

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Christian Aid Week 2022

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Facing hardship in Zimbabwe: Christian Aid Week appeal. Jessica Mwedzi (36) battles drought in Zimbabwe. Her husband is unwell, so she is the sole breadwinner for her six children. Credit: David Brazier/Christian Aid

People and places

Facing hardship in Zimbabwe: Christian Aid Week appeal

Sunday May 15, marks the start of Christian Aid Week 2022 which will run until Saturday May 21.

The focus of Christian Aid Week in Ireland is Zimbabwe, Africa. Here we share Jessica's story. At the end, you will see the difference your donations can make.

Climate change has brought drought, hunger and hardship to Zimbabwe, something married mother-of-six Jessica knows all too well.

“We have gone to bed on an empty stomach many times. My children crave a good meal, but I can't provide. It is so painful to see your children in that situation,” Jessica says.



Jessica Mwedzi (36) with her husband Phaniel Rutsito (47) and four of their children. Jessica's husband is unwell and she is the sole breadwinner for the family. Credit: David Brazier/Christian Aid.

Jessica's family are heavily dependent on growing crops to eat, as well as to sell to earn a living but drought has meant there has not been a good harvest in recent years.

"One year, we had no rain. The scorching sun burnt my crops just as they were about to bloom. It was so painful and disheartening," says Jessica.

Jessica's husband is unable to work because he is chronically ill and she is the sole breadwinner for their six children. She also looks after her father-in-law and brother-

in-law who are both unable to work because of mental illness.

Once when things became desperate, Jessica asked her neighbours for food but she came home emptyhanded because they had nothing to share.

Like you, Jessica only wants to provide for her family. Can you be the kind neighbour she needs?

Jessica knows what it's like to be hungry. Hungry for food. Hungry to earn a decent living. Hungry to provide a more hopeful future for her family.

Your gift could help Jessica grow drought-resistant crops. You could help her set up water taps on her farm and learn how to grow food in the harsh climate. She'll turn her dry, dusty land into a garden of hope.

In the months to come, your gift will help her turn seeds into fresh food like tomatoes, beans and cucumbers to sell and feed her family. And she'll know she's not alone because she'll feel the warmth and kindness of a neighbour like you.

Jessica's love for her family gives her courage to stand strong against the threat of drought. "My children give me the power to go ahead. I pray they have a better future."

£5/€6 could buy water taps for a community garden

£30/€36 could buy drought-resistant seeds for 20 farmers like Jessica to grow food

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£60/€72 could train 50 women farmers to adapt and grow food in the changing climate

£200/€238 could provide materials so a farmer can build a storeroom and preserve food for their family

£330/€393 could buy an irrigation kit to water a family garden

£2,000/€2,381 could provide a drip irrigation kit to water a community garden

Your donations will help families facing poverty and injustice around the world.

Diocesan Evangelist commissioned for St John's Moira



Kyle Harris has been commissioned at a service on Sunday 8 May, as a Diocesan Evangelist for St John's Moira by the Bishop of Down & Dromore, Rt Rev David McClay.

Kyle works mostly in men's ministry, including running a monthly 'mental mandate' outreach group and a weekly football group for members of the community.

Introducing himself to the diocese, Kyle writes -

I am married to Susannah and father to two boys, Seth and Judah. I became a Christian at a young age and as a teenager started attending my home church of St Mary's Ballybeen.

I am so grateful for my church family in St Mary's and the discipleship I experienced there as well as the opportunities I was given to serve in a number of different ministries. I have a deep desire to make Christ known to others and I was delighted when the Diocesan Evangelist Course was recommended to me. Through this course I have gained a deeper understanding of God's word and the ways in which I can evangelise to those around me. I would highly recommend this course to those with a passion for evangelism. I particularly enjoyed getting to know the other course members and learning alongside them.

Three years ago, I felt God was calling me to something different that would require me to take on employment within the church in some capacity. In February 2021 that call was fulfilled and, as an outcome of being on the Diocesan Evangelist Course, I began working as an evangelist at St John's Parish, Moira. This was a step of faith as it took me and my family away from our home church, but God has been so good, and we know we are at the centre of His will.



We have been made to feel so at home in Moira and it has been very encouraging to see how God is moving in the community. I am thoroughly enjoying working alongside the Revd Joanne Megarrell, the staff and congregation here in a paid part-time role. I am expectant and excited for all that is to come.

My hope and prayer for Moira is that as a church we would radiate Jesus to those around us and that many would come to know Him.

Kyle was commissioned at a service on Sunday 8 May 2022.

News reports

Pope to visit Canada July 24-30 to apologise over residential schools

Pope Francis will visit Canada July 24-30, the Vatican said on Friday, a trip during which he is expected to personally

apologise for the Catholic Church's role in residential schools where many indigenous children were abused.

A Vatican statement said the pope would visit the cities of Edmonton, Québec and Iqaluit.

Delegations of several indigenous nations visited the pope in April and accepted his apology then for the Roman Catholic Church's role in Canada's residential schools, which sought to erase their cultures and where many children suffered abuse.

About 150,000 children were taken from their homes. Many were subjected to abuse, rape and malnutrition in what the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2015 called "cultural genocide".

The stated aim of the schools, which operated between 1831 and 1996, was to assimilate indigenous children. They were run by Christian denominations on behalf of the government, most by the Catholic Church.

The pope is currently using a wheelchair because of a flare-up of pain in his knee. He has postponed a trip to Lebanon that had been scheduled for next month so he could receive treatment.

