

COMPASSION

MAGAZINE

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2020 ISSUE 2

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THE
CHURCH
AND
COVID-19

+
PRAY
WITH US

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UNLOCK MORE OF THE STORY

Look out for the Compassion Scanner logo to discover extra videos and behind the scenes footage! Here's how:

1



Download the Compassion UK App from the App Store or Google Play. For more details visit compassionuk.org/app

2



Look out for this symbol on pages that contain video content.

3



Launch the 'Compassion Scanner' which you can find in the menu bar of the Compassion UK App.

4



Fill your screen with the page and watch it come to life - allowing you to see more of the story.

12-YEAR-OLD RICHARD WASHING HIS HANDS UNDER A TAP AT HIS COMPASSION PROJECT IN KENYA.

PHOTOGRAPHER: BEN ADAMS



Dear
friends,

Over the past few months there has been a huge amount of change and uncertainty, and I want to personally thank you for your incredible faithfulness to the ministry of Compassion throughout this. Please know we are continuing to pray for you and your loved ones at this time.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected us all in different ways, but the heartbreaking reality is that it affects vulnerable children in poverty, the most. Please know that with your incredible support we've been able to ensure the critical needs of Compassion-supported children, and their families, are being met on a daily basis.

During this pandemic there may have been times when situations have felt hopeless. This is the same word Compassion Graduate, Tony, uses to describe growing up in poverty. As a young child he believed he was the cause of his family's hardship and began to question whether they'd be better off without him.

As I read Tony's words, my heart broke (page 8). We often see poverty as physical and economic deprivation, but it also has a profound impact on mental and spiritual wellbeing. It tells children, like Tony, that they are not good enough, that they don't matter.

But poverty didn't have the final say. Today, Tony is Compassion's National Director in the Dominican Republic and is leading a team dedicated to serving their country during the COVID-19 pandemic. All thanks to the people God placed around him. As a supporter, you are one of these heroes. God is using each one of us to speak hope into the lives of children like Tony.

So, as you read, I hope you are encouraged by the impact your support is having in the lives of children around the world. Thank you again from the bottom of my heart for continuing to trust us to steward your generosity.

God bless,

Justin Dowds
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, COMPASSION UK AND COMPASSION IRELAND

THE CHURCH AND COVID-19

DISCOVER HOW LOCAL
COMPASSION CHURCH
PARTNERS ARE CARING FOR
YOUR SPONSORED CHILD

During this challenging and ever-changing time, we're so thankful for your continued prayers and generous support. You're ensuring our amazing local church partners are able to meet critical needs and respond in ways that are relevant to the communities they serve.

WE RISE AS ONE

LEAH AND LIN USING THEIR HOMEMADE
TAP IN DAGORETTI, KENYA

Here are just a few examples of how the local church is caring for children and reminding them of God's love and hope.

SOAP AND SCARCITY

In the densely populated community of Dagoretti, Kenya, fast action was needed to prevent the spread of COVID-19. As many families don't have access to running water, the local Compassion project taught parents how to make an affordable handwashing solution.

"Anybody can do it," says Mary, a Compassion Child Survival Implementer. "All you need is a clean, used jerry can and a nail to puncture a small hole at the bottom of the can. The nail can also be used as a tap to block the flow of water when it is not in use."

Since the cost and availability of water fluctuates, families were also taught how to make their own hand sanitiser.

"We have provided provisions to every [family] and taught them how to make sanitisers so that when water is not available, they can still be safe," adds Mary.

THE GIFT OF GROCERIES

As countries went into lockdown, many Compassion-supported families have found themselves unable to work. In El Salvador, the local church stepped in to provide food parcels and supplies to vulnerable families.

For single mothers like Kirian, the help eased an unimaginable burden. The



5-YEAR-OLD ADONAY AND HIS
MUM KIRIAN FROM EL SALVADOR.

PHOTOGRAPHER:
ALEJANDRA ZUNIGA

main provider for her family of four, Kirian usually works as a fruit seller. But, sales are lower than usual during the pandemic and it is risky for her to continue working.

"That's why I am thankful to have this grocery bag because it contains all the essential products that we need during the quarantine," she says. "This provision will help us to survive the crisis."

CREATIVE THINKING

Unable to meet face-to-face, local churches are using technology to stay in touch with families.

