

**LENT 2024: 'LET JUSTICE FLOW
LIKE A RIVER, RIGHTEOUSNESS
LIKE A NEVER-FAILING STREAM.'**

(Amos 5:24)

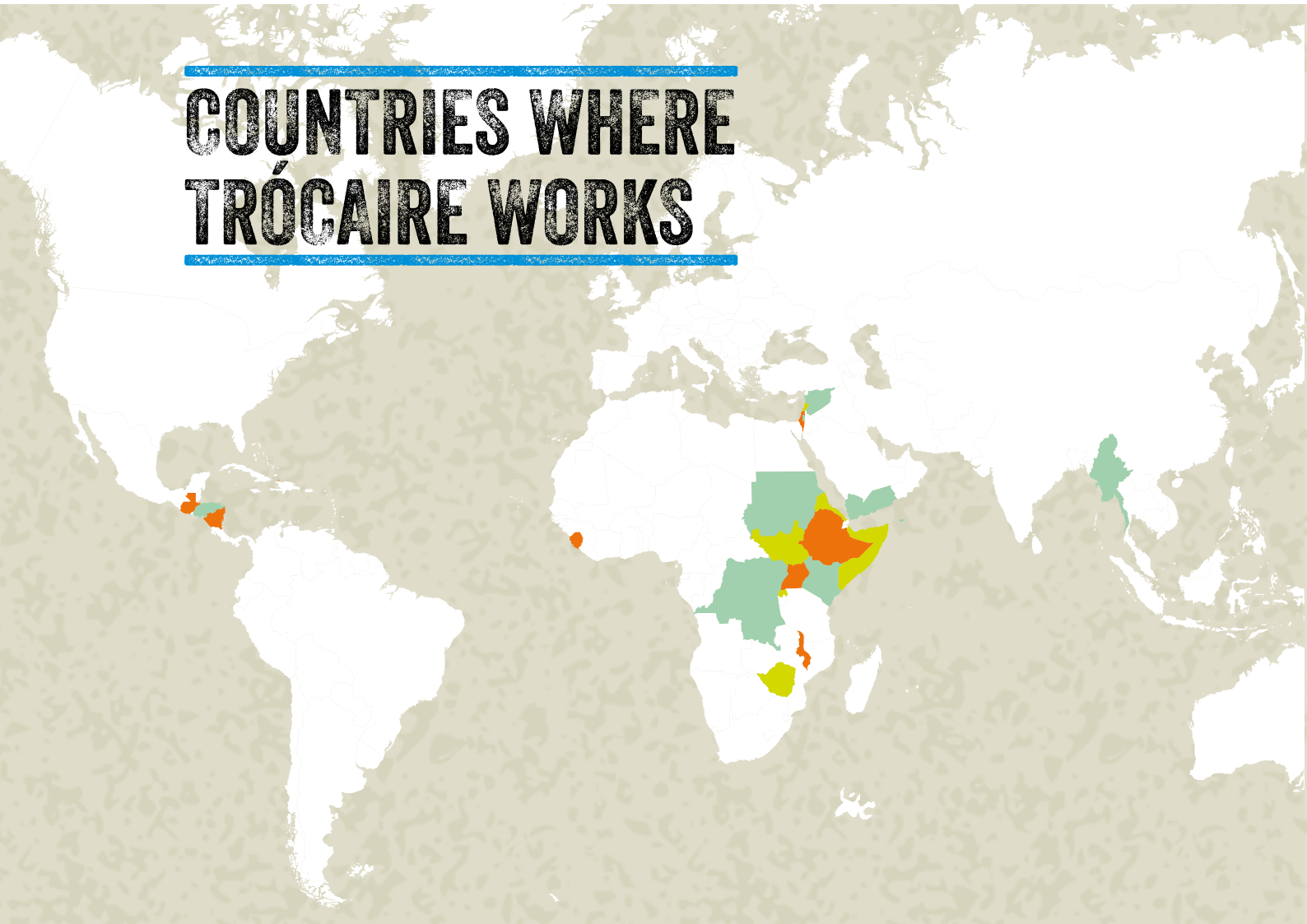


trocaire
TOGETHER FOR A JUST WORLD

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT TRÓCAIRE	3
MALAWI AND CLIMATE CHANGE	4
LENT 2024 FAMILY STORY	5
FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT	7
SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT	9
THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT	11
FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT: MOTHER'S DAY	13
FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT: ST PATRICK'S DAY	15
IN MEMORY OF SR CATHERINE BRENNAN SSL	17

COUNTRIES WHERE TRÓCAIRE WORKS



ABOUT TRÓCAIRE

Trócaire was created as a response to the widening gap between rich and poor and our collective duty to reduce it.

