

The family of 10 live and sleep in a tiny shelter built from salvaged sticks and scraps of plastic. Despite everything, it is the family's love for each other gives them strength. **'We do not have much' their mother Mahat says. 'But we have each other. Our love keeps us together.'**

Their father, Ambiyó's greatest wish is for a better life for his children. 'I want them to go to school and to have an education.' Our contributions to this year's Lenten Trocaire Campaign will help Nasteha, her family and many other families like them. Give what you can and remember even little helps.

Trócaire escalates response as death toll rises in Turkey and Syria, Feb.15th, 2023.

Trócaire, through our local partner Caritas Syria, is scaling up its emergency response to provide essential needs to the thousands of people impacted by the devastating earthquakes in Syria and Turkey.

Currently, the combined death toll in Turkey and Syria is now exceeding 40,000 people. More than seven million children have been affected. The number of casualties is expected to rise as search and rescue operations are ongoing.

Staff on the ground are running blood donation campaigns to cover blood bank's needs and support those who have been injured.

Caritas Syria is also expanding its support to help reach more families who have been forced to evacuate their homes and are in need of shelter. Teams are also distributing mattresses, blankets, drinking water, milk powder, hygiene kits and food baskets to families.

Trócaire CEO, Caoimhe de Barra says: "Immediate priorities are medical treatment for the injured, shelter for those who have lost their homes, heaters for safe spaces and winter kits with blankets, and warm clothes, and ensuring people have food and clean water. Our teams are also providing vital hygiene kits to help desperate families to stay healthy."

St. Mary's Parish Dungarvan

March 2023



LENT

A Time to Rediscover the Direction of Life.

'Because in life's journey, as in every journey, what really matters is not to lose sight of the goal. If what interests us as we travel, however, is looking at the scenery or stopping to eat, we will not get far. We should ask ourselves: On the journey of life, do I seek the way forward? Or am I satisfied with living in the moment and thinking only of feeling good, solving some problems and having fun? What is the path? Is it the search for health, which many today say comes first but which eventually passes? Could it be possessions and wellbeing? But we are not in the world for this. Return to me, says the Lord. To me. **The Lord is the goal of our journey in this world. The direction must lead to him.'**

Pope Francis (Printed in Intercom March 2023)

March 17th: St. Patrick's Day.

What can we learn from St Patrick today?

To entrust ourselves, our Church, our country to God's protective care.

To have full confidence in the Lord's healing presence and power. 'The Lord's is the earth and its fullness, the world and all its peoples' Ps 23.

To give thanks for God's special care and call to each of us, knowing that God took the initiative in our vocation and will sustain us day by day.

To be devoted to reading the Gospels so that we take on the mind and heart of Christ Jesus and make decisions according to the mind of Christ.

To be receptive to God's will in all our trials, to trust him unreservedly, God uses these trials to shape our hearts and conform us to Christ Jesus.

To be alert to all the opportunities we are given each day to proclaim the Gospel, and to know that whatever good we do is through God's boundless grace.

To believe in the importance of intercession for our people and all people at this time.

Mother Marie Fahy OCSO, Abbess of St Mary's Abbey, Glencairn, Lismore, Co Waterford.

(Printed in Intercom March 2023)

March 17th: St. Patrick's Day

I, Patrick, a Sinner

Its not an easy time to be Catholic, but I wonder has it ever, for even in those times when the church seemed all-pervasive, there were many within and without who were uncomfortable and struggled deeply. Perhaps today its actually easier to be Catholic because there's no hiding, no pretending, no going along with the flow. Being Catholic in Ireland means that we are conscious of carrying a different cross to that of any previous generation. We carry not pride in the faith of our ancestors which brought them through difficult times, times of persecution, poverty and oppression, but rather we bear the burden of guilt, the awareness of sins of the past.

The faith was preached in this land by a man who acutely conscious of his own sinfulness, and not just in a general sense. Patricks mission was questioned and in fact, jeopardised by an old friend, possibly a confessor, who revealed some wrongdoing of Patrick's to those who were to send him on a mission to Ireland. We don't know what that sin was, but we do know that Patrick regarded it as a grave sin, which he had left behind him in the past and been reconciled. We nearly didn't have Patrick at all. Out faith was brought to us by a sinner who became a saint.

Our faith was handed on to us by sinners, who may well have become saints. We, sinners, hand on that faith to others, and hopefully we too will become saints, and our sins and those of our forebears will not impede the mission with which we have been entrusted. *From 'My Life in your Hands' Thoughts and Words of the late Fr. John Cummins (Printed—Intercom, March 2023)*

March 25th: Feast of the Annunciation of the Lord.

Reflection for the Feast.

If Mary had been asked, at the beginning of that momentous day, how important or special she felt, she would probably have laughed at the absurdity of the question. But, by the end of her encounter with the divine messenger, her destiny had changed. Every day God is knocking at our doors and asking us to become important and special on his behalf. Every day we are being invited to carry the Good News of his Son into the word. It does not matter how ordinary we may consider ourselves to be, because that is not how God sees us.

Parish Faith Representatives.

Sharing Faith with our Young People.

Information Session for anyone interested in becoming a Parish Faith Representative for their parish, Thursday 2nd March, 7.30 - 9.00pm: St Mary's Parish Pastoral Room, Presentation Centre, Mitchell St, Dungarvan, X35DE98 (beside Deise Day Centre)

Hear more about plans for Youth & Young Adult Ministry in the Diocese and the role of a Parish Faith Representative.

Nodlaig Lillis, Co-ordinator of Youth and Young Adult Ministry in the Diocese will be present. **More information:**

[www.waterfordlismore.ie/ youthministry@waterfordlismore.ie](http://www.waterfordlismore.ie/youthministry@waterfordlismore.ie)
/ Nodlaig 085 8623704.

50 years of Trocaire: 1973 – 2023.

The Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference established Trocaire in 1973. In a letter dated 2 February 1973 said: "The aim of Trócaire will be two-fold. Abroad, it will give whatever help lies within its resources to the areas of greatest need among the developing countries. At home, it will try to make us all more aware of the needs of these countries and of our duties towards them. **These duties are no longer a matter of charity but of simple justice.**" from the Pastoral Letter of the Irish Bishops establishing Trócaire, 1973.

Trocaire's 2023 Lenten campaign: Nasteha's Story.

Nasteha is pictured on this year's Trocaire Box. She is 8 years old and she lives in Somalia. Her family have lost everything, and it's not just their home. The life they had worked so hard to build, is a distant memory.

Nasteha is the middle daughter of the 8 children of Mahat and Ambiyo. Before the drought the family had a good life. They owned a plot of land and a herd of 200 goats. They sold milk and goat meat at the local market to pay for food and family essentials.

Two years without rain changed everything. Temperatures soared to unbearable levels, the crops failed and rivers dried up. The goats began to die until there was only one goat left. They set out for a camp where they heard there was help. They walked for days until they reached the camp where thousands of people are living.

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