



Lent 2018

Church of Ireland Bishops' Appeal, Eco-Congregation Ireland and the Representative Church Body are joining forces to promote the Lenten Initiative #Jars4Journeys

The Idea:

We are inviting people to save an old jam jar or other recyclable container and every time they make a journey that is not by foot or by bike, they can donate to offset the impact of their carbon footprint. The money raised will go towards three conservation projects around the world that support and help build resilience in communities that are most affected by climate change. Bishops' Appeal and the RCB are match-funding the first €1000/£1000 raised. Join us this Lent in being mindful of the impact of our lifestyles on others and on the planet.

The Resources:

Take part in #Jars4Journeys by downloading jam jar labels here and donating every time you take the car, bus, train or airplane. Go deeper by taking more practical and prayerful steps to reduce your carbon footprint.

Jam Jar Labels: www.bishopsappeal.ireland.anglican.org/get-involved

Creation Care Bible Study: www.bishopsappeal.ireland.anglican.org/pray

Practical & Spiritual Resources: <http://ecocongregationireland.com/modules>

Environmental Audits for Parishes: <https://www.ireland.anglican.org/parish-resources>

The Team:

Bishops' Appeal regularly funds projects that builds resilience for communities who are most affected by climate change. Eco-Congregation Ireland have a vision is to see churches throughout Ireland adopt an eco-approach to worship, lifestyle, property and finance management, community outreach and contact with the developing world. The RCB have undertaken several environmental initiatives including Keep Cups for staff, Beehives at the RCB offices and joining the Climate Action 100+ initiative.



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The Projects:

Solar Ovens in Bolivia:

The majority of communities in the Amazon rely on firewood as their main cooking fuel and flooding decreases the availability of dry firewood, which means families struggle to cook food and boil water to make it safe for drinking. This leads to malnutrition and disease, and weakens people's resilience to face the crisis.

Dependency on firewood as the main fuel for cooking leads to deforestation. It is estimated that each family uses up to 3kg of firewood every day. Collecting firewood is a physical burden for women as they have to walk further and further from their communities to collect fuel each day.

Burning fossil fuels on open fires in small family homes is also a hazard for the health and wellbeing of families. The smoke from burning wood, especially when it is damp is often toxic and increases the likelihood of respiratory diseases. Children within these communities have experiences being badly burnt in their homes following accidents with open fires.

This Christian Aid project involves delivering solar ovens to families along with training on how to use the ovens, and ideas for how to adapt traditional recipes for cooking in the new ovens. It will target four disaster hit communities and work with 100 families per year.

As solar ovens are still a very new concept, time will go into training the participants thoroughly on the benefits of adapting to this new way of cooking, and also into how to maintain and repair their ovens.



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Conservation Farming in Ethiopia:



Tearfund works in Ethiopia establishing Self Help Groups in communities affected by drought and subsequently famine. Through education and training, groups learn new ways to generate income and they build up reserves through small savings and loans schemes. They learn about the best approaches to surviving drought and they work together to improve life for their families and for their communities. In other countries, conservation farming techniques have been introduced and people have seen their harvest yield increase even if the rains are unpredictable.



The family pictured are the Ncube family from Zimbabwe who needed at least one tonne of harvest to feed them for a year, but at their lowest they were producing 5 buckets worth of food and hunger was a constant issue. Since being trained in Conservation Farming in 2003, extreme hunger has not darkened their door. They grow crops on a smaller amount of land but with higher yield. They fill their store and sometimes have enough to sell for money. They don't have oxen to plough the land but they do have money for school fees and medicine. The change has been transformative.



This training is now needed for the thousands of Self Help Groups in Ethiopia so that they can not only save for a very dry day, but they can grow food in the midst of drought, and beat hunger.



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Tree Planting & Water Harvesting in Kenya:



“If you destroy the forest then the river will stop flowing, the rains will become irregular, the crops will fail and you will die of hunger and starvation.” *Professor Wangari Maathai*



The Green Belt Movement (GBM) is an environmental organization that empowers communities, particularly women, to conserve the environment and improve livelihoods. They were set up in response to the needs of rural Kenyan women who reported that their streams were drying up, their food supply was less secure, and they had to walk further and further to get firewood for fuel and fencing. GBM encourages the women to work together to grow seedlings and plant trees to bind the soil, store rainwater, provide food and firewood, and receive a small monetary token for their work.

Lenten Prayer

God of All Life, we give thanks for Earth, our common home,
and ask forgiveness for all the unreasonable demands we have made on it.
Our Earth, its many peoples, its oceans, wild life and ecosystems are struggling to survive:
Help us to change our ways and guide us to live a life
which is not centered on ourselves,
but on you, and all that you have created.
We ask this in Jesus' name.
Amen.



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