



| An Ethiopian painting of the Nativity.

ADVENT: SEASON OF HOPE

Dear Friends,

As the beginning of the new liturgical year approaches, we at Trócaire would like to thank you for working with us to build a more just world in 2022.

During Advent, we wait in joyful hope to celebrate the birth of our saviour at Christmas time. We are reminded of God's promise to send his messiah, the one who will save us all. 'The season of Advent restores the horizon of hope, a hope which does not disappoint for it is founded on God's word. A hope which does not disappoint, simply because the Lord never disappoints!' (Pope Francis, 1 December 2013)

Now, more than ever, hope is needed in our world. The climate crisis, along with the Covid-19 pandemic and conflict, has resulted in 44 million

people currently facing life-threatening food shortages in East Africa. Political instability, inequality and gender-based violence are severely affecting the lives of many in Central America. Thanks to generous support from people across the island of Ireland, Trócaire and its partners are working to bring hope and justice to those who need it most.

May this season of Advent be a true season of hope. May we continue to work together for a just world.

Wishing you every blessing of the season,
The Church Team at Trócaire



| Heavy snow covers the ground at a refugee camp for Syrians in Lebanon. Photo credit: SAWA.

FORCED TO FLEE AT CHRISTMAS

It has been more than ten years since millions of Syrians were forced to flee the war that has destroyed their beloved country.

Heading into another harsh winter in tent-like structures, Syrian refugees living in refugee camps in Lebanon are struggling to keep their families warm and fed as they battle the unpredictable weather. The harsh winter weather creates havoc for families living in tents that often flood and collapse. This is not just happening in Lebanon. All over the world people have been forced to flee their homes because of war and climate change. Your love and support can help people have brighter future.

Hana (42) is a mother of five whose family has lived in a refugee camp for six years. 'During the winter, it is too cold here and there are many catastrophes where tents fell apart. I am very worried about how this winter will affect our children. Young children have started therapy in the camps because they were very scared. Some families had to leave the tents and rebuild them.' Hana's children say, 'We get very cold but we try to cover ourselves. We need winter boots and



Hana (42) with her children Samer (13), Salma (10) and Roula (8). The family have been living in a Syrian refugee camp in Lebanon after they were forced to flee from their home in Syria. Photo credit: Hazar Al Zahr.

coats, but we need warm socks and underwear the most.'

Trócaire, in partnership with local organisation SAWA, supported 13,000 people in Lebanon in 2021. Please support Trócaire's Christmas Appeal.

TRÓCAIRE GIFTS OF LOVE

Our Gifts of Love are hugely popular with Trócaire supporters.

Amidst all of the consumerism and spending associated with Christmas they give people the opportunity to buy a meaningful present that will change the life of somebody in dire need for as little as €5.

The Irish public have bought more than one million life-changing Gifts of Love, supporting some of the world's most vulnerable families. People love giving ethical, sustainable gifts that are meaningful and practical, and that support our critical work around the world.

This year we have a range of twenty-three charity gifts ranging from €5 for a gift of soap to €1,000 for the gift of fixing a water well. Due to the increased pressure on people due to the cost of living crisis, and the devastating famine in the Horn of Africa, we have launched two new gifts. The first is our Winter Essentials Gift (€25), which provides items including warm boots and blankets to Syrian refugees living in freezing conditions in tent-like structures in Lebanese refugee camps.

The second new gift is a Family Food Basket (€35) aimed at supporting families of malnourished children in the Horn of Africa, including Somalia, where drought has left hundreds of thousands of people hungry. This gift contains a months' supply of high-nourishment food to nurse babies back to health.

Other gifts include dignity packs to help young girls out of period poverty (€10) and mental health support for women and children traumatised by the ongoing conflict in Gaza (€50).



These gifts are sourced locally in the countries in which they are needed, meaning that the gifts not only improve the lives of the families and communities that receive them but they also benefit the local businesses and farmers that supply them.

Rather than donating an amount of money people get a say in exactly how their money is spent and how it impacts on people's lives.

These life-changing gifts can be purchased online.

To buy a Trócaire Gift of Love, go to trocaire.org/ways-to-help/gifts. You can also call Local 1800 408 408 in the Republic of Ireland or from Northern Ireland you can call Freephone 0800 912 1200.

For your parish newsletter

Give hope for a better world this Christmas with a Trócaire Gift of Love. There are twenty-three Trócaire gifts to choose from, such as chicks, emergency water and solar lamps, ranging in price from £5 to £1000.

The gifts can be purchased at <https://trocaire.org/gifts> or by calling 1800 408 408 (ROI) or 0800 912 1200 (NI).

THE LETTER FILM: A MESSAGE FOR OUR EARTH

'Faced as we are with global environmental deterioration, I wish to address every person living on this planet.' (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 3)

On 4 October 2022, a *Laudato Si'* movie, *The Letter: A Message for our Earth*, was launched in Rome. In just three weeks it had 8 million views on YouTube. *The Letter*, produced by the *Laudato Si'* Movement, together with the Oscar and BAFTA-winning team Off the Fence, is a film-documentary that follows five courageous changemakers from different parts of our world as they tell their stories and bring hope to the global conversation to care more deeply for our common home. This is a movie that explores the

brutal situation our world is in right now as we try to address the climate and biodiversity crises, and how ordinary people are doing what they can to make a difference.

Millions of people around the world have already watched *The Letter* online and we need you to help us arrange community screenings around Ireland and begin the conversation where you are.

If you would like to host a screening of *The Letter*, please email our *Laudato Si'* officer: jane.mellett@trocaire.org.

'All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents.' (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 14)



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