Trócaire is rooted in the principles of Catholic social teaching, which are based on the belief that God has a plan for creation, a plan to build a kingdom of peace, love and justice. In the words of Trócaire's founding document, in which the bishops of Ireland gave the organisation a strong and clear mandate, 'We know that we cannot claim to love God if we do not love our fellow men and women.'

Trócaire has worked through local partner organisations since its foundation. Partnership is at the heart of how Trócaire works. We work with local faith- and non-faith-based organisations who share our values and who are working on any or all of our core programme areas of women's empowerment, resource rights and humanitarian preparedness and response. These organisations understand the needs of their communities and are best placed to work with communities to deliver sustainable long-term change.

Our role is to support our partners through technical advice, financial support and organisational development. Trócaire and our partners work with people of all faiths and none in line with the principles of Catholic social

'Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience.'

(*Laudato Si'*, 217)

teaching. Trócaire and our partner organisations give courage, hope and strength to people around the world who are facing poverty and injustice, including climate injustice. Based on our experience, we believe that localisation delivers more sustainable and impactful development and humanitarian responses in the countries where we work. Moreover, we feel that systems are richer and more effective when they are shaped by the voices and influence of the communities that they are intended to help.

We listen deeply to the earth's cry as asked of us by Pope Francis and the communities with whom we work, who are most affected by climate change. Our hope is for all God's creation to 'let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream' (Amos 5:24).

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

In this resource you will find more information about the country of Malawi. We are focusing on Malawi in this year's lenten campaign. We also invite you to read more about our lenten family in order to learn about Trócaire's work on the ground on your behalf.

We have included newsletter inserts for each Sunday of Lent, along with prayers of the faithful, ideas for music and homily notes. You can access our resources at: <https://www.trocaire.org/our-work/working-in-ireland/parishes/>

MALAWI AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Trócaire has been working with partners in Malawi for the last forty-eight years. Malawi is a landlocked country, bordered by Zambia, Tanzania and Mozambique.

Malawi is often referred to as the warm heart of Africa. Malawi is a country with extremely high levels of poverty, where life is already a struggle for many. Climate change means flooding and droughts are becoming both more extreme and unpredictable. People are losing their homes, their livelihoods and even their lives. In this resource we are focusing on Trócaire's work for water justice as a response to the effects of climate change.

Machinga, where Trócaire is currently working with the Catholic Development Commission (CADECOM) Zomba and Churches Action in Relief and Development (CARD), is one of the districts most impacted by the effects of climate change.

Machinga is a district in the southern region of Malawi, located along the main road that connects Zomba and Lilongwe. Over the last number of years, Trócaire has developed strong working relationships with both church and non-church partners in Machinga.

Water Justice in Malawi

Challenges

Malawi is one of the twenty poorest countries in the world and experiences considerable water stress. 'Water stress' means that Malawi is particularly vulnerable to drought and extreme weather events, which are increasing in frequency and intensity due to climate crisis. Over one third of Malawi's population does not have access to clean water. Rural communities in Malawi face

'Listen carefully, I am about to do a new thing, now it will spring forth; will you not be aware of it? I will even put a road in the wilderness, rivers in the desert.'

(Isaiah 43:19)

Reflect

How much water have you used today? In your home? In your work? In your liturgy?

significant challenges in accessing clean and reliable water sources.

What is Water Justice?

In a just world everyone would have access to sufficient supplies of safe and affordable water; however, for many people around the world, this does not happen. This is an injustice. Obstacles that block access to safe water are the root cause of this injustice. These obstacles arise from issues such as drought, flooding, restricted access to safe water sources, pollution or a lack of control over local water sources. Other issues can increase people's vulnerability to water injustice, such as climate change, migration, conflict and population growth. Ongoing water injustice will result in increasing numbers of people being pushed into poverty, as it affects health, sanitation, livelihoods, education and more.





Malita with her twins, Patricia and Patrick, at their home in Malawi.
Photo credit: Muiru Mbuthia, Trócaire

LENT 2024 FAMILY STORY

Too little or too much water is a daily struggle for Malita and her family. Malita is a single mother of six children, including 12-year-old twins Patricia and Patrick, who are featured on the front of the 2024 Trócaire box. Their story is unfortunately one that is typical in Malawi as they struggle every day with the many problems relating to access to water. Malita was already finding it a struggle to support her family before the burden of increased droughts and floods. Living in a small homestead in Machinga district, Malawi, Malita, the twins and two of their siblings, Margaret and Kondwani, have no direct access to clean water for the household.

Too much water and the family's livelihood is destroyed. Sudden floodwaters can wash away the crops and any nutrients in the soil, leaving families like Malita's with nothing and no hope for a harvest in the next season. Cyclones can rush through the community unexpectedly, washing

away the crops and nutrients in the soil. Last year, floods destroyed part of the family's house. By June, they had used up all of their harvest and had nothing else to eat.

