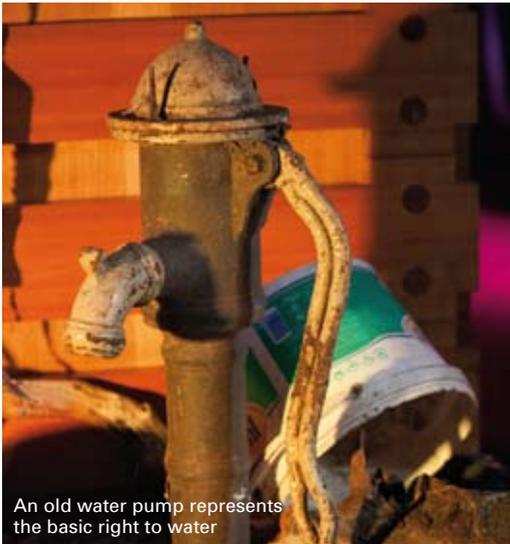
The following space, designed by St. Mary's Cathedral Liturgy Group in Killarney is designed

as a growing space i.e. it will move and grow with the season of Lent.

To begin, the space will appear very **desolate, dry and barren**. This can be illustrated with the use of a pump, dead timber, dry gravel and upturned water containers.

The single sandal points us towards the journeys that many people less fortunate than us have to **travel for the basics like water...** for survival. It is also a symbol of the journey of Lent and our task of following Christ into the empty barren wilderness.

The old and empty buckets serve as an example of "what's one person's trash is another person's treasure". In other words, what we take for granted and perceive as rubbish in the developed world, might in fact be an important necessity to another person's life in the developing world. The empty bucket is also a **symbol of water scarcity** in our world. Women and children



An old water pump represents the basic right to water

across the world spend 200 million hours every day collecting water in similar containers. But what happens when the river or well is dry?

OUR LENTEN JOURNEY

In the 1st or 2nd week of Lent, a bucket can be turned upright to receive the written petitions of the community. This is a great way of **inviting parishioners to engage with the space** and to cement their Lenten commitments in written form.

An unlit candle, possibly with the Trócaire logo, can be placed in the space as **a symbol of hope** for us all; that we will be spiritually renewed by our Lenten commitments.

As the season of Lent progresses the space should reflect this move forward. Slowly, bits of **green and growth should begin to appear**.

It is envisaged that as we near Eastertide, the space will begin to show new life, growth and hope. This transformation will take place by supplementing the space with flowing water, flowers and plants for Easter Saturday.

A growing space is more interesting for parishioners or visitors to your parish. Unlike other spaces which are static, it will encourage people to move spiritually with the space as we

move with the season of Lent which we are observing. Hopefully, it will encourage others to reflect on what we have and on how others struggle for their daily existence.

The pump symbolises how water is a basic human right in our world, yet it is not easily accessed by all. Christ, the source of living water, extends an invitation to all who thirst in our world. A good week to introduce the pump into the sacred space might be the third Sunday of Lent where we hear the story of the woman at the well. On this particular Sunday, Jesus and the Samaritan women discuss water, living water to be precise. If it is difficult to get a pump an easier option might be household items such as an old tap and sinks, or a broken garden hose.

It is important for the space to reflect the theme of Trócaire's Lenten campaign, namely, **WATER**. Having props will gently nudge people towards engaging on issues of injustice as highlighted on the Trócaire box.

The following might also be of use in your Sacred Space this Lent.

- ◆ A poster of a **dry well or barren dessert** painted by a local school or the Family Mass Group.
- ◆ A comparative poster of a **fully functioning water well** or a modern 'water' scene i.e. swimming pool, bottled water, etc.
- ◆ **Word cards** to scatter throughout the space during the weeks of Lent. Ideally, they should vary from week to week, inspiring new thoughts and prayers.

These words might include.....

