A worried Joseph (39), holds his daughter in Bidi Bidi refugee settlement in early 2017. See Joseph today, page 3. Photo: Tommy Trenchard/Caritas

Back to Bidi Bidi: The Good You Made Real page 3
Saint Oscar Romero, the former Archbishop of San Salvador was canonized on Sunday, 14th October 2018 in Rome. Although his life was cut short in a brutal assassination nearly 39 years ago, your kind support helps Saint Romero shine his guiding light for human rights defenders to this day...

Since 1973, donations like yours to Trócaire have been defending human rights in Central America – and helping to fund the El Salvador Human Rights Commission founded in 1979 by Saint Oscar Romero.

Blessed martyr, long remembered
Only weeks after writing his 1980 letter of thanks (excerpt at right) to Trócaire supporters like you, Saint Oscar Romero was gunned down for tirelessly denouncing the torture, killings, and exploitation of El Salvador’s poor and marginalised. At the time of his murder, he was saying mass in the chapel of the hospital compound that was his home.

Not the product of terror or fear
But although St. Romero is no longer with us, his fearless dedication to human rights will guide our work each day and serve as the foundation upon which the Trócaire Romero Awards and Romero Fund stand. In the words of his own 1978 Epiphany homily, “Peace is not the product of terror or fear...Peace is not the silent result of violent repression. Peace is the generous, tranquil contribution of all to the good of all.”

Thank you for being part of St. Romero’s legacy by helping people in the world’s most desperate places.

Like the everlasting legacy of St. Romero, when you leave a gift of any size in your Will to Trócaire, the light of your generosity will chase back the long night of poverty and injustice for women, children, and men in the world’s most hard-hit places.

And in honour of your legacy of love after you pass, we’ll say your name in a special Mass each year. To mark the Month of Holy Souls, and remember that although you are no longer with us, you are forever a cherished part of your Trócaire family worldwide.

How to get started
To notify us that you’ve included the work of Trócaire in your Will – or for free details on how to get started – contact Grace Kelly in Trócaire Maynooth on 01 629 3333 or grace.kelly@trocaire.org.

www.trocaire.org
Not two years ago it was a patch of bush land in northern Uganda dotted with small villages. But a bloody war in nearby South Sudan has sent people fleeing in mortal terror, in droves across the border. The heroically traumatised children, women, and men now take refuge here, more people than in all of county Galway. Yet despite the growing numbers, through Trócaire partner Caritas, your love has been there almost from the start – bringing food, clean water, helping with shelter, and urgent healthcare. And as the war rages on and hopes of returning home fade, your love and training that are already changing lives. This is Bidi Bidi refugee settlement, sixteen months on...

Thank you for helping. Thank you for staying. Thank you for believing that people who have been displaced deserve a chance.

www.trocaire.org
Kumba, now ten, is so grateful for your Trócaire Box support during Lent last year. Donors like you provided the gift of a new classroom after much of her Sierra Leone community was destroyed in a landslide.

Photo: David O’Hare/Trócaire

The New Classroom You Gave to Kumba

She is only seven. But in her still-young life, Kumba has survived Ebola and a deadly landslide that took only four minutes to kill eight out of every ten people in her community of Matone in Freetown, Sierra Leone. Her father Sahr said, “All I could see was the mountain flowing down like water.” Then out of the rubble, your kindness came to Kumba and her family through the Trócaire Lent Box last year. Because of you both community and family are rebuilding, including a new classroom stocked with paper, pens, and other supplies – plus uniforms and schoolbags and textbooks. There are many challenges ahead, and with your continued help we’ll stay as long as we’re needed.

Kumba says thank you!

Uganda

Trócaire Gifts of Love sent by supporters like you this past Christmas (more, page 6) and throughout the year translate directly into goats, chicks, seeds, and other stepping stones to a better tomorrow for refugees like Martin (42). Although he lives in a rocky part of the Bidi Bidi settlement with his family and children, your donations helped Martin to attend a Caritas-supported Farmer’s Field School, where he learned new skills. Since then he has set up a small savings group, and invested in livestock.

