

**LENT  
2020**

**'Hold fast to love  
and justice.'  
(Hos 12:6)**



**tröcaire**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>How to use this resource</b>	<b>3</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Lent 2020</b>	
– <b>Madris and her family of faith and prayer</b>	<b>5</b>
– <b>Meet Father Barasa</b>	<b>7</b>
– <b>Meet Angela</b>	<b>9</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Workshop</b>	<b>10</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Prayer for Rain</b>	<b>14</b>
<hr/>	
<b>A Prayer for the Earth</b>	<b>15</b>
<hr/>	

Additional Lenten resources, including homily notes, reflections and Stations of the Cross are available at: [www.trocaire.org/resources/parishes](http://www.trocaire.org/resources/parishes)

**List of contributors:**

Anna Keegan, Trócaire

Mary Boyce, Trócaire

Mary Coogan, Trócaire

Garry Walsh, Trócaire

Cover photo: Alex, Madris and Joy Faith at their home in Kenya. Photo credit: Gary Moore

# INTRODUCTION

Trócaire was established in 1973 as the overseas development agency of the Catholic Church in Ireland.

The organisation 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. Catholic social teaching is based on the belief that God has a plan for creation, a plan to build his 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. Saint John tells us, "If anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or speech, but in deed and truth"' (Jn 3:17–18).

In light of the words of the Gospel, we invite you with your parish community to read, share and respond to this parish pack in the joy of knowing that all things are possible through God.

# HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

The activities in this resource focus on two of the families that Trócaire is supporting on your behalf in Kenya and Honduras.

This resource includes:

- Stories from Lent 2020
- Workshop
- Prayers and reflections
- More resources, including homily notes, can be found on Trócaire's website: [www.trocaire.org/resources/parishes](http://www.trocaire.org/resources/parishes)

This resource can be completed as an individual or as a group in your home or parish.

---

# LENT 2020

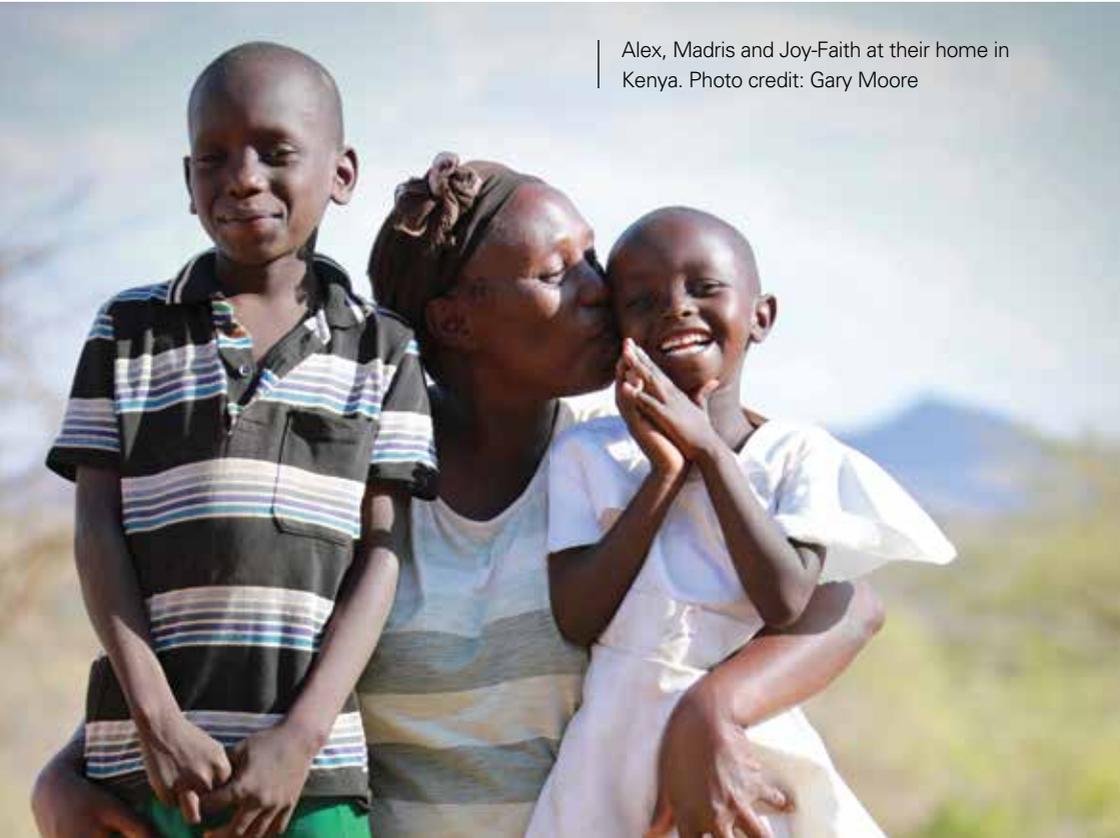
Around the world, families are living under constant threat of conflict, drought and land grabs.