Reach out – Lent – Isolation – Water – Food – Searching – Isolation – Others – Dignity – Famine – Death – New life – Prayer – Fasting – Almsgiving

All of the above would be small, and importantly have the Trócaire logo, to connect the space with the Lenten campaign. There should be few or no words on the poster material.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS



Ernestina Muyeye, aged 9, collecting water with her mother Eliyete, Malawi

OPENING PRAYER

In his meditation upon the Via Crucis at World Youth Day in Rio, Pope Francis commented that “the Cross of Christ invites us to allow ourselves to be smitten by his love, teaching us always to look upon others with mercy and tenderness, especially those who suffer, who are in need of help, who need a word or a concrete action which requires us to step outside ourselves to meet them and to extend a hand to them.” May we draw deeply from the well of these words as we pray the Stations of the Cross together this day.

Heavenly Father, we gather with open hearts and empty buckets to draw from the well of love and knowledge that you have given us. We thirst for salvation and a sense of belonging in your Kingdom. Teach us to recognise the same Christ suffering in people across the world and inspire us to become advocates of truth and justice on their behalf.

*We ask this prayer through Christ our Lord.
Amen*

Enestina Muyeye,
aged 9, Malawi



FIRST STATION: JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

We Adore you O Christ and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

(Mk 15:14-15)

Pilate asked them, 'Why, what evil has he done?' But they shouted all the more, 'Crucify him!' So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

How could Pilate, a man of such honour and integrity sentence an innocent person to death? Public pressure and popular opinion swayed his decision whereby he chose to release a notorious criminal over an innocent being. The world around us today forces similar situations of injustice on innocent people. We too, often wash our hands of this guilt like Pilot did. We too condemn others to suffering and death by squandering the world's resources for our own benefit.



Fortune Kalolo (18), sister of Eliyeta Muyeye
at the family's crops in Dedza, Malawi

SECOND STATION: JESUS CARRIES THE CROSS

We Adore you O Christ and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

(Is 53.5)

*But he was wounded for our transgressions,
crushed for our iniquities, upon him was the
punishment that made us whole.*

Lord, you took on our troubles, our sins, and carried them to Calvary. Your sacrifice was not in vain. Each time we participate in the Eucharist may we become more resolved to help others carry their cross in life, and to ensure that our thoughtlessness and extravagance does not add a further burden to the already troubled lives of our brothers and sisters.

Gamo Muni, (40), filling jerry cans at the pump, Dillo District in southern Ethiopia



THIRD STATION: JESUS FALLS FOR THE FIRST TIME

We Adore you O Christ and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

(Is 50:6-7)

I offered my back to those who beat me, I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting. The Lord God helps me, Therefore I will not be disgraced. Therefore have I set my face like flint, and I know I will not be put to shame.

Lord, why did nobody help you? How could people look on and see your suffering and not speak out? In life we often stay silent or go along with actions that we know are not just, because it is the easier option. Give us the courage this day to rise up and to speak out. Let us create a better world for all, where we are responsible stewards of the earth which you created. Forgive us for failing to preserve your masterpiece of creation and for letting our actions influence climate change and affect those who long for water as a result.

Jacinta Mwendu Mutemi,
with her children, Kenya



FOURTH STATION: JESUS IS FACE TO FACE WITH HIS MOTHER

We Adore you O Christ and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

(Jn 19:25-27)

Standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

For a mother to stand by and watch her child suffer and die unnecessarily is unimaginable. For millions of mothers in the developing world this is a daily reality. As Jesus meets his mother we recall the role of women in some societies who will today bury their children who have died as a result of drought, famine and easily preventable diseases. We take our water for granted here. In most of these cases, if clean drinking water had been available, these children would not have died.



Eliyete and Stephen
Muyeye, Malawi

FIFTH STATION: SIMON OF CYRENE HELPS CARRY THE CROSS

We Adore you O Christ and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

(LK 23:26-27)

As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus. A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him.

Jesus was human after all and must have felt imminent relief when Simon picked up the cross and helped him carry it along. Simon's part in the crucifixion scenario was small but significant. When we see the Trócaire Box or advertisements on television we are moved to act. We are called to take up the challenge ourselves or even to assist others like Trócaire to carry the cross. Our part like Simon's is also small, but significant. By doing so, we allow Trócaire to stand side by side with the world's poorest people in order to help ease their burdens and suffering. In our support of Trócaire, may we resolve to dismantle the cross of injustice in our world and build from that same wood an ark of refuge for all in need of protection from the storms of life.



