

COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS 2011

Make Lent meaningful

Lent is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate and give thanks for even our smallest blessings, and to turn our thoughts to those in need around the world. *Count Your Blessings* is a creative way to pray for, and give to, the work of Christian Aid – reflecting on the good things in our lives and thinking of those for whom life is very different.

From Ash Wednesday to Easter, follow these simple daily actions and reflections for a meaningful Lent. Record your responses in the boxes and see how your blessings can add up to become a gift for those living in poverty around the world.*

* The daily giving amounts are suggestions only. Please give what you can.



'I congratulate Christian Aid for its campaign this Lent. We should all count our blessings for what God has given us and I hope that everyone will consider taking action to help those in need this Easter, no matter where they live.'



Dr John Sentamu,
Archbishop of York

Follow our *Count Your Blessings* journey on Twitter by going to twitter.com/christian_aid and searching for #cyblessings – we will be posting daily actions each morning. You can also follow our tweeting church leaders, who will be responding to our tweets so make sure you get involved and tweet back!



For a **children's version** of *Count Your Blessings*, **cell-group resources** and an **all-age talk** go to www.christianaid.org.uk/lent

Thank you to everybody who counted their blessings last year. Your Lenten giving resulted in more than **£250,000** for Christian Aid's work to end poverty.

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WEEK ONE: FOOD

9-13 March: a week of nutrition

Wednesday 9 Ash Wednesday

On average, each person in Britain eats 3kg (6lb) of chocolate every year. In Nicaragua, Christian Aid provides farmers with cocoa seeds that cost 10p each.

Give 10p for every bar of chocolate you have eaten during the past week.

Thursday 10

Each household in Britain throws away an average of 4kg (9lb) of food and drink every week.

Weigh your kitchen rubbish on the bathroom scales and pay 50p for every kg (or 20p for every lb).

Friday 11

Christian Aid works with farmers in 42 countries around the world to help them access equipment, markets and training.

Give 10p for every country from which your breakfast came.

Weekend 12 & 13

Sunday marks the end of Fairtrade Fortnight. By offering fair prices and protecting producers from fluctuations in trade markets, Fairtrade directly benefits 7 million people in 58 developing countries.

Give 50p for every packet of non-Fairtrade tea, coffee or hot chocolate in your home. Reflect on the great changes we can bring about in the lives of others by making small changes in our own lives.



Christian Aid/Sam Faulkner

Christian Aid partner CIPCA helps indigenous communities in Bolivia to farm cocoa and, through newly formed Growers' Associations, to sell their produce for an agreed minimum price. These farming families have some financial stability for the first time

14-20 March: a week of learning



Monday 14

£2.50 will pay for a textbook for two students to share in southern Sudan where Christian Aid partners are supporting schooling for children.

Give 10p for every book you have read since the beginning of this year.

Tuesday 15

Roughly 16% of the world's population cannot read or write.

Give 20p for every crossword or sudoku you attempt this week.

Wednesday 16

It is estimated that in 42% of countries worldwide the press is not free and people do not have access to unbiased news.

Give 10p for every newspaper you have read since the start of Lent.

Thursday 17 St Patrick's Day

In Mali, only one in four people can read.

Give 10p for every unread book in your house.



Friday 18

65% of British households own a computer. Fewer than one in ten people in Burkina Faso have access to a computer.

Give 20p for every computer or mobile phone you have used in the past week at home or work.

Weekend 19 & 20

Despite the aim of universal primary education stated in goal two of the Millennium Development Goals, 69 million primary-school-age children around the world don't go to school. Ajang Garang, 11, is luckier than some – her education was interrupted by the civil war in Sudan, but she now attends a school run by Christian Aid partner organisation Hope Agency for Relief and Development. Ajang hopes to become a teacher.

Give 5p for every O-level or GCSE, 10p for every A-level and 50p for every tertiary degree you hold. Give thanks for teachers who provide education to students all over the world.



Christian Aid/Antoinette Powell

21-27 March: a week of work



Monday 21

Even earning the British minimum wage, you would be among the richest 11% of the world.

Give £1 if you earn more (or receive more in pension or benefits) each month than you did last year.

Tuesday 22 World Water Day

In addition to their daily work, many people around the world must walk for miles to collect water.

Give 5p for every hour of unpaid work you have done over the past week.