Too little water can be much more of a struggle than too much water. From August to November, every morning and up to five times a day, Malita and/or her daughters, Patricia and Margaret, must make an hour-long round trip on foot to collect water from a stream. This is because the shallow well near their home dries up every year. Malita carries 20 litres of water back to the house in a bucket on her head. Malita reports that the dry season has become more prolonged in recent years, and droughts are becoming more frequent as each year the rains fail to arrive.

The dry season, which typically lasted from April to October, can now go on much longer, with the

first rains not arriving until December or January some years. During these dry seasons, the well that the family uses for water for drinking, washing and cooking dries up and they are forced to walk further to fetch water from another source.

It is not uncommon for the family to spend up to five hours every day fetching water. Some mornings, the journey to collect water means that the twins are late for school or they are too tired to go to school. When the children return from the well, they must walk a further 4 km to school. Fortunately if they have missed breakfast, they can have some porridge in school before they start classes.

The water that the family spend so long collecting is not always safe to drink. Animals use the same water sources so Malita must treat the water with chlorine tablets before it is drinkable. Even then, the children still fall sick with diarrhoea every couple of months. When it is serious enough, Malita must walk with them to the hospital, which is a further 5 km away, to seek treatment.

In addition to collecting water, Malita's days are busy on her small farm, a one-acre piece of land where she grows maize, cassava, millet and pigeon peas to feed her family. She also cultivates tomatoes, leafy vegetables and mustard that they eat. They sometimes have enough left over to sell. Malita depends on her crops to feed her family, so a low yield in a typical year can have a serious

impact on the family's ability to eat. This over-reliance on the farm is compounded even further when the dry season is prolonged and there isn't enough rain to water her crops. For Malita, no rain means her children must go to bed hungry, an outcome she desperately tries to avoid all year round.

As she explains, there are times when they eat twice a day and times when they eat only once. It depends on the season. Sometimes the children will eat after school but sometimes not. There are times when the children must go hungry and when that happens, Malita cries herself to sleep.

Malita is a loving mother with a strong spirit that she has instilled in her children. Her biggest fear is not being able to provide for her family. The challenges of climate change are quickly making that fear a stark reality. Strengthened by her faith, Malita hopes to be able to provide for her family, for her children to get a good education so they can grow up to have good jobs in the community or beyond. She prays for a safe water source closer to their home, which she says would make a huge difference to their lives.

Trócaire's work in Malawi is focused on supporting communities, particularly women like Malita, to adapt their livelihoods to cope with the impact of climate change or ensuring families like hers can continue to survive.

Malita.

Photo credit: Muiru Mbuthia, Trócaire



FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

'I set my bow in the clouds to serve as a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.'

(Genesis 9:13)

Newsletter Insert

This year Trócaire's lenten campaign focuses on the country of Malawi, Africa. Malawi is one of the least developed countries in the world and has been badly affected by climate change. In the Machinga district, Malita and her family must make a one-hour trip up to five times a day to collect water. Please support Trócaire in helping communities develop sustainable access to clean, safe and reliable water supplies by taking home a Trócaire box today or going to: www.trocaire.org.



'Fresh drinking water is an issue of primary importance, since it is indispensable for human life and for supporting terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.'

(*Laudato Si'*, 28)



Patricia and Patrick at their home.
Photo credit: Muiru Mbuthia, Trócaire

Sacred Space

- Set up a space in a prominent place in your church or community.
- Use purple cloth, the large Trócaire box and some plants to decorate the space.
- Place a map of Africa with Malawi highlighted in your sacred space.
- Put a water container in the space to symbolise the theme of access to water.



Prayer of the Faithful

- 1) We pray for the people of Malawi, with whom we shall journey this Lent. May the Lord open our hearts and minds to learn more about the effects of climate change.
- 2) For those places in the world where people do not have access to a clean, safe water supply. May we be moved to support the work of Trócaire to secure water justice for all.



Music

'Oh, Come to the Water' by Kevin Mayhew

'The King of Love My Shepherd Is'

'Be Not Afraid' by Robert J. Dufford



This Week

Try to become aware of every time you use water – to clean, to drink, to brush your teeth. Are you careful not to be wasteful of this precious resource?



GOSPEL REFLECTIONS BY FR PAUL THORNTON

Mark 1:12-15

The harmony that we experience in the first reading today is contrasted with the disharmony that is set before Jesus in the temptations of the Gospel. Though the temptations aren't listed we know they are the turning of stones into bread, the riches of the world and power over all humanity; symbolic of the uncontrolled actions of human beings, who exploit the world, its peoples, and resources. If we don't recognise these in ourselves and in our social decisions, we will not recognise that the kingdom of God is close at hand. We will miss the opportunity to repent, to turn our lives around.

