

The Poverty and Hope Appeal 2019

The Bishop of Rochester launched the Poverty and Hope Appeal in May. He wrote *"Jesus calls us to 'hunger and thirst for righteousness' (Matthew 5:6) for a world free from poverty, injustice and exploitation. Here in Rochester Diocese, our annual Poverty and Hope appeal is one way that we answer that call"*.

This year the Appeal is concentrating on supporting, in prayer and financially, projects in Burundi, Syria, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe and, as always, Commonwork Trust in the UK.

The projects in Syria and Burundi are new this year. In Syria young people will be provided with education, psychological support and community initiatives. War-damaged educational and youth facilities will be repaired, providing training to young men in basic construction skills and there will be vocational training in nursing to address a critical shortage. In Burundi the project is providing horticultural training, good seed, and access to land to support widows, young people and marginalised ethnic groups.



Young refugees living in Lebanon hope to return home to Syria to complete their education.

Our projects in Zimbabwe, including in our Companion Diocese of Harare, and Sri Lanka continue. The former helps the church work with people living with HIV and AIDS to reduce stigma and transform lives. It works to prevent new infections, improve access to treatment, and facilitate nutrition gardens and savings groups. In Sri Lanka, the Appeal supports Nevedita Jeevabalan's work managing the child protection unit of LEADS, a community development organisation. She describes her mission as *"to show God's love to children who have been through trauma and abuse."*

Here in the diocese Commonwork offers justice and global citizen education to school children and also helps vulnerable young people fulfil their potential. If you are involved with a school do get in touch with Commonwork and see all that they can offer.

The Poverty and Hope Appeal is run by volunteers and over 95% of the money we raise goes to the projects. These are overseen by one of our partner organisations, Christian Aid, USPG, CMS and Commonwork. They ensure the money is well spent and regularly report to the Poverty and Hope Committee, led by Bishop James.

More information about all the projects is available on the diocese website bit.ly/PovertyHope or contact povertyandhope@gmail.com. We are delighted to provide speakers for Sunday services, small group meetings and school assemblies.

This annual appeal is one way in which our diocese walks with our neighbours in different parts of the world. Another is through our Companion Diocese links with Estonia, Harare (Zimbabwe) and Kondoa and Mpwapwa in Tanzania. Many parishes, schools and communities enjoy friendships with our Christian sisters and brothers in these places. For more details please contact Mike Fawcett (Companion Diocese coordinator, coordinator.cdsg@gmail.com)

Debbie Cooper (Poverty and Hope Appeal coordinator).