Enestina Muyeye,
aged 9, Malawi

SIXTH STATION: VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS

We Adore you O Christ and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

(Mt 25:35-36, 40)

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.—And the king will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.”

It is difficult to face tears of grief and of facial disfigurement like Veronica faced with Jesus. When we see this kind of suffering, it is often easier to turn away and to pretend something is not happening. Lord, summon in me the strength that Veronica had to face you at your weakest moment. Lift my hands to your face and allow me to wipe your furrowed brow. You who are divine, welcomed the comfort of a human touch. Let me relay the same act to those in need.

Gamo Muni, (40), Dillo District
in southern Ethiopia



SEVENTH STATION: JESUS FALLS FOR THE SECOND TIME

We Adore you O Christ and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

(Is 53:3)

He was despised and rejected by all, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

The weight of his cross and the energy required for this task is too much for Jesus. Not even Simon's help has prevented this. He falls again. His body is reaching the limits of its endurance and each fall shows his humanity being stretched beyond breaking point.

Enestina, the child on this year's Trocaire box also pushes the boundaries of her physical limits each day as she struggles to carry 15 litres on her head for a kilometre. This errand can leave her in a lot of pain as her tiny frame struggles to balance such a volume of water.

Gamo Muni, (40), Dillo District
in southern Ethiopia



EIGHTH STATION: THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM WEEP FOR JESUS

We Adore you O Christ and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

(Lk 23:27-28)

A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him. Jesus turned and said to them, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children."

Even in his own personal suffering, Jesus still took the time to meet and console the women of Jerusalem. Lord help me to follow your selfless ways like this. When I feel the personal overload of life, let me be awakened to the suffering of others which makes my anguish seem trivial.



Gacembe Mugende on his farm in Chuka town area, Meru, Kenya

NINTH STATION: JESUS FALLS FOR THE THIRD TIME

We Adore you O Christ and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

(Is 53:4)

Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins!

How did you do it Jesus? How did you carry on? We often fail to pick ourselves up after one fall, but you endured three! This is part of our role as a community of believers. When one person is down, another will lend a helping hand and pick them back up. As Christians we are called to help pick up those who are downtrodden. We persevere on their behalf and journey beside them until they are strong enough to stand once again. The vulnerable people of the developing world need us to continue in our commitment to doing what we can to improve the environment. The world is a shared resource, yet we are using more than our fair share.



Gamo Muni, (40), Dillo District in southern Ethiopia

TENTH STATION: JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS CLOTHES

We Adore you O Christ and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

(Mk 15:22-24)

Then they brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull). And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh; but he did not take it. And they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take.

With each shred of clothing came a piece of his dignity. In 2011 a drought in the Horn of East Africa stripped away life. Bit by bit, people watched as their crops died, their children became malnourished, and their animals lay dying, paralysed by thirst. Many attributed the drought to the devastating impacts of climate change. This drought didn't just take away people's access to water, it also took their dignity. Imagine the feeling of powerlessness in not being able to provide your child with a drink of water?



Enestina Muyeye,
Malawi

ELEVENTH STATION: JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

We Adore you O Christ and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

(Jn 19:18-20)

There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.' Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek.

Jesus suffered greatly as each nail pierced his flesh. He was treated in a cruel manner. Yet this is the way some people in our world continue to suffer, except their nails are our indifference. In

northern Myanmar, a seventeen year ceasefire between the government and armed groups broke down in June 2011, leading to renewed fighting. Caught in the crossfire, over 85,000 civilians are living in temporary camps without basic services. Through our church-based network, Trócaire is accessing camps in remote areas that other organisations cannot. We are providing food, shelter and health kits to over 20,000 people and building simple wooden houses for over 5,000 people. As fighting continues and further displacement occurs, food remains a constant need. We have worked on supplying children with warm clothes and ensuring that the basic wooden structures are made fit for purpose and insulated for the winter months, as well as combating the spread of disease. These people face their toughest challenge yet.