This could be how we look at the climate crisis that we find ourselves in. After decades of irresponsible human activity – overproduction and the draining of natural resources, the asset stripping of countries in the global south, the destruction of ecosystems and treating the planet as a commodity from which to gain wealth and power rather than as our common home – the harmony of the natural world has been lost.

'These situations have caused sister earth, along with all the abandoned of our world, to cry out, pleading that we take another course.' (*Laudato Si'*, 53)

This year's Trócaire campaign focuses on Malawi and on the work being done to support and empower local people and communities. We hear the story of Malita and her family, who are on the front of the Trócaire box this year. Malita is facing the effects of the climate crisis on a daily basis. When you listen to the people of this region, you hear the very real ways in which climate change is affecting their daily lives. You hear that the climate is less predictable now and that the lack of trees on the mountain and the land makes them vulnerable to crop failure and contaminated water. The people of Malita's village, and others like them, are not the ones who have caused this situation – but they are paying the highest price. Read more about Malita's story and find homily notes at: <https://www.trocaire.org/our-work/working-in-ireland/parishes/>

'Today, however, we have to realize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.' (*Laudato Si'*, 49)

Take Action Day of Celebration – World Water Day

World Water Day occurs every year on 22 March. In 2024 this falls on a Friday just before the Easter break. Use this day to celebrate all things water in your parish. The following are just some suggestions for integrating water issues into your parish for the day. We would encourage you to join with your local school, youth club and community groups for these activities.

- A Pledge Waterfall: Create a waterfall of pledges in a public area. Each water droplet coming down the waterfall can be an individual pledge.
- Organise a river or beach ritual using this Trócaire resource: <https://www.trocaire.org/documents/trocaire-river-ritual-season-of-creation/>

- Do a water liturgy review. How many times during our Catholic celebrations do we use water? One example is during baptism; can you find more, especially as we enter Holy Week?
- Join the Trócaire volunteer programme: <https://www.trocaire.org/join-us/volunteer/>
- Fundraise for Trócaire: <https://www.trocaire.org/ways-to-help/fundraise/community-fundraising/>



Patrick uses the water pump at Puteya Primary School.
Photo credit: Muiru Mbuthia, Trócaire

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

'I believed, even when I said, "I am greatly afflicted."'

(Psalm 116:10)

Newsletter Insert

Travelling so far for water each day affects other parts of the lives of Malita and her children, Margaret, Patrick and Patricia. Carrying 20 litres of water leaves the children tired and some days they are not able to go to school. Farming is an important part of how the family support themselves, but a lack of water makes farming difficult. Trócaire and our partners in Malawi are working to create solutions to the water shortages, such as digging bore holes close to villages. To learn more, go to: <https://www.trocaire.org/our-work/working-in-ireland/parishes/>



'Water poverty especially affects Africa where large sectors of the population have no access to safe drinking water or experience droughts which impede agricultural production. Some countries have areas rich in water while others endure drastic scarcity.'

(*Laudato Si'*, 28)



Malita on her farm.
Photo credit: Muiru Mbuthia, Trócaire

Sacred Space

Add some plants to your sacred space this week. These will help us to reflect on Malita and the importance of her family farm, and remind us to give thanks for the food we can grow at home.



Prayer of the Faithful

- 1) Loving Father, we pray that individuals, communities and policymakers can work together to build a just world where all people have access to their basic needs, such as food, water and education.
- 2) Loving Father, we pray for those parts of the world where war, conflict and climate change make access to safe, clean water difficult. Give us the courage and strength to stand up against injustice wherever we see it.



Music

'Come to the Water' by John B. Foley SJ

'Eye Has Not Seen' by Marty Haugen

'Come Back to Me' by Ian Callanan



This Week

Check your home or parish for water leaks and dripping taps.



GOSPEL REFLECTIONS BY FR PAUL THORNTON

Mark 9:2-10

At the end of July there is the annual pilgrimage to Croagh Patrick. The struggle up the bare mountain with shale collapsing under your feet is worth it on a clear day when you arrive at the summit, and you can see all 365 islands in Clew Bay. It is a moment to be quiet and to savour all that is beautiful.

When we begin to become aware of the beauty we have experienced, our sense of the sacred in nature grows deeper. As we grow in this spiritual awakening, we also see the great wound that has been caused to our beautiful earth.

How much greater must the experience have been for Peter, James and John when after their climb up the mountain with him, Jesus is transfigured before them. His clothes and his face become dazzling white, and the voice of the Father is heard. The natural reaction is to want to hold onto this moment forever, to set up the three tents, for this is holy ground. To have that connection with this place and this event will mean so much to these and the other disciples when they face the events of Holy Week in Jerusalem.