In the face of those threats, many women hold their families together, battling enormous odds to provide for their children. Lent 2020 highlights the different ways in which women overcome the odds to keep their families safe from harm.

This Lent, we are focusing on two families, one in Kenya and one in

Honduras, to highlight how mothers work to protect their families and communities from the devastating impact of climate change and from the actions of corporations. Madris and Angela are two such women. We think of them and women like them all over the world this Lent.

Alex, Madris and Joy-Faith at their home in Kenya. Photo credit: Gary Moore





Erick, Joy Faith, Alex, Madris, Julius and Eugene at their home in Kenya. Photo credit: Gary Moore

## MADRIS AND HER FAMILY OF FAITH AND PRAYER

Madris walks around the dusty brown patch of land beside her small home, where she lives with her six children. There are no crops visible, just a few scraggy bushes.

‘I feel very bad when the rains don’t come because all my plants depend on rainfall,’ she says.

Her home in the parish of Ishiara in the eastern region of Kenya is small and basic, made of wooden poles and mud, with a corrugated iron roof. There are two small rooms for the family, and there is no running water or electricity.

Madris and her family are, like many in Kenya, struggling to grow enough food and to make ends meet because of the failed rains. As the planet warms, drought is becoming more frequent in arid areas like Ishiara.

Madris can no longer depend on growing enough food or generating enough income from her crops to survive. She has to rely on rearing chickens and goats, and engaging in casual labour such as collecting and selling firewood. Without a steady income, Madris struggles to feed her family and to pay the children’s school fees.

‘Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Saviour.’

(Hab 3:17–18)

In the face of these challenges, Madris draws on her inner strength and resilience. She is an Anglican Christian and her faith is incredibly important to her. When asked how she finds the strength to care for her family in such challenging circumstances, she doesn't hesitate to say, 'I draw my strength from God because I am Christian. I pray to God. God helps me to teach good values to my family.'

Prayer is a very important practice for Madris and her family. They end each day by praying together. When times are difficult, Madris turns to prayer. 'I have a lot of faith in God, and even on the days that I can't pay school fees, I pray to God and he provides. We pray a lot for rainfall, at church and even at community meetings.'

She hopes that the prayers of others can help them in their situation. 'I want to tell people in Ireland that here in Kenya we don't have enough rainfall. I would like you to pray for us and for our farms.'

Mealtimes are also at the heart of Madris's family. 'It is very important for my family to eat together, because when we eat together we also talk

together and find out who is facing challenges and how we can help them.' Sometimes, however, the family runs out of food and at those times, mealtimes are difficult for Madris. 'I feel very bad when my children don't eat because they cry a lot.'

Madris's favourite time of the day is the evening. The family often plays games together and sings songs. Madris says, 'I love the evening, because I have time to talk to my children.'

Madris has been supported by Trócaire's local partner, Ishiara Parish. She has received chickens, and has learned new eco-friendly methods of farming, how to harvest rainwater and how to prevent livestock diseases. She has been supported to join a savings and loans group, which enables her to receive additional income during the dry months, and to get support and help from other women.

Despite the challenges they face, Madris holds her family together, even if this means carrying containers of water on her back for hours every day.

Madris with her savings and loans group, Kenya. Photo credit: Gary Moore



# MEET FATHER BARASA

'Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love.'