Muthui (6) listens to his grandmother tell their story, at his home in Ngiluni village, Kitui, Kenya

TWELFTH STATION: JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

We Adore you O Christ and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

(Lk 23:46)

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Having said this, he breathed his last.

A final breath and a new life for all. Through his death, God truly embraced the sufferings of the world and took responsibility for them. There is nothing remote about God, even in the darkest places. Following the ultimate darkness that descended upon the land, came a promise of light. We remember all who have died as a result of having no access to water. In the midst of our current global water crisis, we pray that the light will soon prevail and that justice will flow like a river.



Richard Mwandwa Makio (58) drinking water to quench his thirst from the farm work, at his homestead in Mutulya community, Kitui, Kenya

THIRTEENTH STATION: JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS

We Adore you O Christ and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

(Mk 15:42-45)

When evening had come, and since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate wondered if he were already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he had been dead for some time. When he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the body to Joseph.

Joseph of Arimathea took a risk. He bravely faced Pilate, who had just sentenced Jesus to death and declared himself a follower of Christ by showing his compassionate side in his care for Christ's emaciated mortal body. In Syria, war has forced millions of people from their homes. In recent months, the people of Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey have shown great care for their Syrian neighbours, opening their borders so that people can seek refuge there. People there are struggling for life. May the Spirit guide these neighbouring countries along the path of care and sharing and help the people of Syria down from the cross of war as Joseph did with Christ's wounded body.



Anthony, 2 months old,
Meru, Kenya.

FOURTEENTH STATION: JESUS IS PLACED IN THE TOMB

We Adore you O Christ and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

(Mk 15:46-47)

Then Joseph bought a linen cloth, and taking down the body, wrapped it in the linen cloth, and laid it in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus saw where the body was laid.

Why? Why Jesus? Why our Saviour? Why did he have to die? In this passage of scripture, we hear the deafening 'why's' of a people baffled by the cruelty and ruthlessness of others. This 'why' unfortunately remains rooted in our world today. Why are so many people still dying from hunger? Why is the earth made up of 71% water and yet so many people are thirsty? Why do some people choose to do evil over good? Our challenge is to keep asking 'why' until we find a 'how'. 'How' we are going to fix this. 'How' we can alleviate the suffering of our brothers and sisters in need. Let us not bury our heads in the sand, or remain trapped in the vague 'whys' of life. Let us look towards the 'how' and find our hope and solution in the risen Christ Jesus.

A photograph of a woman, Eliyetta Muyeye, sitting and holding a young child. The woman is wearing a light-colored sleeveless top and a dark patterned wrap. The child is wrapped in a dark fabric with a green and white floral pattern. They are positioned in front of a window with a brick wall in the background. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day.

‘Confession heals, confession justifies, confession grants pardon of sin, all hope consists in confession; in confession there is a chance for mercy.’

St. Isidore of Seville

RECONCILIATION SERVICE 2014

This year's Lenten Reconciliation Service provides a space for your parishioners to explore in a deeply prayerful way the **Parable of the Good Samaritan**. In particular, parishioners will be asked to reflect on the question, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" This is, of course, a hugely significant question particularly during Lent as we approach the Easter mysteries. It is a question Jesus doesn't necessarily answer in a particularly straightforward way in this parable. There is nuance and subtlety here. But in spending time reflecting on the question of eternal life, parishioners will be brought more deeply into the really significant questions here; who is my neighbour, and how are we to be neighbours to one another? In answering this question, we are then brought to a richer understanding of the question of eternal life.

FOR WHOM

This service is intended for use with adult groups. Suggestions for how it might be adapted for a younger age group are available on www.trocaire.org/parishes

Ideally, because of the nature of the prayer service, it would be great if the **Sacrament of Reconciliation** could be offered as part of the gathering.

An overall leader (this might be a priest, but need not be) will be required. Obviously, if you're intending for the Sacrament of Reconciliation to follow immediately you will need to have a priest or priests for this. If you are intending for the invitation to the Sacrament of Reconciliation to be a more general one, and that it will not be offered immediately after this service then you will not need priests for this service. It is, in either eventuality, designed so that it can be led by a lay man or lay woman.