Malawi's natural environment is becoming more unpredictable and unstable. Families like Malita's, pictured on our Trócaire box, live with the uncertainty of what the weather will bring; yet they don't give up. They continue to rebuild, replant and use the skills that are being provided by Trócaire and its partners.

Pope Francis reminds us that our ecological awareness depends on our ability to see the interconnectedness of the people and communities of the world with the planet itself. The more we lose this awareness the less chance there is of finding the holy ground on which the transfiguration takes place. We have to open again the book of nature alongside the scriptures so that we will be engaged in what Archbishop Dermot Farrell calls 'a quest for insight, inspiration and strength so as to live in a new way on this earth, our common home'.* How might you reconnect with nature this Lent? You could look up Trócaire's family resource to help you to reconnect with nature. Read more about Malita's story and find homily notes at: <https://www.trocaire.org/our-work/working-in-ireland/parishes/>

*Archbishop Dermot Farrell, *The Cry of the Earth – The Cry of the Poor*, Dublin: Veritas, 2021, p. 9.

Take Action Day of Celebration – World Water Day

World Water Day occurs every year on 22 March. In 2024 this falls on a Friday just before the Easter break. Use this day to celebrate all things water in your parish. The following are just some suggestions for integrating water issues into your parish for the day. We would encourage you to join with your local school, youth club and community groups for these activities.

- A Pledge Waterfall: Create a waterfall of pledges in a public area. Each water droplet coming down the waterfall can be an individual pledge.
- Organise a river or beach ritual using this Trócaire resource: <https://www.trocaire.org/documents/trocaire-river-ritual-season-of-creation/>

- Do a water liturgy review. How many times during our Catholic celebrations do we use water? One example is during baptism; can you find more, especially as we enter Holy Week?
- Join the Trócaire volunteer programme: <https://www.trocaire.org/join-us/volunteer/>
- Fundraise for Trócaire: <https://www.trocaire.org/ways-to-help/fundraise/community-fundraising/>



Patrick uses the water pump at Puteya Primary School.
Photo credit: Muiru Mbuthia, Trócaire

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

'Lord, you have words of everlasting life.'

(Psalm 19:8)

Newsletter Insert

In Malawi, longer and more severe droughts in recent years have dried up small streams and water holes. Unfortunately, some areas are also affected by cyclones and flooding. When this happens, the simple mud houses are badly damaged. The water that falls is not suitable for drinking or farming but causes a huge amount of destruction. Trócaire is working with local partners to help communities to rebuild after these events and to be better prepared for the future. To learn more, go to: <https://www.trocaire.org/our-work/working-in-ireland/parishes/>



'Parishes are asked to expand their circles of solidarity, to protect and care for biodiversity and creation on 30 per cent of their grounds, and to care for this as a haven for pollinators and biodiversity, that can be enjoyed by the whole community.'

(Irish Bishops' Conference, Spring Statement 2023)



Destruction from Cyclone Freddy in Chinkhwangwa Village in the east of Malawi.

Photo credit: Muiru Mbutia, Trócaire

Sacred Space

The response to the psalm today is, 'Lord, you have words of everlasting life.' We can find great hope in scripture. Gather some scripture quotes that provide hope and put them around your sacred space.



Prayer of the Faithful

- 1) God our Father, we pray for those parts of the world affected by cyclones, earthquakes and flooding. Give us your grace to stand in solidarity and hope with those who are suffering, and to respond in whatever way we can.
- 2) God our Father, we pray for those who are homeless, in Ireland and around the world. May they find shelter and safety in a place they can call home.



Music

'God of Mercy and Compassion' by Michael Hodgetts

'Behold What You See' by Bernard Sexton

'Lord, Your Mercy is My Hope' by John O'Keeffe



This Week

Did you know that the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference has a plan for parishes to return 30 per cent of church grounds to nature by 2030? You can find out more about the Return to Nature plan here: <https://www.catholicbishops.ie/laudato-si/returning-to-nature/>



GOSPEL REFLECTIONS BY FR PAUL THORNTON

John 2:13-25

Think of the last time you visited a city whose architecture impressed you. Maybe it was Dublin, Galway, Cork or Belfast; have you been overseas, maybe to Rome or London? In admiring the beauty, you get a sense of the historic age of the buildings and a feeling that they will always be here. The temple in Jerusalem, which we hear about in today's gospel, was one of those impressive buildings that took your breath away. It was not the first temple built in Jerusalem but this time they were sure that it would not be destroyed. Yet a few years after Jesus says these things the temple is again in ruins.

