

Trócaire

YOUR LOVE IN ACTION

News on how Trócaire supporters like you are conquering fear worldwide

Winter 2019

Back to Bidi Bidi: The Good You Made Real page 3

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

Maria Luisa Against the Odds, page 5
The Christmas Gifts of Love You Gave, page 6



PLUS: Thank You
From a Saint, page 2
And more ►

THANK YOU, FROM A SAINT

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...

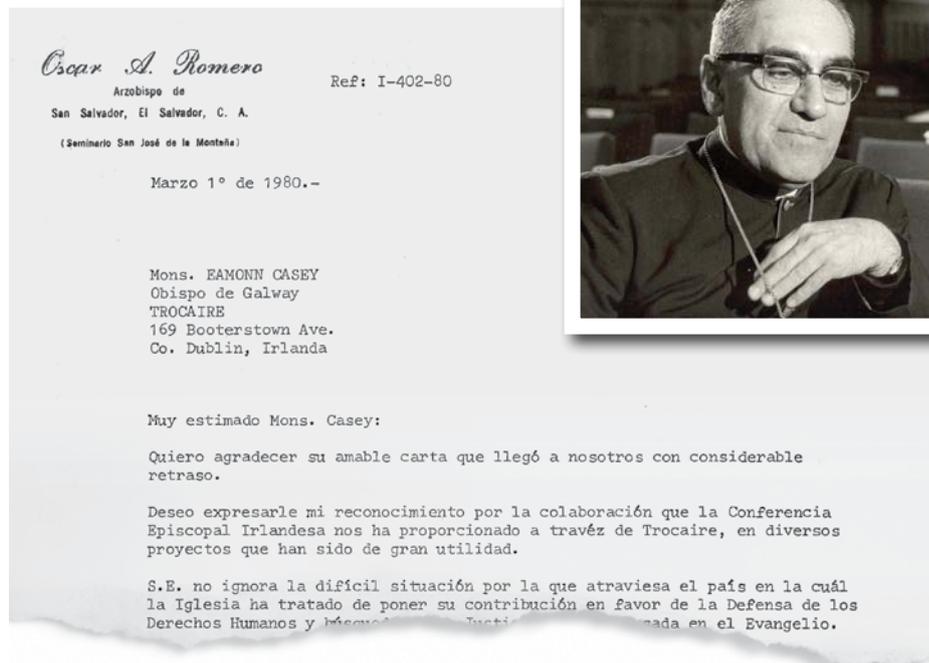
Since 1973, donations like yours to Trócaire have been defending human rights in Central America – and helping to fund the El Salvador Human Rights Commission founded in 1979 by Saint Oscar Romero.

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



Just weeks after writing this letter to **thank Trócaire supporters like you for "your kindness and preoccupation for our country and our Church,"** the newly canonized St. Oscar Romero was murdered for his defense of human rights.

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.

WE WILL REMEMBER YOU

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**. ♥

BACK TO BIDI BIDI: THE GOOD YOU MADE REAL, 16 MONTHS ON...

Not two years ago it was a patch of bush land in northern Uganda dotted with small villages. South Sudan has sent people fleeing in mortal terror, in droves across the border. The traumatised children, women, and men now take refuge here, more people than in all of Ireland. Through Trócaire partner Caritas, your love has been there almost from the start – bringing 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



▲ Storm clouds over Bidi Bidi in northern Uganda, now the largest official refugee settlement in the world. Most of the children, women, and men who take shelter here faced atrocities ranging from the murder of their family members to rape, home burnings, and brutality in the South Sudan war. Your support is giving them a way forward. Photo: Tommy Trenchard/Caritas



▲ With proceeds from the sale of his first harvest of okra from seeds and farm tools you helped to supply, Malis (30), was able to buy new sandals for his children (pictured here is Malis' son) – and a bit of fish to add some much-needed protein to his children's diet. Photo: Tommy Trenchard/Caritas



► Joseph (from newsletter cover) and his daughter Flora (2) today, standing among the crops he planted at Bidi Bidi thanks to your kind gifts of seeds, tools, and training. In addition to his own children, Joseph cares for five nieces and nephews who were orphaned after his brother and sister in law were killed in the South Sudan war. "The soldiers set fire to the houses. We couldn't go into the bush with the children, so we fled for Uganda on foot. It's tough to be a refugee. You don't have anything in hand. But it's better to be a refugee than have somebody trying to kill you," he says. "To people who have given money and support, may Almighty God bless you for taking care of refugees, without your help we would have been nowhere." Photo: Tommy Trenchard/Caritas



Thank you for helping. Thank you for staying. Thank you for believing that people can change.

Uganda →



villages. But a bloody war in nearby human heartbreak is staggering: over 250,000 of county Galway. Yet despite the growing numbers, giving food, clean water, helping with shelter, and and generosity remain, bringing practical supports in months on...



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

▶ Jackie (25), fled South Sudan with her two girls, now aged just 6 and 4. Thanks to your support of a skills programme initiative, Jackie received tailoring training. Part of a group of four women who were given sewing machines, and with help from a loan, Jackie was able to buy cloth stock and open a tailoring shop. "When we arrived, we had nowhere to sleep. We had to survive off food aid. When I do go back, I will bring with me the skills I have learned and my knowledge to build a better life."
Photo: Tommy Trenchard/Caritas



🌐 **WATCH:** For a deeper look, don't miss "Welcome to Bidi Bidi" at www.trocaire.org/news/standing-solidarity-refugees.

People who have been displaced deserve a chance. ❤️

THE NEW CLASSROOM YOU GAVE TO KUMBA



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

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!

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...



After horrific human rights abuses traumatised Maria's community, your donations made it possible for a Trócaire partner to be there with counselling and help them move forward. Photo: Finola Finnan/Trócaire

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.



THE CHRISTMAS GIFTS OF LOVE YOU GAVE...

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. ♥

Photo: Maria from northeast Uganda is another student who is thankful for the solar lamp you gave to help her study at night. Credit: Ross McDonnell/Trócaire.

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. ♥



Photo: Alan Whelan/Trócaire.



Trócaire

Head office: Trócaire, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, Tel: +353 (0)1 629 3333

Email: info@trocaire.org

Dublin: 12 Cathedral Street, Dublin 1, Tel: +353 (0)1 874 3875

Cork: 9 Cook Street, Cork, Tel: +353 (0)21 427 5622

Belfast: 50 King Street, Belfast, BT1 6AD, Tel: +44 (0)28 90 808030

Email Belfast: infoni@trocaire.org

JOIN US ON

 **Website:** trocaire.org

 **Facebook:** facebook.com/trocaireireland

 **Twitter:** twitter.com/trocaire

Thank you!

Trócaire is the overseas development agency of the Catholic Church in Ireland. We work with partners in over 20 countries in the developing world to empower communities to improve their lives, meet their basic needs and ensure their human dignity. In Ireland, we raise awareness about the root causes of poverty and injustice, and advocate for change.

ROI Charity Regulatory Authority No. 20009601 CHY5883 | NI Charity Commission No: NIC 103321 | Revenue Number (HMRC) XR10341 | Company Number NI021482