In addition, a number of other speakers will be needed. Because of the nature of the reconciliation service, these readers need to be very comfortable with silence and be okay with

holding groups in that silence. Some 'rehearsal' time and/or guidance may be required to ensure the correct atmosphere is created.

WHEN

Holy Week is the most obvious time for holding this reconciliation service. However, your parish might use it on **one of the Fridays during Lent** that you could designate for this purpose. You might even consider linking the service in some way to the **Wilderness Meal** (see page 25) if your parish decides to run with this initiative.

HOW

This service is designed to be prayerful and peaceful, and it is designed to afford people some time to reflect quietly on where they are in their own faith journeys. The focus of the service is on the questions contained in the parable itself. These are challenging questions that call for some quality engagement. Feel free to adapt the service as required to your own particular pastoral reality.

The service is divided into three parts. Part 1 is a moment to **reflect on how God is our Good Samaritan** and it has a symbolic anointing moment mirroring the care received from the Good Samaritan on the road. Part 2 provides a form of an **examination of conscience** through reflection on the questions posed and answered in the parable. A third, optional part, should priests be available, might be the **Sacrament of Reconciliation** for individuals who desire it.

CREATING THE SPACE

The main focus of your sacred space might be **symbols relating to the Parable of the Good Samaritan**. These might include;

- ◆ A road in sand, symbolising the journey of the traveller
- ◆ Road signs
- ◆ A set of question marks printed and displayed around the sacred space
- ◆ Some coins symbolising the payment made to take care of the man

- ◆ Cloths representing the bandages covering the traveller's wounds
- ◆ Oils representing the care given to the man

In addition you might include some of the following. These might be processed at the start of the service so as to draw attention to the sacred space. The leader might chose at the start of the service to explain the sacred space; drawing particular attention to the oils and to the image of the journey.

- ◆ A lit candle
- ◆ A copy of the scriptures
- ◆ A purple cloth
- ◆ A crucifix

ATMOSPHERE

For a large parish group, it is important that there is enough light for the safe arrival of people to their seats. For smaller groups, a cosier

atmosphere is easier to create. You might assist in creating a suitable atmosphere for this service by asking some of the **parish musicians** to play quietly in the background as people enter.

It is recommended that an order of service be handed out at the start of the service as people enter. This is particularly important given the challenging questions asked.

This is available in an easy to photocopy format online at www.trocaire.ie/parishes

MUSIC

It would be preferable for there to be a **choir or group of musicians** available to support this Service. If this is not possible, you might consider having quiet music that might be played at various intervals on a CD player.



Community gather at the Komboni river, Malawi

ORDER OF SERVICE

Leader: We welcome you to our Penitential Service in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen

Leader: We pause in silence as we begin our service, allowing ourselves to come into the presence of the one who has called us here; our God of love and mercy.

(Pause in silence.)

Leader: As we gather here together, we do so not only to acknowledge our failings, but more importantly to draw ever more deeply into an awareness of God's unfailing love for us.

(Opening hymn: 'The Servant Song'.)

Leader: We take a moment to listen to the word of God. We invite you to spend some time reflecting on this text with us. We will read it slowly and after we have read it, we will pause to examine together what the word of God is saying to us in our own lives.

Reader 1: *(The text should be read very slowly and prayerfully. The reader might pay particular attention to the questions asked and pause with these. An alternative approach might be to role-play the text, with the leader or another taking the part of Jesus and reader 1 taking the part of the lawyer).*

The Parable of the Good Samaritan
(Luke 10: 25 – 37)

A lawyer stood up to put Jesus to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read it?"

And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself." And he said to him, "You have answered right;

do this, and you will live."

But desiring to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbour?"

Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; then he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.'

Which of these three, do you think, proved neighbour to the man who fell among the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed mercy on him." And Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

(Pause for quiet prayer and reflection.)

Leader: Let us now spend some time reflecting on the love our God has for us; how He is our Good Samaritan.

Reader 1: In the Parable of the Good Samaritan, the Good Samaritan is moved with compassion. This is a moment of grace.

Reader 2: Spend some time remembering how God has loved you through your own journey through life. Where have you met the Good Samaritan; the one who bends down to lift you up? Think about the people who have helped you, who have lifted you up. Think also about times when you have been lifted up in prayer and in healing.