(Jl 2:13)

Father Patrick Barasa is an Augustinian priest who was ordained four years ago. Father Barasa first wanted to become a priest because his family are Catholics and frequently went to Church. There was a priest working in their church that Father Barasa admired greatly and he thought, 'I want to be like him.'

Father Barasa is the curate in Ishiara Parish, 200 kilometres north-east of Nairobi. The parish has been there for twenty-seven years and is in a very arid part of Kenya. The main challenge faced by the people of the parish is the lack of rain and the resulting drought. The rains usually come twice per year, but the first rain of 2019 only lasted for a week.

The parish of Ishiara has one main parish church and nineteen outstations, which are smaller churches run by lay catechists. There are four priests to serve all of the outstations in the parish. They try to make it to these outstations once or twice a month to celebrate Mass with the community. In the parish, there are fifteen Catholic primary

schools and five Catholic secondary schools. They also have a teacher training school. Father Barasa provides pastoral care to all of these places. People in Ishiara often pray for rain.

Trócaire has been working in Ishiara since 1996. It started with a water irrigation project that helped people to grow more food. Father Barasa says that families who are able to grow more food in an eco-friendly manner often share their food with families who have less. There is generosity and mutual support among the people of the parish; however, they are all facing the constant threat of drought due to failed rains. This uncertainty means that people are always living close to the edge in fragile situations.

There is one river and when this dries up, finding water becomes a challenge. The older people tell the priests that it was different when they were young. They say that back then, there were many rivers and that they knew when the rains were coming. Now, most of these rivers have dried up and they can no longer depend on rainfall.



Father Patrick Barasa in his parish church, Ishiara, Kenya. Photo credit: Gary Moore

Father Barasa says, 'Climate change is an important issue within our faith because whatever God created is good. Whatever God created is also related to us; we need the environment and it needs us.'

'It makes me feel bad, because I have gone to training and I have seen that the contribution of other counties to climate change has been much greater than Kenya's. Yet people here are feeling some of the worst effects. What I pray for is that everyone will

come together, because one continent cannot do it on its own.'

Father Barasa also had this message for people in Ireland: 'I would like to thank you so much. The people of Ireland have really contributed to many parts of the parish. I would like to ask them to work together against climate change. Let us pray for rain and support each other so this planet may still be here for the next generations, so that we may not be the last ones to live here.'



# MEET ANGELA

Angela is a mother of five living in Honduras.

Angela's home is on ancestral tribal land, which is held in collective title. In 2008, Angela became involved with Trócaire's partner MADJ, a broad movement for dignity and justice that fights against corruption.

Angela says, 'The problem we have here is the destruction of the forest. I saw that they were selling the wood (trees) and minerals and decided to intervene. Companies have come on to our land to exploit it.'

'In 2010, a logging company entered our land,' Angela explains. 'We have a small stream that we use for water. We knew it was polluted when we started getting rashes, including the children. We used the water to wash clothes and dishes – it was not drinking water, thankfully. That is when I really got involved. The training I received taught me about our rights. We were asleep and did not understand what was happening. Now we have woken up. Now we are fighting against a logging company.'

On 2 October 2017, Angela and her community set up a dignified encampment to protect the forest.



Angela, Jocsan and baby Helen at their home, Honduras. Photo credit: Simon Burch

Angela and the community, though protesting peacefully, were at risk of violence against them. They stopped a number of trucks by placing rocks in the road and the police came to intervene. The protestors refused to move and so the police shot twenty-five canisters of tear gas at them. There were children, elderly people and pregnant women in the crowd. 'One of the police officers was beating a man with the butt of his rifle,' says Angela. 'I thought he was going to kill him.'

Angela says, 'As a woman, as a mother of five children, I have learned a lot, to fight for the defence of our territory, of our goods. Because our life lies in this forest, it lies in the rivers, it is in all the nature.'

# WORKSHOP

*Trócaire now invites you into a reflection and discussion time. This can be done alone or with a group in your home, parish or community.*

*We start in prayer:*

In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Lord we ask you to guide our hearts and minds,  
teach us to know and love you through word and action,  
guide us in our search for justice for all.  
Amen.