Wednesday 23

Like many children around the world, Issa has to help support his family. He goes to school during the week, but at weekends and in the holidays he works in a quarry near his village in Egypt to bring in extra money.

Give 50p if you have more money in the bank than you will need for the next month.

Thursday 24

Many people living in poverty have little or no choice over how they are able to earn a living.

Give 10p for every different job you have ever had.

Friday 25

Thousands of people in developing countries make a living from scavenging on rubbish dumps.

Give 5p for every audio cassette, vinyl record or VHS tape in your house that you can no longer play because you don't have the necessary equipment.

Weekend 26 & 27

In Bangladesh, 10-year-old Kichuna has to go fishing for shrimp fry every day in order to buy books and food for school. Kichuna also has to fetch drinking water for her family each day, which can take her up to three hours. Her family are joining the local water council set up by Christian Aid partner BACS and Kichuna hopes that soon they will have a water-collecting system, which will cut down the time she spends fetching water each day.

Give 10p for every bill you have paid this month. Give thanks for employment opportunities that pay a fair wage.



Christian Aid/Mohammedur Rahman

28 March – 3 April: a week of youth

Monday 28

In Sierra Leone, more than one in five children will die before reaching their fifth birthday.

Give 10p for every picture in your home drawn by a child.

Tuesday 29

A baby born in Britain today can expect to live to the age of 79, whereas a baby born in Afghanistan can only expect to live to the age of 44.

Give 1p for every year of your life.

Wednesday 30

Vitamin A deficiency affects 40% of children under five in sub-Saharan Africa and southeast Asia, significantly increasing their susceptibility to life-threatening diseases such as measles and diarrhoea.

Give 20p for every piece of fruit or veg you eat today.

Thursday 31

Many girls in developing countries find it difficult to get an education. In Sudan, Christian Aid partners work to raise awareness of the importance of educating girls.

Give 10p for every year you spent in a school classroom.

Friday 1

More than 11 million children in sub-Saharan Africa have lost one or both parents to AIDS-related illnesses.

Pray for all parents affected by HIV/AIDS who are struggling to support their children. Give a donation of your choice.

**Weekend 2 & 3
Mothering Sunday**

In Malawi, Alima Ayami's four-month-old son Haka was diagnosed as malnourished three years ago. Unable to afford transport but determined for her child to recover, she travelled by foot and bike for up to four hours a day for months to attend a treatment and feeding clinic. Pictured aged three, Haka is a healthy weight and the nutritionists at the Baptist Clinic, a Christian Aid partner organisation, are delighted with his progress.

Give thanks for mothers all over the world who make sacrifices for their children.



Christian Aid/Sarah Filbey

4-10 April: a week of shelter

**Monday 4
International Mine Awareness Day**

In Cambodia, landmines and unexploded ordnance continue to kill and maim: 87% of victims are civilians.

Give 10p for every street you have walked down today without being injured.

Tuesday 5

Unemployment in Zimbabwe is estimated at 94%, forcing many people to live miles from home to find work to support their families.

Give 10p for every time you have been in touch with a member of your family this week by email, letter or phone.

Wednesday 6

More than 42 million people worldwide are currently displaced by conflict, persecution and disaster.

Give 10p for every place you have called home.

Thursday 7

In the Gaza Strip, 1.5 million people are locked into an area no bigger than the Isle of Wight.

Give 10p for every pace you can take around the room you are in.

Friday 8

Following the Haiti earthquake in January 2010, more than 2 million people became homeless. For months Rosemund Ernest shared a single room with 12 members of her family.

Give 10p for every room in your home.

Weekend 9 & 10

Emitilla Paucara Choque, 77, receives the new state pension in Bolivia, which is being provided now that the oil and gas industries are taxed. Emitilla is able to pay her rent from her pension and no longer has to go out to work.

Give 10p for every friend or family member who receives a pension. Give thanks for all those who care for the elderly, both within families and outside of family structures.



Christian Aid/Hannah Richards

11-17 April: a week of well-being

Monday 11

In Ethiopia, Christian Aid partners train teachers in health and sanitation so that this knowledge is passed on to schoolchildren.

Give 10p every time you flush the toilet today.

Tuesday 12

Nearly 1 billion people do not have clean water.

Give 10p for every tap in your home.

Wednesday 13

Almost half the people in developing countries lack adequate sanitation.