In Honduras, Compassion tutors like Jeffry are using mobile phones to send lessons to children as well as encouraging Bible verses and words of hope.

"Some of our youths have access to mobile phones," shares Jeffry. "So I started recording and narrating the Bible lessons. After wrapping up my videos, I send them to the families. For the younger children, I've developed

handmade visuals and colouring pages which I drop at their houses."

GOING FURTHER

Thank you to everyone who has supported our COVID-19 Emergency Appeal. Your generosity has allowed our church partners to extend their care even further within their communities, providing vulnerable children and families with health and stability through hygiene, food and housing security.



NEWS AND UPDATES

To stay up to date with how our local church partners are responding to COVID-19 and to get all the latest news from the country where your sponsored child lives visit: compassionuk.org/corona-virus-update

DESSERT AND A DEVOTION

TASTE AND SEE THAT
THE LORD IS GOOD!



A GROUP OF TEENAGERS LEARNING TO BAKE
IN GUATEMALA
PHOTOGRAPHER: RYAN JOHNSON

Besitos de Coco

If the lockdown hasn't lifted and you are looking for things to do, get your family together and try this easy recipe! These coconut kisses are a favourite treat in Spanish-speaking Caribbean islands such as the Dominican Republic.

We hope you enjoy this five-step treat as much as the sponsored children in our projects do.

**PREP TIME:**
5 MINUTES

**COOK TIME:**
20-25 MINUTES

**TOTAL TIME:**
30 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS:
MAKES APPROX 24 MACAROONS

- ☐ 3 cups of desiccated coconut
- ☐ 1 cup of plain flour
- ☐ 4 egg whites
- ☐ 1 cup of caster sugar
- ☐ 2 tbsp. butter
- ☐ 1 tsp. almond or vanilla extract
- ☐ Melted chocolate for drizzling (optional)

METHOD:

1. Preheat your oven to 180 °c (160 °c fan) or gas mark 4.
2. Line and grease a baking sheet.
3. In a bowl, mix all the ingredients together to form a dough.
4. Divide the dough into 24 balls.
5. Space the balls out on the baking sheet and bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until golden. Once cool, drizzle with chocolate for an extra treat. **Enjoy!**



DEVOTION

While you enjoy your coconut kisses, read and reflect on this verse as a family:

**"Taste and
see that the
Lord is
good."**
PSALM 34:8

REFLECT:

- Where have you experienced God's goodness recently?
- How can you share His goodness with others?
- What step will you take today to put that into action?



**LOOKING FOR
MORE FUN
ACTIVITIES?**

Find out more and teach your family about the countries where Compassion works.

Visit [compassionuk.org/fun-family-activities](https://www.compassionuk.org/fun-family-activities)

FROM SPONSORED CHILD TO COMPASSION NATIONAL DIRECTOR

TONY BELTRAN'S PERSONAL TESTIMONY OF KNOWING HOPE



TONY HOLDING A PHOTO OF HIMSELF AS A SPONSORED CHILD



TONY WITH A GROUP OF YOUNG PEOPLE FROM THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC.

The first time I realised I was living in poverty was when I walked into my house and my mother was praying. She was telling the Lord, “We have nothing to eat. We have nothing but you.” That was the day I realised that I was poor. It suddenly made sense why we didn’t have any running water. Why there were days when we didn’t have any food to eat.

I blamed myself, thinking *maybe we are living in poverty because of me. Maybe I’m eating too much. Maybe I’m asking too much of my parents.* I felt hopeless.

That day I asked my dad if I could help so we built a shoe-shining box together. I used to go walking around the streets asking people if I could shine their shoes for money. I also started selling corn bread while all the kids were playing games at school. I did whatever I could to get some

money and help my family. I didn’t want to be a burden.

But when God brought the Compassion project into my family and I was found a sponsor, I began to see change. At the project things were different. We would play games and there would be time for curriculum activities and lessons. People cared about me and showed me God’s love.

The project staff took us to the doctor at least once or twice a year. I used to get really

painful stomach aches and in my community there was no hospital. So, the project would send me to Santiago, another city where I could be treated by a doctor. My doctor’s name was Agosto and he was just the best!

If I could describe Compassion in one word, I would say opportunity. It was a bridge, an open opportunity for me to get an education. Compassion used to pay for my schooling and at the project there were activities and books to help me do my homework.