## Lectio Divina

In the first week of Lent we will hear the Gospel, 'You are the light of the world, you are the salt of the earth.' Read this Gospel in silence or aloud. Listen to the words.



Alex and Joy Faith at their home, Kenya.  
Photo credit: Gary Moore

Jesus said to his disciples, 'You are the salt of the earth.' But if salt becomes tasteless, what can make it salty again? It is good for nothing, and can only be thrown out to be trampled underfoot by people.

'You are the light of the world. A city built on a hilltop cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp to put it under a tub; they put it on the lamp-stand where it shines for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine in the sight of men, so that, seeing your good works, they may give the praise to your Father in heaven.'

(Mt 5:13–16)

Allow for some silence, letting this Gospel speak to you.

Read the Gospel, then answer the following questions by writing in the space provided or by having a group discussion.

Pick one word or phrase that stood out to you in this Gospel.

---



---



---



---

What is this word or phrase saying to you now in this moment?

---



---



---



---

Read the Gospel a third time, prayerfully and in the knowledge of what the Father is saying to you. Allow the words of the Gospel to wash over you. Feel the love the Father is giving.

### Reflection

You are salt and light. Jesus does not say what you could be or what you should be; he says you *are* the salt and the light. Salt is so valuable, especially so in the time of Jesus; it was needed to preserve, to give taste, to cleanse. Salt is precious. In saying you are the salt, Jesus is saying to the disciples that you are valuable, you are important. We all need you to survive.

You are the light of the world. It is our job as Christians to shine a light – on

our own lives and as a witness for the Gospel. We do this by sharing our love. In the moments when we love others as much as ourselves, when we do good works, we are the light.

Salt and light do not exist just for themselves – they enhance other things. This is what we are asked to do – we are asked to exist for others, to reach out to all parts of the world, to bring witness and to show each person that we need and want them on this planet.

---

**'Believers, you are to shine as light in the world.'**  
**(Phil 2:15)**

---

## See – Judge – Act

### See

In light of the Gospel, the phrase that stood out most to you, and the reflection you have heard, read Madris's story again.

### Judge

Ask yourself these questions, or discuss them as a group. Feel free to write down your answers.

What part of Madris and her family's life is like yours?

---

---

Madris talks about the change in weather since she was a child. What has changed in your life, home and community since you were a child?

---

---

Kenya's annual carbon emission is 0.3 metric tonnes per person – almost twenty-five times less than Ireland. Madris and her community are far more vulnerable to the most severe effects of climate change than a community in Ireland. Those who are contributing the least are being affected the most. Do you think this is fair? Why/why not?

---

---

### Act

Take a moment to pause. Think about what you have heard from the Gospel, the story of Madris and then think about your own life.

---

**'Everyone's talents and involvement are needed to redress the damage caused by human abuse of God's creation.'**  
**(Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 14)**

---

To help in the fight against climate change, what action could you take now ...  
... in your home?

---



---

... in your parish?

---



---

... in your community?

---



---

... in your heart?

---



---

Madris and Father Barasa asked to made two requests of people in Ireland.

*We close this workshop/reflection in prayer:*

In the name of the Father and the Son ...

Jesus be with us as we learn more about the world you have given to us.

Give us courage to act justly and love tenderly.

We accept your call to action for all the people of this world.

Together we ask Mary our mother for help:

Hail Mary ...

Amen.

## Other Actions You Can Take

- Become a Volunteer with Trócaire or any organisation working for a more just and sustainable world: [trocaire.org/getinvolved/volunteer](http://trocaire.org/getinvolved/volunteer)
- Sign up to support Trócaire's campaign on Business and Human Rights: [trocaire.org/business-and-human-rights](http://trocaire.org/business-and-human-rights)

More information and resources on all of our campaigns are available on our website: [www.trocaire.org](http://www.trocaire.org)

# PRAYER FOR RAIN

by **Father Barasa**

*We invite you to pray this prayer in your home, parish or community. This can be used as a communion reflection or while you are telling the stories of the two Lent families.*

Let us pray together:

God our Father, we thank you this time for the gift of life,

The gift of the world you gave to us.