(Pause for silent reflection with quiet music.)

Reader 1: Archbishop Desmond Tutu once rather humorously explained heaven in this way, “We may be surprised at the people we find in heaven. God has a soft spot for sinners. His standards are quite low.”

Reader 3: Pause for a moment to reflect on the God who is all compassion and mercy. Is this how you experience God? Do you come to God full of fear or do you come to God as a friend, as someone deeply and passionately on your side and at your side? Perhaps your fear of ‘falling short’, stops you from believing in this God of love?

(Pause for silent reflection with quiet music.)

Reader 1: The inn where the ~~good samaritan~~ is brought might be compared to the Church.

Reader 4: How are you with this image? Is the Church – this parish – a place of sanctuary and care for you? Are you actively part of creating the parish reality to be a place of caring and compassion? What is good about our parish life? What can we work on together to make our parish life a more caring, inclusive and compassionate place?

(Pause for silent reflection with quiet music.)

Leader: To symbolize God’s loving care for us as his beloved sons and daughters and to symbolize God’s care for God’s Church, made real and alive in our parish here today, we invite you now to come forward to be anointed on the hands with some holy oils. In the Parable, the good samaritan binds up the traveller’s wounds and pours on them oil and wine. As you come forward, name something in your own life that needs the healing love of the good samaritan, our living Lord Jesus. Bring this to him in prayer, knowing that Jesus, like the good samaritan is moved always with compassion, desiring to come to us in our distress to heal our wounds and to make us whole. It is this compassion we

celebrate on Good Friday and throughout Easter. To prepare ourselves for our Easter celebrations, take time now to reflect on God’s loving care of you in your own life and in the life of our parish.

(While quiet music plays, members of the congregation come forward to volunteers at the front of the Church and elsewhere around the Church who will bless their hands with oil.)

Leader: Let us take some time now to reflect again in prayer on this powerful Parable.

As well as reading the parable with Jesus as the good samaritan, there are lots of other ways of exploring this parable. You can look at the parable from the perspective of the robbers, from the perspective of the traveller on the road, from the perspective of those who passed by and of course from the perspective of the good samaritan. But the parable itself has its own suggested approach. It asks us questions that are challenging, probing and very rich. Let us prayerfully explore these questions together as part of our reconciliation service. Let these questions become for you a kind of examination of conscience.

There are five such questions asked in this short parable, a lot of questions for such a short text.

Take some time now to pause, to quieten yourself and to become open to being surprised, in prayer, by what you hear when you truly listen to these questions.

Reader 2: The lawyer asks the first question; ‘Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?’ He is asking this question from the perspective of the law.

Reader 3: CS Lewis, the author said, that “If you want to get warm you must stand near the fire: if you want to be wet you must get into the water. If you want joy, power, peace, eternal life, you must get close to, or even into, the thing that has them.”

Spend some time reflecting on this question; what shall I do to inherit eternal life? How can you get close to that reality? What is it that you are being called to 'do' to inherit eternal life? Maybe more importantly, how are you called to 'be'?

(Pause for silent reflection with quiet music.)

Reader 2: Jesus asks the second and third, "What is written in the law? How do you read it?"

Reader 4: St Catherine of Siena once said, that "All the way to heaven is heaven, because Jesus said, "I am the way."

Jesus, for us as Christians is the fulfillment of the law. What does that mean for us in our faith journey? What is my personal relationship to the

'rules' of my religion? Do I put them before my relationship with God and with others? Or do I understand the 'rules' as part of an expression of a life lived in faith in Jesus Christ? Do they make me more compassionate or more judgmental?

(Pause for silent reflection with quiet music.)

Reader 2: The lawyer asks the fourth question, "And who is my neighbour?"

Reader 5: "All human beings are my neighbours. We share the same planet." (Anna Monar)

Jesus summarises faith as love of God and love of neighbour. What does this question mean for me today, 'who is my neighbour'? How am I with that question? Do I have a sense of the answer? Is the answer small or big? How am I with my closest neighbours now, with those

Qersi Godana, age 12, is one of a family of eight in a district of the Borana zone of southern Ethiopia





Enestina Muyeye,
Malawi

who are around me here in this parish? What is the challenge here in this question for me personally?