My sponsors wrote to me and told me, “Tony, we are so proud of you. It’s amazing that you are young and you’re already teaching others how to use a computer.” Those words of motivation meant so much.

“
IF I COULD DESCRIBE
COMPASSION
IN ONE WORD,
I WOULD SAY
opportunity.”

I was encouraged that I could use the opportunities the Lord was bringing to me!

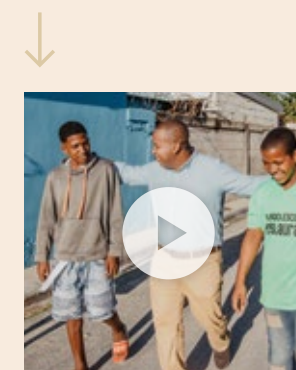
I went on to get a degree in systems engineering and when I graduated I developed software for different companies. Today, I have a master’s in arts of spiritual formation and discipleship and I serve as National Director for Compassion in the Dominican Republic, releasing the next generation of children from poverty, in Jesus’ name.

I think my story is evidence that God is using Compassion to change lives and to bring opportunities to many children who are currently in need. That is why I want to encourage you to continue sponsoring a child, to continue sacrificing, even at this difficult time.

I know right now you might be worried about how your sponsored child is doing during this COVID-19 pandemic.

In the Dominican Republic people are under a strict curfew. This has created a huge burden for the families we serve as most parents get their income through the informal interaction of people in their communities.

Yet God is moving powerfully. As sponsors, you are being the hands and feet of our Lord Jesus Christ in different communities and I thank you for your partnership in this ministry. Thank you for empowering the churches to do what they always wanted to do but could not do because of the lack of resources.



CONTINUE THE STORY.

Hear Tony share more of his powerful testimony by scanning the page on the left using the Compassion UK App or visiting

compassionuk.org/tony



Scan this page using the Compassion UK App

RICE, RATS AND A NEW HOPE

Desperation drove widower Budrai to steal food from rats, but now, thanks to your support, his children are on a journey to a hopeful future.

At night, the rice fields are riddled with rats. Scouring for loose stalks, they dig holes and stash a supply of ripened rice for later. They don't realise, but they are doing farm labourers, like Budrai, a service. They are providing a meal for his two children.

Before the sun rises, Budrai takes his hoe, crowbar and sack to the rice fields. He knows that if he can be first to find the rice stash, he can feed his teenage children, Salina and Subhas, that day.

Budrai works for low wages harvesting rice on the farm,

but the work is seasonal. It doesn't provide him with enough income to feed his family all year round. As more farm owners invest in modern equipment, such as tractors, the demand for Budrai's labour is shrinking.

DESPERATE MEASURES

Many children from Budrai's village in Bangladesh join their parents in the rice fields. Collecting the rice stashes left by rats is a desperate measure, but it is permitted by the land owners. For Budrai, this felt like the only option to provide for his family, despite the scorn it attracts from other members of the community.

Yet, thanks to you, Budrai has another choice for his children. Salina and Subhas are following a hopeful path to a new future thanks to the invaluable support they receive through sponsorship.

"Thankfully, our low social standing doesn't affect my children's participation at the church's Compassion project," says Budrai.

Including Salina, 18, and Subhas, 17, the project currently



“

REGISTERING MY CHILDREN WAS THE BEST DECISION I HAVE MADE IN MY LIFE. TO SEE A better future WITH THE HELP OF THE CHURCH.”

serves 190 children from the community, providing them with access to education and helping with nutrition, giving medical help when necessary and teaching good values.

NEW HOPE

At the project, a safe and supportive environment, the children also receive additional tutoring and their lives are enriched by sport, music, dancing and art. Counselling from caring adults also helps them to face the many challenges life presents. The two teens love the time they spend at the church and they eagerly participate in all the activities.

The work of the local church is showing all generations in the community that there can

be hope for a brighter future. Martin, the Project Director, says, "In my 25-year career, I haven't seen people in such misery and, at the same time, facing so many opportunities for positive change. Seeing them embrace change encourages us to pray harder and commit stronger to bring optimism to our country."

FOOD, SCHOOL AND A FUTURE

Today, because of the nutritional support provided through sponsorship, Budrai worries less about providing food for Salina and Subhas. He is also happy that both children are going to school and learning alongside other children from their community.

