



ST JAMES'

CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

20th February 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: CAFOD Family Fast Day

This coming Friday, 23rd February, is CAFOD Family Fast Day. As a school, we are encouraging the children to support this by sacrificing something they would normally eat and donate the cost to CAFOD. So for example, going without a breaktime snack and, where possible, donating the money to CAFOD.

Form Tutors will share with the children the story of James, a fisherman from Liberia who is supported by CAFOD. James lives in a poor coastal suburb of Monrovia, Liberia. James told us that when his family had no food, he faced a terrible choice: stay home and stay hungry or put everything on the line to go out onto the water in his small canoe.

Five fishermen a month – many he called 'brothers' – were dying in storms at sea. Just like him, they could not afford the life jackets, compasses, and other equipment they needed to stay safe at sea and get a good catch. When he came back home 16 hours later, aching, exhausted, hungry, he would often be empty handed.

Even for a skilled fisherman like James, making that journey to sea and back alive without the right tools or safety equipment was difficult enough; getting a catch was almost impossible. James' wife Cynthia told us: "Sometimes there wasn't any food at all to eat. Sometimes we hoped that if there was no food in the morning, we would get food in the evening to eat. But when the evening comes, there is no food. My son was five at the time."

It is thanks to support from schools like ours that James now has the equipment he needs to fish safely and sustainably – a compass, life jacket and a GPS tracking system – to find good fishing spots and return home safely. He also has a way of storing fish he catches, so he brings more to shore for Cynthia – his wife and business partner – to sell. You can find out more about James' story at [this link](#).

If you are able, we would ask that you consider making a donation to CAFOD via ParentPay to support our fundraising. Thank you in advance for your support.

Yours faithfully

Mrs C Pickles
Senior Deputy Headteacher