(Pause for silent reflection with quiet music.)

Reader 2: Jesus asks the final question, “Which of these three, do you think, proved neighbour to the man who fell among the robbers?” This is a question asked out of love.

Reader 6: Pope Francis preaching on this parable challenges us to become like the good samaritan who allows his plans for that day to be changed. Surprised by God in the person he met on the road who was in need of help, the good samaritan stopped to help. He was moved with compassion. Of those who didn’t stop, Pope Francis says, “People pass by him and look at him. But they do not stop, they just continue on their journey, indifferent to him; it is none of their business!” Pope Francis goes on to ask, “How often do we say, it’s not my problem?

How often do we turn the other way and pretend not to see?”

Reader 2: This final question that Jesus asks is the crucial question. Which of these three, do you think, proved neighbour to the man who fell among the robbers? How am I with it? Do I stop to help those in need? Do I pause to consider the needs of others in our world? In what way have I been conditioned not to stop? Am I moved with compassion? Or do I allow my heart to be hardened? Pause now for a moment with the question Jesus asks of you today, “Which of these three, do you think proved neighbour to the man who fell among the robbers”?

(Pause for silent reflection with quiet music.)

Leader: We have been asked lots of challenging questions today. Pause for a moment to see how you are now having had the courage to answer at least some of them. We pause as we listen together to the hymn...

(Music: 'The Servant Song'.)

Leader: We take time now to pray together.

Reader 1: The response is: The Lord will heal us in our brokenness. He reaches out to us in compassionate love.

**All: The Lord will heal us in our brokenness.
He reaches out to us in compassionate love.**

Reader 1: We are sorry Lord for the times when we forget how much you love us.

**All: The Lord will heal us in our brokenness.
He reaches out to us in compassionate love.**

Reader 2: We are sorry Lord when we fail as Church to reach out in compassion to our fellow travellers on the road.

**All: The Lord will heal us in our brokenness.
He reaches out to us in compassionate love.**

Reader 3: We are sorry for the times when we draw too heavily on rules, forgetting that you, our Lord, are the fulfillment of the law.

**All: The Lord will heal us in our brokenness.
He reaches out to us in compassionate love.**

Reader 4: We are sorry Lord, when we think we do not need your help and your love.

**All: The Lord will heal us in our brokenness.
He reaches out to us in compassionate love.**

Reader 1: We are sorry Lord, when we think we are too busy to help those around us who are in need.

**All: The Lord will heal us in our brokenness.
He reaches out to us in compassionate love.**

Reader 2: For the times, Lord, when we have a small and limited understanding of who our neighbour is.

**All: The Lord will heal us in our brokenness.
He reaches out to us in compassionate love.**

Reader 3: For when we fail to work for a more just world for all of our fellow travellers on the road.

**All: The Lord will heal us in our brokenness.
He reaches out to us in compassionate love.**

Reader 4: We are sorry Lord, for the times when our hearts become hardened and we fail to love others as you have loved us.

**All: The Lord will heal us in our brokenness.
He reaches out to us in compassionate love.**

Leader: Let us say together an Act of Sorrow:

**All: Oh my God, I thank you for loving me,
I am sorry for all my sins, for not loving
others, and not loving you. Help me to live
like Jesus and not sin again. Amen**