We also thank you for the gift of faith

That keeps us going.

Lord, I pray for rain, especially in this Ishiara Parish and in all parts of Kenya that are dry.

You, Lord, are the provider of everything.

You are the one who brought us where we are and you have a good plan for us.

Lord, I pray you may look at the suffering of your people, especially those who lack rain,

those who have nothing to eat because of the effects of drought and hunger that is caused by climate change.

I pray, Lord, that you may give us your graces and you may send rain to this area; therefore, your people will be able to live a good life.

I pray, Lord, you will give us courage to preserve our environment so that the environment may provide for us as we continue to preserve it.

May we also have the investment for future generations.

We make our prayer through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



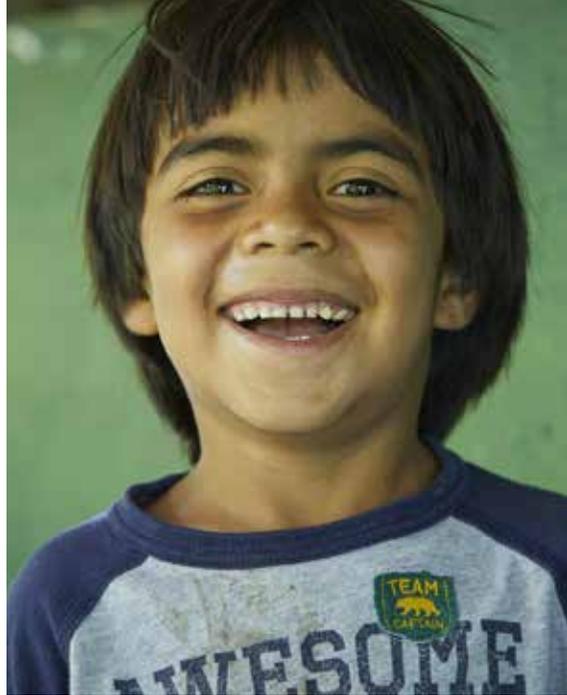
Madris carrying water for her family, Kenya. Photo credit: Gary Moore

# A PRAYER FOR OUR EARTH

For use during Communion reflections, at the start of pastoral council meetings or for personal prayer.

## 'A Prayer for Our Earth' by Pope Francis

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one. O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain



Angela's son Jocsan at his home, Honduras. Photo credit: Simon Burch

at the expense of the poor and the earth. Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognise that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light. We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace.

## More resources, photos and videos are available at: [www.trocaire.org/parish](http://www.trocaire.org/parish)

### Join us on:



**Facebook:** [facebook.com/trocaireireland](https://facebook.com/trocaireireland) – connect with us



**Twitter:** [twitter.com/trocaire](https://twitter.com/trocaire) – keep up with our latest tweets



**YouTube:** [youtube.com/trocaire](https://youtube.com/trocaire) – see the people you support



**Vimeo:** [vimeo.com/trocaire](https://vimeo.com/trocaire) – watch our videos



**Instagram:** [instagram.com/trocaireonline](https://instagram.com/trocaireonline) – see our photos and videos

### Contact us:

Trócaire, Maynooth,  
Co. Kildare, Ireland

T: +353 (0)1 629 3333

E: [mary.boyce@trocaire.org](mailto:mary.boyce@trocaire.org)

[www.trocaire.org](http://www.trocaire.org)

Trócaire, 12 Cathedral Street,  
Dublin 1, Ireland

T: +353 (0)1 874 3875

E: [dublincentre@trocaire.org](mailto:dublincentre@trocaire.org)

[www.trocaire.org](http://www.trocaire.org)

Trócaire, 9 Cook Street,  
Cork, Ireland

T: +353 (0)21 427 5622

E: [corkcentre@trocaire.org](mailto:corkcentre@trocaire.org)

[www.trocaire.org](http://www.trocaire.org)

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

T: +44 (0) 28 90 808 030

E: [infoni@trocaire.org](mailto:infoni@trocaire.org)

[www.trocaire.org](http://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 Protections 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](http://trocaire.org/privacy-security) or contact us for a copy of our privacy statement.

REF: CH7

# Trócaire