Photo: Tommy Trenchard/Caritas

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Photo: Tommy Trenchard/Caritas


People who have been displaced deserve a chance. ✨

www.trocaire.org
MARIA LUISA AGAINST THE ODDS: WOMEN LEADING THE STRUGGLE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

Many women and girls around the globe still face the lack of a voice in nearly every aspect of their daily lives. Worldwide, one in three women has faced physical violence in her lifetime. Today we introduce you to Maria Luisa, one of the thousands of women standing against gender-based violence and leading the struggle for social justice, thanks to partner programmes you support...

Half a lifetime of grief is etched upon the face of Maria Luisa (60). Yet because of your support, today there is something else in the eyes of this Mayan Q’eqchi woman. Determination. Resolve. Courage.

Without a trace
Thirty-five years ago a violent military invasion led to her husband’s disappearance – along with others in her Guatemalan community. The military accused them of being guerrilla fighters. “They started kidnapping people, women, men, and even children. My husband and his brother were taken. He was a Catechist. He said, ‘I’m doing this for God.’ Why would they take him?”

Grim discovery
Maria Luisa searched for the answer for over three decades. Then she received a call. Anthropologists were being brought in to unearth secret graves discovered by surviving relatives. Maria Luisa was asked to serve as translator. She soon served a far greater role. With each new body found, women and relatives turned to her. For comfort, for a listening ear, for help. “Some of the remains were hugging each other. Some were blindfolded while others were tied up by the ankles and wrists – women, children... all mixed in together.” Her husband Arnoldo was among them. The pain of those who sought her help, and her own unspeakable grief, nearly crushed her.

A new mission
A Trócaire partner programme that provides support to people who experience the Guatemalan genocide, especially indigenous communities like Maria Luisa’s, gave her a way to cope and a new mission. Your kind donations help to fund it. “I was on the verge of a nervous breakdown,” she says. “The support was invaluable, both as an individual and part of a group. Without that help I don’t think I would have recovered. It’s not just me saying thank you, it’s the voices of all the women from my community.”

Today Maria Luisa is a leader in her community, helping other women. Her hope for the future is simple: to bring justice. “What they did was not correct – they took away innocent people, they took away children. What wrong could they have done?”

LEARN: Read more stories of women you are helping around the world in the Trócaire special report, “Against the Odds: Women Leading the Struggle for Social Justice,” on trocaire.org/resources/policyandadvocacy/against-odds-women-leading-struggle-global-justice.
When the 2018 Trócaire Gifts of Love Christmas catalogue came out, so many of you responded with generosity and caring, purchasing gifts of chicks and goats and solar lamps, seeds, and more in honour of your loved ones – for people in need worldwide. Martin in Uganda (see “Back to Bidi Bidi,” page 2) is but one of the hundreds of success stories now in the making because you gave.

Today we simply want to say, “Thank YOU!” and share with you the words of grateful student Chance, whose mother received the gift of a solar lamp in 2016:

“This lamp has helped me a great deal in my studies, where I have been able to prepare my lessons and study for exams at night. I have also seen changes in the village, including a decrease in smoke inhalation from the traditional oil lamps. A big ‘thank you’ to Trócaire and its partners who care about the conditions of our lives.”

From your Trócaire family around the world, we wish you love and peace in 2019 for the transformations you bring to people’s lives.

COMING SOON: WATCH FOR YOUR 2019 TRÓCAIRE BOX AND ALL-NEW LENTEN GIVING KIT

Please will you hold María, Patricia, and Maya in your heart this Lent?

The families of María, Patricia, and Maya have had their land, and their homes, taken. And it just isn’t right. This Lent, know their stories and let your love conquer their fear by getting your 2019 Trócaire Box and giving what you can to help them.

Thank you so very much for caring.