There are many things that we take for granted and assume will always be there. One of the fundamental natural resources is water. Year by year the water crisis worsens. We have some idea of it when we hear about or experience the contamination of local water schemes, the problems of aged water infrastructure and the depletion of our reservoirs in the summer.

For people in the global south, however, the water crisis has become a matter of survival.

'Fresh drinking water is an issue of primary importance since it is indispensable for human life and for supporting terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. ... Water poverty especially affects Africa where large sectors of the population have no access to safe drinking water or experience droughts which impede agricultural production.'
(*Laudato Si'*, 28)

The lives of Malita and her family, who are pictured on this year's Trócaire box, are hugely impacted by too much water from heavy rains, the rise in the number of extreme weather events like cyclones, and the lengthening of the dry seasons. Close to their village there is a 'bobo' pump, which draws water from a well. When the well is producing water, life is much easier for the people. Read more about Malita's story and find homily notes at: <https://www.trocaire.org/our-work/working-in-ireland/parishes/>

Take Action Day of Celebration – World Water Day

World Water Day occurs every year on 22 March. In 2024 this falls on a Friday just before the Easter break. Use this day to celebrate all things water in your parish. The following are just some suggestions for integrating water issues into your parish for the day. We would encourage you to join with your local school, youth club and community groups for these activities.

- A Pledge Waterfall: Create a waterfall of pledges in a public area. Each water droplet coming down the waterfall can be an individual pledge.
- Organise a river or beach ritual using this Trócaire resource: <https://www.trocaire.org/documents/trocaire-river-ritual-season-of-creation/>

- Do a water liturgy review. How many times during our Catholic celebrations do we use water? One example is during baptism; can you find more, especially as we enter Holy Week?
- Join the Trócaire volunteer programme: <https://www.trocaire.org/join-us/volunteer/>
- Fundraise for Trócaire: <https://www.trocaire.org/ways-to-help/fundraise/community-fundraising/>



Patrick uses the water pump at Puteya Primary School.
Photo credit: Muirú Mbuthia, Trócaire

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT: MOTHER'S DAY

'Whoever lives the truth, comes to the light.'

(John 3:21)

Newsletter Insert

Happy Mother's Day from all in Trócaire. In the Machinga district of Malawi, Malita is a strong and resilient woman, despite the challenges she faces. She works tirelessly in her community to improve the life of all its members. Like all mothers, she prays for the best for her children. She wants them to have an education and opportunities for a better life. Trócaire and its local partners are working with women like Malita to build a more just world. To learn more, go to: <https://www.trocaire.org/our-work/working-in-ireland/parishes/>



'A society without mothers would be a dehumanized society, for mothers are always, even in the worst moments, witnesses of tenderness, dedication and moral strength.'

(Pope Francis, General Audience, 7 January 2015)



Malita.

Photo credit: Muiru Mbuthia, Trócaire

Sacred Space

Add a notebook in which people can express their thanks for mothers. There are many different types of mother in our lives, including those who step in to mind us in our hour of need. Give thanks for these women today, those who are still with us and those who have gone home to God. Today we remember Our Lady, who is constantly there to help and guide us.



Prayer of the Faithful

- 1) We pray for mothers and all in a mothering role. We remember especially mothers living in situations of war, conflict and climate change. May God give them the strength they need to support and guide their families through difficult times.
- 2) We pray for women and mothers who are survivors of gender-based violence, and who live each day in danger because of their gender. May we work together to create a world in which girls and women can live and flourish safely.



Music

'Out of Darkness' by Christopher Walker

'Lord of Sorrow, Lord of Shame' by Liam Lawton

'Our Eyes are Fixed on the Lord' by Ephrem Feeley



This Week

As a family have a look at our study guide.



GOSPEL REFLECTIONS BY FR PAUL THORNTON

John 3:14-21

Our celebration of the Eucharist today begins with the word 'rejoice'. As we go through the season of Lent, we are given this day to focus on the transformation that is going on within us. Lent is a time of letting things go because we want to embrace the new life that Christ gives us.

In the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus, Jesus says that change will come about through his death and resurrection, and he will save the whole of world. 'Yes, God loved the world so much that he gave his only son, so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost but may have eternal life' (John 3:16). The change that comes about in a person comes from deep within. It is not enough to know, talk about or explain the actions of Jesus; we must believe this in our hearts and from that knowledge comes the desire to change and to embrace the love of God. The same is true of the willingness of nations and individuals to embrace the conversion that is needed to heal our common home. This ecological conversion is 'grounded in the convictions of our faith, since the teachings of the Gospel have direct

consequences for our way of thinking, feeling and living' (*Laudato Si'*, 216).

