*Famine in Malawi*

Newsletter No 65

March 2016

Dear Parishioner

You will know that we have a link with three parishes in Malawi: *Njale* (Fr Frances), *Karonga* (Fr Denis) and *Chiringa* (Fr Charles).Between them, these priests minister to several thousand parishioners, many in very remote areas.

The rains have failed during the recent crop-growing season and as a result there is widespread hunger. Neither the people nor their priests have the money to purchase maize from the various government depots, which store recently imported stocks from neighbouring Tanzania.

A message is shown below from Fr Charles, which gives a graphic account of their terrible plight. Frs Francis and Denis are equally affected.

----------

*“The situation of hunger has reached an alarming stage here at Chiringa. As I was going for morning Mass I found so many people waiting to ask for food but the parish cannot assist them as there is literally nothing to give them.*

*You tell them we do not have any help but they cannot leave the parish premises and I am really stranded as I do not know what to do with these starving people. Looking at them, they are genuine in their requests for food.*

*As I returned from Mass the number increased and this is the first time in my twenty years of priesthood that I have witnessed such a situation, seeing so many needy people coming to the parish to ask for food.*

*Of course needy people come to the parishes to ask for help but the situation here at Chiringa has reached an alarming point. I did not have the choice but to let you know. As I am sending this email to you there are so many people sitting on the veranda of Father's house, waiting to be assisted, but they cannot be assisted and as parish priest everybody looks at me and the church leaders are in their homes and the curate just looks at me.*

 *I was asking the sisters at the convent if every year this is the situation but they said it is because the rains are erratic and it is not like this all the years past. Yesterday we had a meeting of all Diocesan priests at the Cathedral but as we travelled looking at the maize in the gardens drying up due to lack of rains and scorched sunlight it was really very very sad and I am afraid it will become worse.*

*There is hunger already but it will be one of the worst times in the living memories of Malawi.*

*As I have said I am in my room writing this email but so many people are waiting outside to be assisted with food and I do not know what to do”.*

*Sincerely yours,
Fr Charles Manyenje.*

Fr Charles describes a desperate situation and we are urgently seeking your help. It has started to rain in the last few days but this season’s crops are totally lost.

Will you please help them?

There will be a second collection next weekend and we pray that you can help these poor people. If you are a gift aider you can use one of the spare envelopes at the back of your box, otherwise please use a plain envelope marked ‘Malawi Appeal’ with your name.

Whatever you can give will literally be a life-saving gift and will be sent to Malawi within days of the collection being taken.

Please help us to feed these starving people.

Thank you

Peter Wells

On behalf of your Malawi team.