SHORT TALK

***LENT 2025***

Good morning/evening everyone and thank you [priest’s name] for this opportunity to invite you all to join CAFOD’s mission in this holy Jubilee Year.

Pope Francis has called us to be ‘Pilgrims of Hope’ this year. This is to be a Jubilee Year of hope for a world suffering the impacts of war, global debt, and climate change.

This is CAFOD’s mission! We bring your love of neighbour to people facing the world’s biggest challenges, with the support they need to build hope for the future.

Sadly, in the last few weeks, the UK government has announced that it will cut spending on overseas aid by 40%. Other nations, who are amongst the wealthiest in the world have done similar in recent weeks. This means that in some of the poorest countries on earth, more people will die and many more will lose their livelihoods.

Pope Francis reminds us in his encyclical from 2020, Fratelli Tutti, “*Each day we have to decide whether we want to be Good Samaritans or indifferent bystanders*“.

This moment demands that we choose compassion over indifference, action over inaction.

As people of faith, we know how important it is to follow the example of Christ and journey with those who suffer the most. By giving to CAFOD, working with the international Caritas family to help people experiencing the worst impacts of poverty and climate change, you, and our parish share hope with the world's poorest communities – communities like Lokho’s in Kenya, who you can see on our CAFOD poster.

After Lokho’s animals died during a four-year long drought, she had no way to feed her family. Lokho and her community planted vegetables, which were damaged by the scorching sun and birds. They reached out to Wakera, our local expert. Together, they devised a solution to protect the crops – and their future. Lokho and her community created a shade net that would help protect their crops from the harsh climate and animals.

With your support, people like Lokho can feed their families and have a safety net to prepare for whatever comes. Every prayerful donation shows the better world that God intends for all of us *is* possible, if we all play our part.

CAFOD’s Family Fast Day is on Friday 14 March. By praying, eating simply and giving, you’ll be supporting local experts to provide simple, effective solutions to the toughest problems facing people around the world, at a time of huge uncertainty.

Collect a CAFOD envelope as you leave church to make a Lent offering, and please consider pledging a monthly gift this Jubilee year. You can scan the QR code or search ‘CAFOD envelope’ to give online. If you can Gift Aid your donation, you’ll add a free 25 per cent to anything you give!

Please be a pilgrim of hope with us in the Jubilee Year by supporting communities worldwide to fight poverty and injustice. Thank you.

CAF7604

**

# GOSPEL REFLECTIONS THAT CAN BE INCLUDED IN THE TALK

**First Sunday of Lent: 9 March (Luke 4:1-13)**

In today’s gospel, we hear how Jesus went out into the desert. Just like Lokho and her community, Jesus knew what it was like to live in harsh conditions and at the end of the forty days he was hungry. During this difficult time, Jesus was not alone. He was filled with the Holy Spirit, who strengthened him throughout his time of preparation and prayer. Knowing that we are never abandoned – that God is always with us – let us also stand alongside and support those who are facing serious challenges in our world today.

# Second Sunday of Lent: 16 March (Luke 9:28-36)

In today’s gospel, Jesus is transfigured on the mountain. Peter, James and John are finally able to see him in his glory. It brings us joy when we see someone flourishing in life – someone who is able not just to meet their needs, but to thrive and to be filled with hope for the future. Today’s gospel also reminds us to listen to the Son

of God, who calls us to love one another, especially those like Lokho, who face such challenging situations. Together we can strive to build a world transformed, which reflects the glory of God.

*See overleaf for Short talk >*

The Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD) is the official aid agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales and part of Caritas International. Registered charity number 1160384. Company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales number 09387398. Printed on paper from well-managed forests.