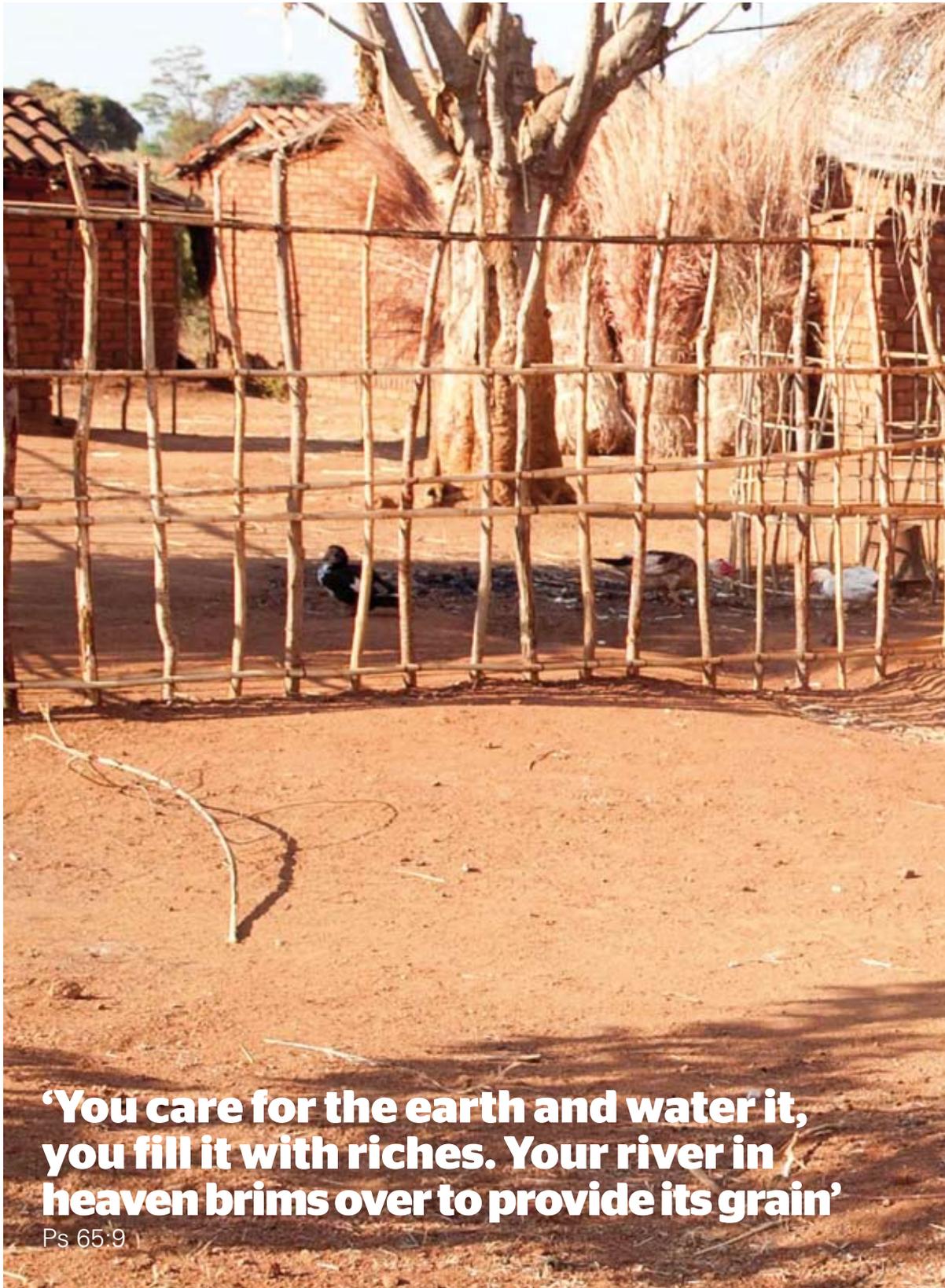
Leader: *(Here is the ideal moment to offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation, should you decide that this is what should follow the service. You might also conclude with some words of thanks to those who have helped in preparing and delivering the service. If you are not intending for the Sacrament of Reconciliation to be part of the gathering you might highlight when the sacrament will be available in the parish in the coming days.)*

Leader: Let us stand together for a final blessing. We bow our heads and ask for God's blessing.

Loving Lord Jesus, as we journey through this holy season of Lent, continue to journey with us, teaching us always to love others as we have been loved by you. We make our prayer through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

(Concluding hymn: 'The Servant Song'.)



**‘You care for the earth and water it,
you fill it with riches. Your river in
heaven brims over to provide its grain’**

Ps 65:9



Enestina Muyeye, carrying water home, Malawi

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Enestina Muyeye with water cans
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Enestina Muyeye in class

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Jacinta Mwende Muteni and her son

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Eliyeta Muyeye with her daughter
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