Budrai says, "When my wife passed away, I couldn't think of any other options than making my two children work on the farm alongside me or collecting grains of rice from rat holes. Registering them into the child sponsorship programme was the best decision I have made in my life, to see a better future with the help of the church. And I am confident now that my children will never go hungry."



BUDRAI STANDING WITH HIS TWO CHILDREN SALINA AND SUBHAS

BUDRAI STANDING IN A LARGE FIELD SEARCHING FOR RAT HOLES.

LOSS, SURVIVAL AND HOPE

AKOUI WITH HER TWINS
PAUL AND PIERRE

Your generous support for our Different Path Appeal has helped to change the course of the future for Akouvi and her family.

Ten-month-old twins Paul and Pierre nestle into the protective embrace of their mother, Akouvi. They are the picture of health, but the contented scene belies the struggles they have endured.

The family live in Kpeme, a suburb of Togo's capital, Lomé. The boys' father struggled with alcohol addiction and left Akouvi to raise two children and prepare for the birth of the twins on her own. Having already lost twin babies in infancy, Akouvi was fearful for her unborn children.

PRIOR TO MY REGISTRATION IN THE Survival project MY LIFE WAS A MESS."

However, with rent to pay and hungry mouths to feed, she had little time to focus on herself and certainly couldn't afford antenatal care or contemplate giving birth in a hospital. "During the pregnancy, I fainted many times. I prayed every morning for help," she says sadly.

As her pregnancy progressed, her anxiety increased. In Togo, 1 in 20 babies don't survive their first year of life.¹

"I PRAYED EVERY MORNING for help."

When the time came for Akouvi to deliver her sons, she was alone and frightened. But God heard her prayers.

ANSWERED PRAYERS

Akouvi was renting a small home from a woman who attended Kpeme Baptist Church. When the woman arrived to collect her monthly rent, she found Akouvi cradling a newborn baby in a pool of blood. She immediately rushed to her pastor.

"The project was able to intervene and send her to the nearest medical centre where she received assistance to deliver the second baby," remember's Pastor Comla Agbeko. "I believe that the woman wouldn't survive without the intervention of the project, and the second baby would have died at birth."

The boys weighed barely three pounds – the same as a bag of sugar. They were dangerously weak, and Akouvi was so malnourished that she struggled to provide enough milk for the hungry babies. But the intervention of the local church meant that Akouvi was no longer alone.

Akouvi was immediately registered into the church's Child Survival intervention where the project workers kept a close eye on her and her children. They ensured Akouvi got the medical care she needed and have continued to support the family ever since.

¹ UNICEF Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) data from 2016



PIERRE BEING
WEIGHED AT THE
LOCAL CHURCH

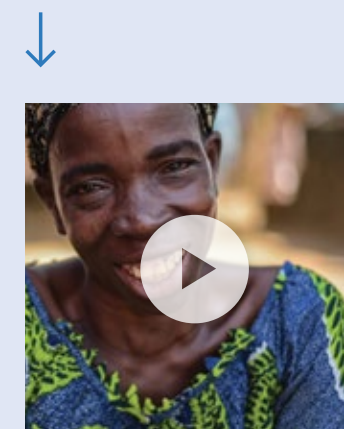
"I receive milk for the twins, medical care and education to be a good mother. Since my registration, the problems of food shortage and how to get to the hospital have ended," says Akouvi, her face lighting up with joy. Akouvi can also take comfort in the knowledge that both Paul and Pierre will become Compassion sponsored children when they are old enough.

COMPLETE SUPPORT

Since January 2020, the Child Survival intervention at Kpeme Baptist Church has been funded by Compassion UK supporters who generously donated to our Different Path Appeal. The appeal raised an incredible £2.2 million, including match funding from the UK government. The funds are being used to help Child Survival interventions across Togo to protect women during pregnancy and ensure their babies have a healthy start in life.

Through the intervention, trained community workers based at the local church work closely with mothers and caregivers to help them access life-saving medical support, health screening, hygiene supplies, nutritious food baskets and education.

Your generosity is already making a difference, as Akouvi can testify. "Prior to my registration in the Survival project my life was a mess. I would like to thank God wholeheartedly for the life of the donors. May God continue to bless you a hundred times for what you give to others."



THERE'S MORE TO THE STORY.