This Mother's Day let us think of Malita, who is the mother on our Trócaire box this year. Malita is so proud of what her children are doing in school and looks forward to a better future for them. In responding to the needs of Malita and the people of her community, it is not enough to simply install infrastructure; this has to go hand in hand with education that empowers local communities. Malita's village is at the start of a programme that begins with listening to people and supporting them to address issues around health, farming practices, financial management and gender-based violence.

We think of all mothers who worry for their children, who at times cry themselves to sleep as they face situations over which they are powerless; let us pray for them, let us support them, let us never forget them, let us celebrate their strength and determination. Read more about Malita's story and find homily notes at: <https://www.trocaire.org/our-work/working-in-ireland/parishes/>

Take Action Day of Celebration – World Water Day

World Water Day occurs every year on 22 March. In 2024 this falls on a Friday just before the Easter break. Use this day to celebrate all things water in your parish. The following are just some suggestions for integrating water issues into your parish for the day. We would encourage you to join with your local school, youth club and community groups for these activities.

- A Pledge Waterfall: Create a waterfall of pledges in a public area. Each water droplet coming down the waterfall can be an individual pledge.
- Organise a river or beach ritual using this Trócaire resource: <https://www.trocaire.org/documents/trocaire-river-ritual-season-of-creation/>

- Do a water liturgy review. How many times during our Catholic celebrations do we use water? One example is during baptism; can you find more, especially as we enter Holy Week?
- Join the Trócaire volunteer programme: <https://www.trocaire.org/join-us/volunteer/>
- Fundraise for Trócaire: <https://www.trocaire.org/ways-to-help/fundraise/community-fundraising/>



Patrick uses the water pump at Puteya Primary School.
Photo credit: Muirí Mbutia, Trócaire

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT: ST PATRICK'S DAY

'Whoever serves me must follow me, says the Lord; and where I am there also will my servant be.'

(John 12:26)

Newsletter Insert

Beannachtaí Lá Fhéile Phádraig ó gach duine i Trócaire! Today is a day for celebrating our roots, our history and, for many people, celebrating with our family. In Malawi, Malita is also proud to be part of a strong community. Despite the challenges they face, the community works hard to build a better future for their children through education, savings and loans initiatives and village gatherings. Trócaire is supporting communities in Malawi and around the world to provide basic needs so that families can thrive and enjoy life. To learn more, go to: <https://www.trocaire.org/our-work/working-in-ireland/parishes/>



'The problem of water is partly an educational and cultural issue, since there is little awareness of the seriousness of such behaviour within a context of great inequality.'

(*Laudato Si'*, 30)



Patrick at school, Malawi.
Photo credit: Muiru Mbuthia, Trócaire

Sacred Space

St Patrick was a man of mission. Add a globe or a map of the world to your sacred space. You could also add a list of people who left your parish as missionaries to bring faith and justice to the world.



Prayer of the Faithful

- 1) Loving Father, on this feast day, we pray for the young siblings on this year's Trócaire box, who are named Patrick and Patricia. May St Patrick guide and protect them, and all who share his name.
- 2) Loving Father, we pray for all who share the Good News around the world in word and action. Like St Patrick may we listen to God in nature and find ways to share our faith through the beauty of God's creation.



Music

'Unless a Grain of Wheat' by Bernadette Farrell
'We Walk by Faith' by Marty Haugen
'Living Water' by Ronan McDonagh



This Week

St Patrick's Day is a special day for Ireland and people connected with Ireland. Could you tell someone about the work of Trócaire today?



GOSPEL REFLECTIONS BY FR PAUL THORNTON

John 12:20-33

The friendship between Jesus and the family of Martha, Mary and Lazarus is very strong. Through his relationship with them Jesus teaches many things about conversion and the spiritual journey. It is Martha who goes out to meet Jesus, while Mary remains sitting in the house. It is Martha who makes the statement of faith, 'I know that, even now, whatever you ask of God, he will grant you' (John 11:22). Jesus goes on to say, 'Your brother will rise again' (John 11:24) followed by, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me, even though they die they will live ... do you believe this?' (John 11:25-26). It is Martha, whose faith and trust in Jesus has grown since their earlier meeting, who says in front of the crowd, 'I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who was to come into this world' (John 11:27).

In her words and in his actions Jesus' resurrection is foretold and the conversion of many takes place. What gives this meeting so much power is that it is a raw, unvarnished meeting of friends. They know each other, they share their lives together, they have a great love for one another.

When we face the sickness and death of loved ones, there is no place to hide. In his emotion at the tomb of Lazarus we see the reality of Jesus, who feels our pain and takes that pain to himself. When we cry out to him, our prayer is heard.

