

# FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

'I set my bow in the clouds to serve as a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.'

(Genesis 9:13)

## Newsletter Insert

This year Trócaire's lenten campaign focuses on the country of Malawi, Africa. Malawi is one of the least developed countries in the world and has been badly affected by climate change. In the Machinga district, Malita and her family must make a one-hour trip up to five times a day to collect water. Please support Trócaire in helping communities develop sustainable access to clean, safe and reliable water supplies by taking home a Trócaire box today or going to: [www.trocaire.org](http://www.trocaire.org).



'Fresh drinking water is an issue of primary importance, since it is indispensable for human life and for supporting terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.'

(*Laudato Si'*, 28)



Patricia and Patrick at their home.

Photo credit: Muiru Mbuthia, Trócaire

## Sacred Space

- Set up a space in a prominent place in your church or community.
- Use purple cloth, the large Trócaire box and some plants to decorate the space.
- Place a map of Africa with Malawi highlighted in your sacred space.
- Put a water container in the space to symbolise the theme of access to water.



## Prayer of the Faithful

- 1) We pray for the people of Malawi, with whom we shall journey this Lent. May the Lord open our hearts and minds to learn more about the effects of climate change.
- 2) For those places in the world where people do not have access to a clean, safe water supply. May we be moved to support the work of Trócaire to secure water justice for all.



## Music

'Oh, Come to the Water' by Kevin Mayhew

'The King of Love My Shepherd Is'

'Be Not Afraid' by Robert J. Dufford



## This Week

Try to become aware of every time you use water – to clean, to drink, to brush your teeth. Are you careful not to be wasteful of this precious resource?



# GOSPEL REFLECTIONS BY FR PAUL THORNTON

## Mark 1:12-15

The harmony that we experience in the first reading today is contrasted with the disharmony that is set before Jesus in the temptations of the Gospel. Though the temptations aren't listed we know they are the turning of stones into bread, the riches of the world and power over all humanity; symbolic of the uncontrolled actions of human beings, who exploit the world, its peoples, and resources. If we don't recognise these in ourselves and in our social decisions, we will not recognise that the kingdom of God is close at hand. We will miss the opportunity to repent, to turn our lives around.

This could be how we look at the climate crisis that we find ourselves in. After decades of irresponsible human activity – overproduction and the draining of natural resources, the asset stripping of countries in the global south, the destruction of ecosystems and treating the planet as a commodity from which to gain wealth and power rather than as our common home – the harmony of the natural world has been lost.

**'These situations have caused sister earth, along with all the abandoned of our world, to cry out, pleading that we take another course.'** (*Laudato Si'*, 53)

This year's Trócaire campaign focuses on Malawi and on the work being done to support and empower local people and communities. We hear the story of Malita and her family, who are on the front of the Trócaire box this year. Malita is facing the effects of the climate crisis on a daily basis. When you listen to the people of this region, you hear the very real ways in which climate change is affecting their daily lives. You hear that the climate is less predictable now and that the lack of trees on the mountain and the land makes them vulnerable to crop failure and contaminated water. The people of Malita's village, and others like them, are not the ones who have caused this situation – but they are paying the highest price. Read more about Malita's story and find homily notes at: <https://www.trocaire.org/our-work/working-in-ireland/parishes/>

**'Today, however, we have to realize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.'** (*Laudato Si'*, 49)

## Take Action Day of Celebration – World Water Day

World Water Day occurs every year on 22 March. In 2024 this falls on a Friday just before the Easter break. Use this day to celebrate all things water in your parish. The following are just some suggestions for integrating water issues into your parish for the day. We would encourage you to join with your local school, youth club and community groups for these activities.

- A Pledge Waterfall: Create a waterfall of pledges in a public area. Each water droplet coming down the waterfall can be an individual pledge.
- Organise a river or beach ritual using this Trócaire resource: <https://www.trocaire.org/documents/trocaire-river-ritual-season-of-creation/>

- Do a water liturgy review. How many times during our Catholic celebrations do we use water? One example is during baptism; can you find more, especially as we enter Holy Week?
- Join the Trócaire volunteer programme: <https://www.trocaire.org/join-us/volunteer/>
- Fundraise for Trócaire: <https://www.trocaire.org/ways-to-help/fundraise/community-fundraising/>



Patrick uses the water pump at Puteya Primary School.  
Photo credit: Muiru Mbuthia, Trócaire