Hear first-hand from Akouvi and see the wider impact your support is making by scanning the page on the left with the Compassion UK App or visiting compassionuk.org/akouvi



Scan this page using the Compassion UK App

WRITTEN BY EMILY JOHNSTONE WITH PIYAMARY SHINODA,
ERIC D. LEMA AND YRAHISA MATEO.

Pray

WITH US

A YOUNG BOY FROM CARIGARA IN THE
PHILIPPINES PRAYING AND PRAISING GOD.

PHOTOGRAPHER: EDWIN ESTIOKO

Join with children, churches
and communities around the
world who are praising God
even in the face of adversity.
Pray our Heavenly Father
would strengthen them and
that they would be filled
with hope for the future.

**Now faith is
confidence
in what we
hope for and
assurance
about what we
do not see.**

Hebrews 11:1 NIV

WE PRAY FOR THIS PANDEMIC TO END

The COVID-19 pandemic has devastated
families and communities. And it is the
marginalised and vulnerable who
are suffering the most.

As well as people's health, the illness
has impacted jobs, small businesses,
complicated travel and, in some places,
made food and hygiene items even
more expensive.



10-YEAR-OLD
TUDU FROM
BANGLADESH.



TRANSLATION:
WE ARE
PRAYING FOR
COMPASSION
SUPPORTERS
ALL AROUND
THE WORLD.

Our local church partners around the
world are doing their best to meet the
need in their communities. But more
support is desperately needed.

"As markets are running dry of hygienic
items, the desperation continues to
grow in our village," shares Rakhi,
Compassion Bangladesh Social Worker.

**Please pray more people will be helped
through our COVID-19 Emergency
Appeal. Lift up our church partners as
they care for their communities. Pray
for safety and health as we ask for a
swift end to this pandemic.**

WE THANK GOD WE HAVE NEVER GONE HUNGRY

Paskali and his family live near Moshi,
Tanzania. Like many in his village, Paskali
relies on farming but the lack of rain has
meant his harvest has shrunk every year.

"This year, I don't think my harvest will
be more than one bag," he says. "There
was a time I would harvest 11 bags, but
those days are long gone."

Paskali's daughter Rehema is part of the
local Compassion project and through
her sponsorship the family receives help
with school fees, uniforms and other
school essentials.

"We thank God we have never gone
hungry," declares Paskali. "Whenever we
need food, the [Compassion] project
has always been there to help us."

**Lift up Paskali and his community. Join
him in praising God for the provision of
food and pray for rains for the harvest.**

I HAVE FAITH IN GOD THAT I WILL BE HEALED

Twelve-year-old Taweessin lives in a
remote village in the mountainous
region of north-west Thailand. He
suffers from a rare kidney disease and
frequently endures vomiting, fever, and
excruciating stomach pains.

When his symptoms get really bad,
his body goes into shock requiring
urgent medical support, but the nearest
hospital is two hours away. Thanks
to the generosity of Compassion
supporters and the Kidney Foundation
of Thailand, all Taweessin's medical costs,
transportation and accommodation
costs are covered, lifting a huge burden
from the family.

Despite his daily health struggles,
Taweessin's radiant smile and courageous
faith speaks volumes. "I have faith in
God that I will be healed when I grow
up," he beams.

**Take a moment to stand with
Taweessin and pray for complete
healing in Jesus' name.**



YOUR PRAYERS MATTER.

Sign up for our Prayer and Stories
email to receive the latest prayer
requests from children and
Compassion church partners around
the world. Visit [compassionuk.org/
pray](https://compassionuk.org/pray) or scan the QR code.



Releasing children from poverty
Compassion
in Jesus' name

COMPASSION
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Front cover image: 5-year-old
Adonay and his mum Kirian holding
a food parcel they received from
their local church in El Salvador.

Photographer:
Alejandra Zuniga

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Design and production
The Drummer Agency

Together we **pray** **take action** **rise** as one Global Church



“During the COVID-19 pandemic your commitment continues to empower the local church to do God’s work in their communities. As sponsors, you are being the hands and feet of our Lord Jesus Christ in different communities and I thank you for your partnership in this ministry.”

**TONY BELTRAN,
NATIONAL DIRECTOR FOR THE
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

Discover the difference you are making as we unite as one Church to respond to the impact COVID-19 is having on the most vulnerable children and communities. Scan this page with the Compassion UK App or visit

compassionuk.org/weriseasone

WE RISE AS ONE



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