

Good morning/evening everyone.....My name is And I work/volunteer with Trócaire. I wish to share with you today some information about the work of Trócaire and our role in looking after creation and ourselves.

The theme for our Season of Creation this year is **Cultivating Hope**. We celebrate this season, in the awareness that we are in the midst of an international health crisis. The environmental crisis and this health crisis are interconnected. Both are global emergencies that are affecting many people.

Pope Francis's ground-breaking encyclical *Laudato Sí* reminds us of our duty to care for Our Common Home and for the people and nature around us. Pope Francis also reminds us how interconnected all our lives are with each other and our Covid 19 crisis has proven this so much.

We have all come from some kind of home and are held within the relationships of that experience. So too, we are also held within a relationship with the natural world and all of God's creation. Our connection with each other and with our common home is more important than ever. What we do locally can have global effects, the more we keep our locality clean, the cleaner our world will be.

We all share much in common with the families and communities which Trócaire works with overseas. We are all connected to our home and to our environment, we all depend on the earth for our survival. We are all experiencing the impacts of global emergencies such as Covid-19 and climate change.

However, many of our brothers and sisters around the world feel the impact of these challenges far more than we do here in Ireland. Many depend on the land to feed their families and disruption to rain patterns caused by climate change can have a devastating impact on food production. Many live without access to clean water or hygiene facilities, many live in countries with weak health systems. Many are forced to live in overcrowded camps having fled conflict, oppression or drought.

During Lent this year, we heard about Madris and her family in Kenya. Madris was working hard to provide for her family, facing the challenges of climate change with strength and resilience. Thanks to your support, Madris, through her faith and love for her family, cultivates hope each and every day. Let me take this opportunity to extend a heartfelt thank you for your support during Lent. Even as our own communities faced the challenges and uncertainty of Covid-19, there was still so much love and support shared with communities like Madris around the world, around our common home.

Each one of us has a place, which is unique to us in God's plan for creation. Trócaire believes that we can Build Back Better as the world begins to emerge from the sudden and awful shock of Covid-19. We have a unique opportunity to rebuild the global economy in a way that protects the most vulnerable members of our society, as well as the planet itself.

The most vulnerable members of our societies – people living in poverty, without access to health systems or with health problems are bearing the brunt of the Covid crisis. Likewise, the poorest people in the world are bearing the brunt of the climate crisis. Building back better means protecting those people by helping them and also by ensuring we are not contributing to the challenges they face.

Through your support, Trócaire and our local partner organisations have cultivated hope for families living in Kenya by the introduction of solar water pumps. Solar water pumps are an innovative and environmentally friendly solution for communities in remote areas in the East of Kenya where there is no electricity and where climate change has brought drought.

The Season of Creation is a reminder to all of us of our call to protect our environment and to do what we can, where we are, to live in a more sustainable world. In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis reminds us: "Hope would have us recognise that there is always a way out, that we can always redirect our steps...All it takes is one good person to restore hope... Truly, much can be done!" (*Laudato Si*, 61, 180).

God's Word has always been a source of hope in troubled times and remains steady, constant, and true. This verse from the book of Isaiah, is inspiring for the work of Trócaire and for all who look after nature in their own creative manner

"But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint. "

Thank you so much Fr. and thank you all, for your continued support and generosity. May the gift of the Holy Spirit guide us all through this Season of Creation and the challenging times ahead for the work of Trócaire and for us all.