



School motto

Update on Malawi

In the summer of 2014, a group from St Lawrence Church went to Malawi for two weeks to help in St Luke's Hospital, Malosa. Whilst there, we visited Malosa Secondary School for boarders, and were appalled to discover that three of the school's four rice boilers were no longer working, causing real concern for the welfare of the students. When we returned home, the group mounted an appeal to mend the boilers and we are now pleased to report that all four boilers are up and working! Below is a message from the school's Headmaster (seen below sitting in his office):

I am sending you pictures of the boilers you funded at the school ... showing all the four boilers working and being used as you can see. On behalf of the students, staff and the proprietor I would like to thank you very much for your support and we hope that you will continue supporting Malosa when need arises.



Best wishes,
Nelson Mwale,
Headmaster

Since our visit last year, Malawi has suffered some catastrophic weather conditions which have caused considerable suffering amongst its people. The school's Deputy Headmaster and Chaplain, Father Howard Nasoro, wrote (in June) the following about the problems Malawi is experiencing at the moment:

I know that the British people are soon to have a general election. In fact, by the time you read this, you will have a new government but I thought you might be interested to compare the sort of problems which your new government faces with those we have in Malawi. It might help to put things in proportion.

In the third world, every year we walk a tightrope between severe poverty and famine, depending on the size of the current harvest. Our staple diet is maize which accounts for more than 60 percent of the country's total food production. This year (2015) Malawi expects a drop in maize production from last year's 3.9 million metric tonnes to 2.8 million tonnes due to the floods and prolonged dry spells which the country experienced in the course of the season. According to the government, there is approximately 46,000 metric tonnes currently in the strategic grain reserves. In view of this,

the country is going to have a huge deficit in maize. Unfortunately, there has also been a drop in production for other major crops such as rice, millet, cassava and sorghum and also in cash crops such as cotton and groundnuts.

Thus, the drastic weather conditions Malawi suffered have been disastrous. Firstly, the onset of rains in the current cropping season was delayed by between 30 to 40 days across the country which resulted in the late planting of most crops. Then, the heavy rains between the end of December 2014 and mid-January 2015 caused massive water-logging, wash-aways and heavy flooding. The amount of damage varies from place to place. Damage means such things as: loss of food stocks, property, crops and drowning of livestock. Rice crops, too have been particularly affected as the

seedlings have failed to grow because they were submerged for weeks. Due to continuous rainfall, some farm activities such as weeding and storage have been hampered, thereby significantly reducing the hiring of labour, resulting in reduced income for the poor.

Even now, over 600,000 people in our district are still reeling from the effects of the ravaging floods and will need food assistance. Hunger is also affecting the population in 17 other districts and these people will need food assistance till the next season in 5 months time. The country is facing an uncertain future with a sharp rise in maize prices and a worsening of the current high inflation rate. The whole national economy faces a steep downward spiral.



Please continue to pray for the people of Malawi at this time of crisis, and give thanks and appreciate the food you put so easily on your table each day.

There are photos on the notice board in the church hall of the children's clothing arriving which we sent to the people of Malosa via a container with the Diocese of Birmingham. Also photos of the completed building of the Maternity Unit which we raised funds to build, together with the congregation of St Luke's Church in Watford. We thank you for your continued support for these people: Wendy, Norman, Debbie, Linda, Catherine and Pam - the Malawi Team.