

CHRISTMAS APPEAL 2009

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT



From darkness to light – this dramatic image echoes throughout the Scriptures to depict the total transformation brought about by the presence of God among us. Christ came into the world “to give light to those who live in the darkness and the shadow dark as death” (Lk 1:79). This Advent, week by week, Canadian Jesuits International (CJI) invites you to contemplate the light of Christ shining in the darkness of today’s world.



CANADIAN JESUITS
INTERNATIONAL

Week 1



Mr Mulenga (Junior) a KATC trained farmer

First Sunday of Advent – 29 November

“I am the light of the world. Anyone who follows me will not be walking in the dark but will have the light of life.”

John 8:12

There are about 1.1 million orphans in Zambia, including 600,000 orphaned by AIDS. A farmer, named Rita Hamusokwe, looks after no less than eight of these orphans in her village. “Mrs. Sustainable Farmer”, as she is popularly known, feeds the children with the produce she grows. Her success is due largely to a course she attended at the Kasisi Agricultural Training Centre (KATC), which offers training in organic, sustainable agriculture. The KATC courses are attended annually by 1000 small-scale farmers like Rita and Mr. Mulenga (photo); and at least 30% of places are reserved for women.

Hheavy shadows of poverty, hunger and disease hang over Africa. But the **light of life** prevails, not least in grandparents and people like Rita who look after orphans, often at great personal sacrifice. This week, let’s remember their efforts, and those of Jesuits and their co-workers to foster community development.

Week 2



J. Caliso/CJI

Durga, preparing a meal at the crèche

Second Sunday of Advent – 6 December

“Light shines in darkness, and darkness could not overcome it.”

John 1:5

Her name is Durga Chettri. In Darjeeling, India, she sells vegetables and corn from a small shop and her husband is a daily wage earner – a porter. These hard working parents and their children have benefited from programmes – mother and child community health, crèche, pre-school, scholarships and daily supervised studies – run by Hayden Hall, a relief and community development organization. Tragically, one son died last year of TB Meningitis aged five. Durga herself is now in hospital, fighting TB. In the hills where her family lives, this disease thrives in conditions of malnourishment, overcrowded accommodation and poor public sanitation.

In the darkness weighing on the Chettri family, it is Durga and her husband who are a shining light as they persevere to give their children hope for the future. This week, as we pray for Durga and her family, let’s remember the projects supported by CJI in Darjeeling, which aim to create opportunities for education and self-sufficiency.

Week 3



St Anne's Primary School, Kingston

Third Sunday of Advent – 13 December

“The people walking in darkness have seen a great light.”

Isaiah 9:1

Each person is special; each person's case is unique, although the needs are so similar. People come to St Anne's Parish, asking for food, for board, for school supplies, for jobs, for transport. The needs are constant. As “back to school” time comes, some children need help with part or all of their school fees. From time to time, they come for bus fares and lunch money too. Ten-year-old Matthew takes extra lessons. He lives with his aunt, who wants to help him because he is bright and well behaved, although she doesn't have much to give him. Sometimes she appeals to St Anne's so that she can help him get an education.

For many years, St Anne's parish, schools and community centre have been a **light** in West Kingston, a poor, violence-prone neighbourhood in Jamaica. Involved in social development since its foundation, St Anne's Church has education, healthcare, skills-training and parenting programmes. This week, let's reflect how the support given by this Jesuit project to Matthew's aunt, can make all the difference in the life of children like him.

Week 4



Kids from St Anne's parish, Kingston

Fourth Sunday of Advent – 20 December

“If you deprive yourself for the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, your light will rise in the darkness.”

Isaiah 58:10

The generous and faithful support of our donors and friends is a **light that shines in the darkness** of our brothers and sisters in need. This Christmas, join us to continue spreading this light. Your gift will go directly to one of the circa 45 initiatives supported by CJI in over 20 countries worldwide.

Thank you for your gift

Please send a cheque payable to **Canadian Jesuits International**. Or just log on to **www.canadianjesuitsinternational.ca** and click the Canada Helps icon and follow the easy instructions.

If you wish to make a **monthly donation**, the amount you donate could be charged directly to your Visa or Mastercard or withdrawn from your bank account. If you wish to leave a lasting legacy, you could consider planned giving. To learn more, call or write to us at CJI.



A carpet weaver at Hayden Hall, Darjeeling

The CJI vision and mission

The vision of CJI is of a world of justice, peace and integrity of creation, transformed through our commitment to the poor and our faith in a living God in our midst.

As a response to God's love in the world, the mission of CJI is to support poor and marginalised people in developing countries through the work of Jesuit and other partners, and to carry out educational advocacy in Canada, linked with our overseas work.

We work with Jesuit and other partners rooted in the Jesuit tradition in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and Eastern Europe.

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