He is still scheduled to make a trip to South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo in early July.

In the media

Church has 'not interfered in the last three years when 21,000 abortions were recorded', says minister

Irish Independent

Junior Health Minister Mary Butler moved to allay fears about the proposed National Maternity Hospital by adding 'the religious orders have left the scene'

There have been approximately 21,000 abortions in Ireland over the last three years since terminations became legal – and the Catholic Church has not interfered in any of them.

That was the impassioned argument of junior Health minister Mary Butler to the Dáil in statements on the proposed creation of a new National Maternity Hospital on the St Vincent's site in Dublin.

"The religious orders have left the scene," Ms Butler insisted as she accompanied Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly in defending the paused decision to go ahead with construction on land that will remain technically owned by the St Vincent's Healthcare Group, incorporating the Sisters of Charity, under a 299-year lease.

"The figures show that 21,000 abortions have taken place since the legislation changed," Ms Butler said, an average of approximately 7,000 a year.

[[] <https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/health/church-has-not-interfered-in-the-last-three-years-when-21000-abortions-were-recorded-says-minister-41643712.html>]

New church included in development plans on former landmark site in Finglas

A former landmark church in Finglas is to be replaced with a significantly smaller building due to declining mass attendances, new development plans reveal, Tony McCullagh reports in the Irish Independent.

The site of the Church of the Annunciation forms part of a proposed scheme for lands known as Fergal's Field, off Cappagh Road in Finglas West.

In addition to a new church and parish centre, there are plans for a primary health centre, housing and sporting facilities for local schools.

The main stakeholders in the proposal are Dublin City Council, the Dublin Archdiocese, the HSE and the City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETb).

The Church of the Annunciation, one of the largest in the country which could seat up to 3,500 parishioners, closed in 2018 after more than 50 years due to a fall-off in regular mass attendances.

Demolition work was completed last November and planning permission has been secured for a parish centre and smaller church on the site of a former car park.

Construction work on the new church, with a capacity of between 150 and 200 people, is expected to commence later this year following a tender process.

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According to Dublin City Council, all other elements of the Fergal's Field proposal will be subject to ongoing local consultation before planning applications are submitted.

The council is currently engaging with parish authorities to acquire the former church site and develop up to 100 homes, comprising mainly one and two-bed units.

Courtesy the Irish Independent, May 10, 2022

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Christian charity combating exploitation and abuse of Ukrainian refugees, offering free training for hosts

A new Christian charity formed in the wake of Russia's invasion in Ukraine is working to counteract the risk of exploitation and abuse as refugees arrive in the UK.

Sanctuary Foundation is offering free online training for all those hosting or working with Ukrainian refugees.

The organisation has urged everyone involved in refugee hosting and support to be vigilant, and to commit to basic training in safeguarding, trauma awareness and community integration.

Dr Krish Kandiah, founder of Sanctuary Foundation, told Premier Christian News: "It covers really important things like safeguarding, how can we make sure that we're creating

an environment where our guests or those that we're volunteering alongside are safe? And also, how can we keep ourselves safe? What about trauma?...

"Particularly children leaving a warzone are likely to be experiencing something close to post traumatic stress syndrome, and we need to make sure that as we engage with them, we make enough room for them to recover.

"We also need to know when and where to get expert help. I see this as a little bit like first aid training, no one's trying to help you become a surgeon, but they are trying to help you do the right thing in an emergency and get the help that people need."

The Sanctuary Course consists of six online lessons, which include video input from Save The Children, Refugee Education UK, and other UK charities, as well as global refugee experts and those who have experience as refugees themselves.

More than 5.6 million Ukrainians have left their country since the Russian invasion began. The UK government has issued 86,000 visas and another 30,000 are still in progress.

Last week it emerged that some of the accommodation provided by sponsors in the UK has been deemed unsuitable. Evidence has also begun to show that some vulnerable women are already being exploited.

The Sanctuary Course asks participants to pledge "to protect refugees from harm, to provide safe spaces and to

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promote the wellbeing of refugees". Each lesson guides people on how to do that.

Ed Shapiro, global expert in refugees and founder of the Shapiro Foundation, said:

"Sponsoring a refugee family was a life-changing experience for my entire family and my community. While empathy and kindness are the most important traits for welcomers, accessible and informative training courses can help you and the newcomer to have the best possible experience."

The Sanctuary Course can be accessed here.

[[] <https://www.sanctuaryfoundation.org.uk/>]

Talk - "Preaching to the Poor in Belfast - the Diary of the Rev Anthony McIntyre, 1853-56"

The Rev McIntyre was employed by Belfast Domestic Mission that began in the 1830s and sought to reach out to the urban poor who were often beyond the membership of established churches.

Talk by the Rev Dr John Nelson, on Thursday 19 May 2022 at 8.00 pm in First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, Belfast BT1 1QB

Organised by the Presbyterian Historical Society. Everyone welcome. Refreshments provided

Bishops' Appeal: 50th anniversary video

A video to mark the 50th anniversary of the Church of Ireland Bishops' Appeal for World Aid and Development was presented at the recent 2022 General Synod in Belfast. This includes contributions from those involved in organising the work of Bishops' Appeal and agencies which have benefitted from its support over many years.

Bishops' Appeal is the Church of Ireland's World Aid and Development Programme. It was set up by the Bishops of the Church in response to the commands in the Bible to bring good news to the poor and relief to the suffering.

You can watch the video here -

<https://dublin.anglican.org/news/2022/05/10/watch-new-video-celebrates-50>

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this sit

Church News Ireland

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