

CAFOD's Family Fast Day Appeal.

It's not been possible to give the CAFOD talk during the masses this weekend, so please read it here. On this occasion, we won't be hosting our usual and very successful CAFOD soup lunch either, but one will take place in the future.

CAFOD is part of Caritas, the global Catholic aid network that brings love, hope and practical help to our neighbours experiencing poverty. More than ever in this Jubilee year, we can join together with this worldwide church network and offer our support and prayers where they are needed most.

This Harvest Fast Day, please consider fasting if you can and donate to help our neighbours, such as Waré in Ethiopia. Waré is a mother to five children, and she and her husband herd goats in southern Ethiopia. Severe drought over the last four years has meant a lot of livestock have died, and water has become very hard to find. Waré said she has never seen a drought as severe as this. "Because of drought, we always have little water, and because we have lost so much, many families are vulnerable."

Every day, Waré gets up at 5 a.m. and walks for a minimum of five hours to find water, then returns home. If the nearest water sources have dried up, she has to keep looking – a much longer day walking to find the water. This is Waré's daily challenge. She even had to walk to find water while pregnant with her youngest child.

"Sometimes I felt so weak I would fall down, I was fearful for the baby I was pregnant with, but that child was with me, so I was also afraid for my other children, thinking that maybe I would not make it back to them and they would be left as children without a mother".

But Waré had you, the Catholic community of England and Wales, as her good neighbours. With your Family Fast Day gifts, CAFOD worked together with Waré and her community to build an underground water storage tank, able to support 300 families during a normal dry season and even in longer droughts. Instead of walking ten hours there and back, or longer, the tank will mean Waré has water just a 10-minute walk from her home.

Change like this takes time. It calls us to stand with people for the long term, just as Waré and her community stand alongside and support each other. Please pray that the rain comes for Waré's community. Your prayers for our neighbours are so needed.

Please donate if you can help communities like Ware's until those rains come.

There are several ways you can donate: -

1. Firstly, you can set up a regular monthly direct debit - details are on the envelopes or online at CAFOD.org.uk. This means that, as well as giving urgent help right now, CAFOD can continue to support families around the world working hard to put food on the table tomorrow.
- 2) Secondly, you can give a one-off donation, by cash or cheque. To do this, you can use the envelopes provided before and after mass. If you are a UK taxpayer, you can Gift Aid your donation, which boosts it by 25%. Details are on the envelope. Then, place the envelope in the collection box.

The collection will take place over the next couple of weeks. The envelopes will also be available at the back of church.

As we look at the world around us, it can be easy to doubt that we can make any difference, but today's gospel reassures us. Jesus tells the apostles that with just the smallest amount of faith, they could uproot a tree and move it into the sea. Let us place our faith in the Lord and trust that with God's help, we can work together with our neighbours towards a better world.

On behalf of CAFOD, thank you for your continued support for Waré and all our other neighbours in these challenging and uncertain times. Thank you for reading this.

Anne and Eileen, CAFOD Parish Volunteers