Give 5p every time you wash your hands today.

Thursday 14

20% of the world's poorest people live with disabilities and are the most disadvantaged within their own communities.

Give 10p for every packet of medication in your home that you have not had to use this week.

Friday 15

It would cost US\$11.3bn to bring water and sanitation to everyone in the world. That is one-third of what we spend on alcohol in Britain each year.

Give 10p for every alcoholic drink you've had this week.

Weekend 16 & 17 Palm Sunday

There are 21 doctors in Britain for every 10,000 people. In Burkina Faso, there is just one doctor for every 10,000 people.

Give 20p for every pharmacy and doctor's surgery you can reach within 15 minutes. Give thanks for health professionals all over the world.

18-24 April: a week of heat



Monday 18

95% of homes in Britain have central heating.

Check your thermostat setting and give 50p for every degree above 20.



Tuesday 19

Do you know who your political representatives – including your MP – are? If you do, write to them about Christian Aid's climate change campaign: www.christianaid.org.uk/actnow

If you don't know who your political representatives are, give £1 and find out about them today.

Wednesday 20

In the Philippines, Christian Aid partner MACEC is helping farmers affected by changing weather patterns to find alternative sources of income, such as breeding butterflies for export to tourist attractions.

Give 5p for every journey you took in a car this week.

Thursday 21 Maundy Thursday

One recycled tin can saves enough energy to power a television for three hours.

Give 10p for every item of recyclable waste you throw in the general rubbish this week.

Friday 22 Good Friday

In Britain in 2009, £9.9bn was donated to charities.

Give thanks for all organisations and individuals in the world reaching out to those in need.



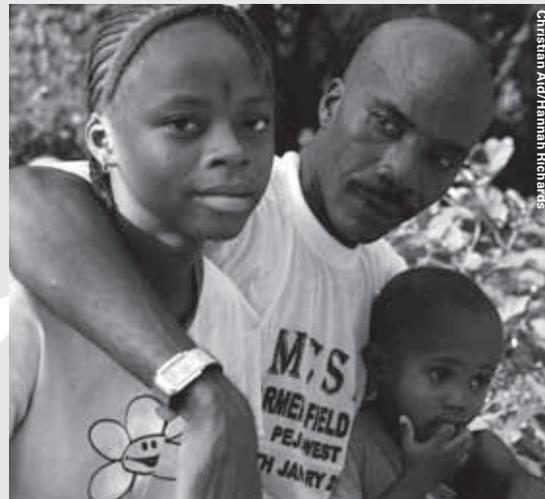
Weekend 23 & 24 Easter

During the civil war in Sierra Leone, John Foday lost two daughters to hunger and almost died himself when he was captured by rebels. He now volunteers for Christian Aid partner MCSL, promoting peace and human rights within his community.

In celebrating Christ's resurrection this Easter, give thanks for peacemakers the world over.

Risen Christ, Lord of life,
Help us roll away the stone of our selfishness and apathy

So that new life may arise
wherever love and hope are crucified;
May we live out your Easter faith,
And bring the miracle of your resurrection to the world.



Christian Aid/Hannah Richards

Thank you for counting your blessings

Please return this form to:
**Freeport Christian Aid,
Valldata House, 2a Halifax
Road, Melksham
SN12 6YY**

Christian Aid will not pass your details on to any other organisation. If you already receive information from Christian Aid we will continue to send it unless you tell us otherwise by writing to us at Supporter Relations, PO Box 100, London SE1 7RT. If you are new to Christian Aid, please tick here if you do not want to receive information from us

Title _____ Forename _____

Surname _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

I enclose a cheque for £ _____
(please make cheques payable to Christian Aid)

This includes £ _____ from a separate children's
Count Your Blessings.

If you would like a children's thank-you certificate,
please give the child's name _____

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I want all the donations I have made to Christian Aid in the past four years, this donation and any donations I make in the future to be Gift Aided until I notify you otherwise.

To qualify for Gift Aid, you must pay an amount of UK income tax and/or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax that the charity reclaims on your donations in the appropriate tax year (currently 25p for every £1 given). Tax year is 6 April one year to 5 April the next. (We cannot claim Gift Aid on donations from children.)

If you have enjoyed using *Count Your Blessings* for your journey through Lent this year, please let us know by sending any reflections in with your donation or emailing cloy@christian-aid.org