CAFOD
Catholic Agency for Overseas Development

Campaigns Update

February 2021

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Learn how to lobby your MP

If you helped make Fast Day happen for your parish, or if you are walking for water, thank you!

We are now looking ahead to spring, and as part of our new campaign **Reclaim Our Common Home**, we will be rolling out a new initiative in our communities, "Parliament in your Parish" and we have some training sessions coming up.

With the G7 meeting and the UN's climate talks being hosted in Britain this year we need to seize these opportunities and ensure that our Catholic voices are heard. And what better way to do this than by hosting a virtual meeting with our local MP to discuss how we can rebuild from the pandemic in a way that makes the world a fairer place, and tackles some of the major global issues of our time, from climate change to unjust foreign debts.

Through their duties in Parliament, our MPs can lend enormous support to these issues, helping us to bring about the changes that Pope Francis calls for. This training session will give everyone who wants to organise a virtual meeting with their local MPs the skills and confidence to do so. And to ensure that as many parishes as possible are able to attend this event, we are offering two training sessions on different dates.

You can register now at **cafod.org.uk/mpmeeting** to attend the session scheduled on **Thursday 25 March, 6.30-8pm**, or wait for the session on **Saturday 10 April, 11-12.30pm**
Next month we'll also send you a pack in the post with more campaign resources for Parliament in your Parish.

Every petition signature counts

As part of the campaign please encourage as many people as possible to sign our new petition to the Prime Minister ahead of UN climate talks that will take place in Glasgow in November.

Collecting a lot of petition signatures is the perfect preparation for your meeting with your MP, as this sends a message that the Catholic voices in your community want to see leadership from the UK this year on climate action.

Three simple tips to collect more signatures:

- Ask your priest or parish secretary to include a link to the petition in the parish bulletin.
- Share the petition via twitter or Facebook and in any WhatsApp group you're part of.
- When someone from your parish, a friend or a family member confirms that they want to sign the petition, please ask them to spread the word among their networks too.

Find the online petition here: **cafod.org.uk/reclaim**

When it comes to a petition to the Prime Minister, numbers matter. So, let's get creative about how to get as many signatures as we can. If you try something that worked in your parish, let us know so we can share your idea with other Campaign Volunteers: PinyourP@cafod.org.uk.
Next month we will send you a small number of petition cards to collect signatures that way, safely, too.

You are signed up to receive this update as a CAFOD Campaigns volunteer. For queries or to order resources, contact CAFOD Campaigns hotline: 020 7095 5692 or campaigns@cafod.org.uk
Photo credits: CAFOD, Charmaine Chitate, Oswaldo Rivas

Pray without ceasing for our common home

In collaboration with other Christian NGOs, we are inviting everyone to join a year of prayer for our common home. Prayer is at the foundation of our Christian life, and in such challenging times as these, prayer is needed more than ever.

Joining this initiative is very simple. Ask people in your parish to pick the day and the time they want to pray and sign up here: **cafod.org.uk/Pray/Prayer-without-ceasing**

From now until the end of the UN climate talks in November, we'll be praying without ceasing to renew the earth.

Fairtrade Fortnight 2021

Monday 22 February to Sunday 7 March.

We have been one of the founder members of this initiative fighting for justice for people and our planet.

This year the focus will be on the challenges that climate change brings to farmers and workers in the communities where Fairtrade works.

Is your parish a Fairtrade parish?

To become one you need to: use Fairtrade tea and coffee after services and for all meetings; try to move forward with using other Fairtrade products such as sugar, biscuits and fruit; promote the Fairtrade Fortnight each year in any possible way.

Meet Kezia...

Kezia Harrow is a young campaigner studying at the University of Wales. She tells us why she cares passionately about social justice.

I started volunteering and campaigning with CAFOD in 2016 when I was 16 whilst being on the CAFOD Young Leadership Programme.

In 2018, I was then fortunate enough to be a participant on the Step into the Gap programme and I travelled to the occupied Palestinian territory and Israel. My CAFOD journey has now continued whilst I am at university as I am a local CAFOD volunteer. I care about social justice because I feel that change is possible and not out of reach.

If we want change to occur and be present in our world we must strive to speak up and stand up against injustice! Catholic Social Teaching calls us to be of service to others and support our global brothers and sisters which is why campaigning is so vital and necessary in making a difference. Campaigning makes a huge difference because by people's voices, thoughts and opinions being heard it creates change!

Campaigning gives us an opportunity as Catholics to put our faith into action and be part of a global movement that is at the forefront of change. So, be brave and bold, become a campaigner, a defender of social justice and live out your faith!

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