Heartfelt prayer is heard from mothers like Malita, who prays every day that she can provide for her family despite the challenges they face due to a lack of clean water. When Cyclone Freddy hit Malawi in 2023, it severely damaged Malita's family home. All of her hard work and her plans for her family's welfare were washed away with the soil. Malita is such a loving mother, who does everything that she can for her children. She has a strong and determined spirit, rooted in her faith. With the other women and elders of her village she welcomes the opportunity to develop their farms, improve their water supply and work together to change their lives and the lives of their children.

Read more about Malita's story and find homily notes at: <https://www.trocaire.org/our-work/working-in-ireland/parishes/>

Take Action Day of Celebration – World Water Day

World Water Day occurs every year on 22 March. In 2024 this falls on a Friday just before the Easter break. Use this day to celebrate all things water in your parish. The following are just some suggestions for integrating water issues into your parish for the day. We would encourage you to join with your local school, youth club and community groups for these activities.

- A Pledge Waterfall: Create a waterfall of pledges in a public area. Each water droplet coming down the waterfall can be an individual pledge.
- Organise a river or beach ritual using this Trócaire resource: <https://www.trocaire.org/documents/trocaire-river-ritual-season-of-creation/>

- Do a water liturgy review. How many times during our Catholic celebrations do we use water? One example is during baptism; can you find more, especially as we enter Holy Week?
- Join the Trócaire volunteer programme: <https://www.trocaire.org/join-us/volunteer/>
- Fundraise for Trócaire: <https://www.trocaire.org/ways-to-help/fundraise/community-fundraising/>



Patrick uses the water pump at Puteya Primary School.
Photo credit: Muirú Mbutia, Trócaire

IN MEMORY OF SR CATHERINE BRENNAN SSL

We dedicate this resource to the memory of Sr Catherine Brennan, for her passion and long-standing drive to protect God's creation through her tireless work with Eco-Congregation Ireland and the Laudato Si' Working Group. May she inspire us as we continue the work that she and others started.

Reflection on Composting

by Sr Catherine Brennan

I look at compost and marvel at its mystery. Organic materials are gathered and heaped together. Heat is generated from within, steam rises and gradually the contents break down. Eventually everything is unrecognizable and we have rich, dark soil. In dying to its own life, the organic waste births a new material, which is life-giving for plants and for us humans who enjoy the fruits of the earth. Compost tells me that the reality of life, death and resurrection is at the heart of creation's mystery. Something always dies as new life comes forth. Whenever dark times come our way 'We must be still, and still moving into another intensity for a deeper communion' (T.S. Eliot)

It is inevitable that experience of disintegration happens. The breakdown of the compost tells us that if we are to realize the more of life and if our lives are to be life-giving for others we must accept life's changes. The life, death and resurrection cycle is the deepest myth of all of reality. The death and resurrection of Jesus, therefore, is not something new to the created universe, but a uniquely divine manifestation of what already is, and of what is all around us. The mystery of the death and resurrection of Jesus holds before us the truth of God's abiding presence and transforming activity in all of Creation.



Sr Catherine Brennan



Patricia helps her mum, Malita, around the house.
Photo credit: Muiru Mbutia, Trócaire

TRÓCAIRE IS THE OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN IRELAND

More resources, photos and videos are available at:
trocaire.org/our-work/working-in-ireland/parishes

Cover photo: Malita with her twins, Patricia and Patrick, at their home in Machinga district, Malawi.
Photo credit: Muiru Mbutia, Trócaire

Resources by: Niamh Morris (Trócaire), Anna Keegan (Trócaire), Mary Dee (Waterford and Lismore), Fr Paul Thornton (Archdiocese of Dublin).

Join us on:

Facebook: – facebook.com/trocaireireland
– connect with us

Twitter: – twitter.com/trocaire
– keep up with our latest tweets

YouTube: – youtube.com/trocaire
– see the people you support

Vimeo: – vimeo.com/trocaire
– watch our videos

Instagram: – instagram.com/trocaireonline
– see our photos and videos

Contact us:

Trócaire, Maynooth,
Co. Kildare, Ireland

T: +353 (0)86 198 8781

E: anna.keegan@trocaire.org

Trócaire, 50 King Street,
Belfast BT1 6AD, Northern Ireland

T: +44 (0) 28 90 808 030

E: infoli@trocaire.org

Trócaire, 9 Cook Street,
Cork, Ireland

T: +353 (0)21 427 5622

E: corkcentre@trocaire.org

www.trocaire.org

Trócaire takes seriously its obligations in respect of your personal data and is committed to adherence to national and international data protection law, namely the Data Protection Acts 1988–2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR – enacted automatically across EU Member States in May 2018). For more information about how we process and protect your data, please go to trocaire.org/privacy-security or contact us for a copy of our privacy statement.

