

DYING FOR THE LOO

Theme: water and sanitation, Christian Aid Week

Country focus: Kenya

Aim: to show how a community without access to basic sanitation facilities is working together for change with the help of an organisation supported by Christian Aid.

Materials/preparation:

- a potty or toilet (if you happen to have a portable one!), a toilet roll with '57' written on it, a calendar, and a plastic bag. Alternatively, you could project images of these things.
- the *Dying for the Loo* PowerPoint presentation, available from www.christianaid.org.uk/learn

Assembly presentation

- 1 Show slide 1** from the PowerPoint presentation. Show the pupils the items you have brought in with you and ask them to guess what the connection is between them. They will probably link the toilet and toilet paper, but may struggle with the calendar and plastic bag.
- 2 Explain** that all the items are related to going to the toilet. *Going to the toilet is something that we all need to do every day. On average, people go to the toilet around 2,500 times a year. Show the pupils the calendar. That means that you are likely, on average, to spend around six months of your whole life in the toilet, but hopefully, not all in one go! Show the pupils the toilet roll. It is thought that we each use about 57 sheets of toilet paper a day. Next time you go to the supermarket, just have a look at the wide variety of different things you can buy to make going to the toilet a clean, sweet-smelling, comfortable experience – different types and colours of toilet paper, different air fresheners, different cleaners, even covers for spare toilet rolls!*
- 3 Ask the pupils** if they can guess what the plastic bag is for. *Going to the toilet isn't straightforward for everyone around the world. Around 5,000 children throughout the world die every day from drinking unsafe water and not having proper sanitation, such as toilets and washing facilities.* That's around three children dying every minute. Show slide 2. Introduce Kenya. Show slide 3. The lack of toilets is a huge problem for 13-year-old Anastacia, 10-year-old Winifred and 12-year-old Jeremiah. They live in one of the poorest areas of Nairobi, the capital of Kenya. The place in which they live is called Matopeni [pronounced 'mat-oh-penny'], which literally means 'in the mud' in Swahili.*
- 4 Show slide 4.** *The people who live in Matopeni have built their own drains and a couple of toilets, but these don't work properly. People have to walk on wooden planks above the drains, which contain sewage and rats. There are no toilets in the 300 or so homes in Matopeni. Most of the houses only have one room and if people need to go to the toilet, they often have to use a plastic bag. Often these used plastic bags are just thrown outside. These are known as 'flying toilets'.*

- 5 Jeremiah says, 'I don't like living here. The bad thing about this place is that when it rains, the drains fill up and water floods into the houses and we have to use a basin to get rid of it. It's dirty and we get sick. I've had a very bad cold and some pain in my throat. It smells bad. It's because... people have no proper toilets. That is why they use "flying toilets".'
- 6 **Show slide 5.** Jeremiah's aunt, Veronica Milla, is determined to make things better. She and her friend have started a community group in Matopeni called *Arise and Shine*. Christian Aid partner MNU has worked with another local community in Nairobi to build toilets and showers. Now MNU hopes to work with *Arise and Shine* to build the water and sanitation facilities, such as loos and showers, that Matopeni so desperately needs. Veronica says, 'Little by little, we can transform Matopeni.'
- 7 Explain that this week is Christian Aid Week, when people throughout the UK and Ireland spend seven days fundraising, praying and campaigning to support the work of the charity Christian Aid. Christian Aid wants the world to be free from poverty and believes that this can happen if people and governments work together for change.
- 8 Challenge your pupils to think about what their talents are and whether they could use them to help people such as Jeremiah. Having proper toilets may not seem like a lot to ask, but this can make an enormous difference to people's lives.

Prayer

Dear God

It's so easy to forget just how fortunate we are – we expect to have clean places to go to the toilet and clean water with which to wash and drink. We're sorry for the times we have taken this for granted. We want to remember those people around the world who don't have these things. Help us to work together to make good changes, whether we do this by keeping our own communities clean and tidy, or by doing things to help communities worldwide. We want a world that is free from poverty. Please help us to see ways in which we can make that happen.

Amen.

Action

For pupils who are inspired by the assembly and want to make a difference, here are some ideas:

- use your talent! Christian Aid is asking you to put your skills to use to raise money this Christian Aid Week. Perhaps your school is musical and could put on a performance, or perhaps some pupils have a particular skill that they could put to good use for a donation to Christian Aid. You can order an *Unleash Your Talent* fundraising pack at www.caweek.org for more great ideas and support on running an activity.
- view Global Explorers (www.christianaid.org.uk/learn/globalexplorers) on your school's interactive whiteboard to find out more about Christian Aid and view the stories of Jamila from Ethiopia and Jerzon from Honduras, both of whom have had to deal with a lack of sanitation facilities and access to clean water.

*www.unicef.org.uk/campaigns/campaign_detail.asp?campaign=24&nodeid=campaign24§ion=9

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