

Stop the flight from hunger

Appeal to Caritas Sunday the 24th of September 2017

«Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord» - Nehemiah 8:10

Today we celebrate Caritas Sunday in every catholic congregation in Norway. This is an expression of solidarity towards our brothers and sisters all over the world. We want to make the world a better place for everyone, together with the church and with Caritas. Today our goal is to *end hunger*, and the collections will go to helping those who are starving.

September 29, the Feast of the Archangels Michael, Gabriel and Raphael has traditionally been a harvest feast - In many countries referred to as "Michaelmas". This year we celebrate thanksgiving for the year's harvest – in thankfulness that we do not need to be hungry – and in solidarity with our brothers and sisters who aren't as fortunate. In many parts of the world, bringing in the year's harvest is *hard work*, and the celebration especially important.

Pope Francis asks for greater awareness of our shared responsibility for the earth and each other. We hope that celebrating the fruits of the earth with special thanks to our Lord can inspire us to share our abundance with "those who have nothing prepared".

Caritas Norway is launching the campaign #Zero Hunger, which this year is called "Stop the flight from hunger." This year's campaign focuses on a global hunger crisis where people are forced to flee from their homeland because of hunger and food shortages. Hunger can be caused by war, by drought, flood and climate change or even a deeply unjust distribution of goods.

There is enough food for everyone. Yet, 800 million people go hungry every day. The Church, as a sign of mercy and charity, can and should extend a hand to those living under inhumane conditions.

We are made from love and meant *for* love. By living out our love and charity to each other, we are living out our potential as human beings. When we take up the fight against poverty and challenge injustice, we do not only improve the lives of others, we also improve and strengthen our own humanity, spirituality, love and morality.

Hunger is a problem we can solve. 70 percent of the world's poor live on the countryside and depend on farming. They need jobs outside agriculture, dry-resistant seeds, better irrigation systems and access to markets to sell their goods. According to the World Bank, investment in agriculture is more than twice as effective in combating poverty than any other method. This is helps that works.

Caritas in Norway works with securing access to food in several countries in Asia, Latin-America and Africa. In 2016, 150,000 people got better living conditions because of Caritas' food security projects. In 2013 *Davies* from Zambia borrowed a small amount of money to buy seeds and received training in sustainable agriculture. By 2015 he had not only repaid the loan, but also earned enough to send all his children to school! In Congo, farmers who participate in the program have more than doubled their income, and almost everyone has enough to eat three nutritious meals a day. These are just a few examples that our work gives results!

When we today celebrate Caritas-Sunday, we hope for great solidarity with our brothers and sisters who go hungry in all continents. We pray that this act of love is an expression of increasing involvement in building a world where poverty and hunger do not exist.

We thank you for your support and hope that in future you will engage in the social work of the church!

Thank you for your attention.