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THE PARISH OF CORPUS CHRISTI TONBRIDGE  
AND ST PETER'S HADLOW  
TWINNED WITH LINK PARISHES IN MALAWI

Give and it will be given to you... The measure you give shall be the measure you receive  
Luke 6.38

Newsletter no: 24

Date: February 2006

Dear Parishioner

*What a year that was!*

During the year 2005 we sent an astonishing £25,602 to Malawi. Last month we sent a further £9,000, the balance of the Drought appeal.

A total of £21,000 has now been sent to help with the purchase of food for those in the more remote areas who do not always benefit from the International Food Aid programme.

Five priests and their helpers are actively buying and distributing food to:

The sick, the elderly, families with children, orphaned children - In fact anyone who comes for help, regardless of race or religious beliefs.

*Please be in no doubt that we, as a parish, have given food AND HOPE to many hundreds of starving people.*

*Well Done to Everyone!*

*And now to 2006...*

We now have our own notice board in Fisher Hall. We intend to keep it full of news, reports and photographs which will describe the work of our twinning project. We hope you will find it interesting and informative.

We are still getting lots of reports from the international press and our priests, telling us that the famine is far from over. The rains have now come to Malawi, so people can plant their crops. The rains can be very heavy and often flood the fields and gardens where crops are planted. Those crops that survive will not be ready for gathering until April, so our friends are not yet out of the woods.

Please continue to pray for the people of Malawi and the other African countries which are in similar straits.

*Zikomo Kwambiri* - thank you very much - for your continued support of our extended Parish family in Malawi. God bless you all.

*"For I was hungry and you gave me food"*  
Matthew 25.35

## The Parish of Our Lady of the Poor, Chiringa

There is much to tell you about Chiringa, which is coordinated by Anne Mahoney. The Playgroup which we support is in the Parish of Our Lady of the Poor, in Chiringa. It is attended by 70 children, often more, on five mornings a week. We gave money to Fr Alfred to establish this project and the Playgroup is now in its second year. Our annual gift enables the Playgroup to operate successfully. Last summer, we were able to send Fr Alfred home with extra money, in order to purchase some much needed toys and play equipment. A large portion of this money was generously given by a group of mums associated with our own Parish Nursery, and who regularly contribute to our Malawi Fund. Recently, we have received a letter from two of the Playgroup's leaders, an extract of which is featured below:

*We would like to express our thanks and appreciation for what you are doing for Chiringa Playgroup. It is now a transformed place, with security bars to doors and windows and enough toys for all the children.*

*We currently have 71 children aged two to five years and the majority are orphans. Due to the hunger situation, we have become a feeding station for malnourished children.*

*They attend from 7.30am to 11am and we begin the session with morning prayers followed by the lesson of the day. At 10am they have their meal of rice or maize porridge. Your assistance is the only source we have for running this playgroup.*

We also received a large bundle of photographs from Fr Alfred, many showing the children of the Playgroup with their new toys – for most, if not all, the very first toys they have ever owned! Imagine! Others showed images of their food distribution, Christmas Day Mass and other Masses.

Drawings and paintings from our own Nursery children have already been sent to the children in Chiringa and another collection of artwork will soon be on its way, together with a letter from our Nursery leaders.

Anne will be visiting Chiringa for Easter this year, and will spend some time helping in the Playgroup. Fr Alfred will be her host and she very much hopes to be able to visit the other communities with which we are involved, transport permitting! Anne will be armed with a good video camera in order to capture as much as possible on film so that we too can see the children in their own surroundings, and how our other projects are progressing.

Following our record giving during 2005 and last month, there is now only a small amount left in the fund. Anne will not be able to take any further gifts of money to Chiringa unless parishioners wish to make a personal gift to the Parish or Playgroup, or indeed any of our other projects. If anyone would like to send a gift, (cash only please – because of baggage restrictions), please contact Anne, or any of the team.

Anne would also be happy to take any letters from sponsors to their children and ensure their safe delivery to the appropriate priest.

Peter Wells

On behalf of the Malawi Team