

DEVELOPMENT MATTERS!
GLOBAL ISSUES LINKED TO THE LECTIONARY
October - December 2005

Dear Colleague,

July 2nd was an extraordinary day.

Around the world many millions of people watched the series of Live8 concerts.

In Edinburgh nearly a quarter of a million people took part in the Make Poverty History demonstration. The event attracted unprecedented levels of media coverage - 20 front-page mentions between 2nd and 7th July; 140 articles in major newspapers between 26th June and 10th July; 435 headline and lead paragraph mentions in national newspapers over a three month period. 350 members of the press registered in the media tent on 2nd July; the media team coordinated over 150 media interview requests, including CNN, MTV, STV, Newsnight, BBC News, ITN, Sky News, BBC Radio Five Live and BBC News 24.

Global poverty – and the determination of ordinary people to see it ended – has been exposed and has made headline news. For a brief period it seemed the world was finally waking up to the issues. It is easy to forget the achievements of our campaigning when these positive and peaceful events were so quickly overshadowed by other terrible atrocities.

In this edition of Development Matters I have included three lengthy extracts from speeches made in Edinburgh on July 2nd: one by a Ghanaian Bishop, one by Gordon Brown and the other the response by Daleep Mukarji, the director of Christian Aid. Between them they give an insight into why we need the Make Poverty History campaign, what was announced by the G8 at Gleneagles and the response of a major charity. I hope you find them as interesting and moving as I do – they contain some very quotable quotes. Further information on the details of the G8 communiqué can easily be found on the internet.

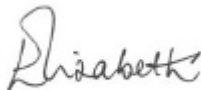
As we enter the final quarter of 2005 and the Make Poverty History campaign, there is still plenty of opportunity for action by both campaigners and decision makers:

- As I write, the UN summit is taking place in New York, when the commitment of world leaders to the Millennium Development Goals is being scrutinised.
- The other key event of 2005 will be the World Trade Organization ministerial in Hong Kong in December, which is meant to complete the Doha ‘Development Round’.

A key task for campaigners will be to highlight the commitment made by the G8 to ‘the right for poorest countries themselves to decide their own trade reforms, rather than be directed from outside’ (from Gordon Brown’s speech).

- In preparation for the WTO meeting, there will be a **mass lobby of Parliament on November 2nd**, when constituents can lobby their MP on trade justice issues at the Houses of Parliament. For further information visit the MPH website; people in Somerset can contact me for details of coaches to the lobby.

With my best wishes,



Elizabeth Perry
World Development Representative, Bath and Wells Diocese
01935 850849

DATE	READINGS	THEMES AND IDEAS IN THE TEXT	CONTEMPORARY PARALLELS, COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS
2nd October	Isaiah 5.1-7 Psalm 80.9-17 Philippians 3.4b-14 Matthew 21.33-46	V7: 'he looked for justice, but saw bloodshed, for righteousness but heard cries of distress.' Paul's desire to know Christ, gain Christ and be found in Christ. Knowing resurrection power and sharing Christ's sufferings are mentioned in the same breath. The tenants seize possession of the vineyard, abusing and killing to keep it. The son's authority is murderously rejected.	The poverty faced by millions in our world is appalling, causing terrible distress (9,10,13). Structural injustice helps drive it (12, 14). The vineyard analogy is not far-fetched; the powerful still seize God's world, with deadly consequences (5,6,7). Yet, many people strive to live Christ where they are and they bring life and hope (1 – 4).
9th October	Isaiah 25.1-9 Psalm 23 Philippians 4.1-9 Matthew 22.1-14	God a refuge to the poor, protection against the ruthless. Our hope and God's promise: a feast for all people and the destruction of death and misery. God with us in the darkest time. Future hope. Individual people matter. Euodia and Syntyche 'struggled in the work of the gospel'. For a third time, a banquet analogy is used. God issues an invitation to a wonderful feast but, otherwise engaged, they 'made light of it' and did not come or deliberately and violently rejected the summons.	Do we show solidarity with the poor and struggle against the ruthless? If God is on the side of the poor, how do we react to Bishop Aboagye-Mensah's speech? (12) Individuals continue to make a difference, bringing hope in darkness and witnessing to the gospel (1,2). v.8 'whatever is true, just, commendable, worthy of praise...' Here are some examples to think about: 3,4,8,13. Point 15 offers a reflection on generosity, provision of food and partnership - and the reluctance of others to take part. Are we living with the vision of a Kingdom feast?
16th October	Isaiah 45.1-7 Psalm 96.1-9[10-13 1 Thess. 1.1-10 Matthew 22.15-22	The treasures of darkness are offered to Cyrus, the outsider. The supremacy of God who brings salvation and judgement. Idols vs God. The faith and action of the Thessalonians are spread abroad - their story told: their turning from idols to serve a living and true God. Honour God, give God what is due to God, reject idolatry.	Turning, conversion, and the <i>choice</i> to honour and serve God run through the NT readings. We need to make conscious choices. What does it mean to reject idolatry, to serve the living God, to give to God what is God's in today's world? Stories of faith and action can be found in examples 1-4, 12, 13 and 15.
23rd October	Leviticus 19.1-2,15-18 Psalm 1 1 Thess. 2.1-8 Matthew 22.34-46	Be holy. Love your neighbour as yourself. Delight in God's law. Paul lived among the Thessalonians in relationship, 'determined to share not only the gospel of God but also our own selves'. The greatest commandments: love God; love your neighbour as yourself.	The command to love our neighbour can seem overwhelming in a world of dire need and information overload, but practical ways of trying to love do exist: by taking action (see 8, 12-14), by giving to charities that work on the ground (1-4), through partnership links, which with two way 'sharing of our own selves', earth loving our neighbour (see 11). How would we feel if we were at the sharp end of the situations in the examples above? What would we want done?
30th October	Micah 3.5-12 Psalm 43 / Psalm 107.1-8 1 Thess. 2.9-13 Matthew 24.1-14	Micah speaks out against (Israel's) leaders who abhor justice and pervert all equity. False prophets say what they are paid to say. A lament of the oppressed / hope of redemption - the hungry fed. Jesus prophesies the destruction of the Temple. Jesus warns that wickedness can cause love to grow cold.	Injustice is still rife, enshrined by global powers as normal practice (see 12,14 and then 5-7). As then, so today, the oppressed lament and redemption is practical (1-4,9,10). Profound changes to the way our world works might be inconceivable, but the current system is failing and there are important signs of progress (see 13 and 14). We need to nurture love when wickedness appears to reign, to endure and proclaim God's good news, and not give in to despair (see 15).
6th November	Amos 5.18-24 Psalm 70 1 Thess. 4.13-18 Matthew 25.1-13	Let justice roll down like waters. A cry for deliverance - pain of being pursued. Hope in the face of death. Always be looking for the Lord and his coming among us. Five got it right - it is possible! They were prepared for the long haul; the bridegroom did eventually come and there <i>was</i> a feast.	God calls his people to worship him by seeking justice. Amos's words echo through the centuries and are as needful now as then: see 8,12 and 13. Endurance and hope - see 15 and 1.

13th Nov- ember Remem- brance Sunday	Zephaniah 1.7,12-18 Psalm 90.1- 12 1 Thess. 5.1-11 Matthew 25.14-30	Life is short. A call to live wisely, aware that our true dwelling place is God. Live as children of light, clothed in faith, love and hope. A less familiar interpretation of the Matthew passage is that it is not a parable of using gifts well, but a straight forward description of the way the world is: the rich get richer and those who have nothing are powerless: even what they have is taken away*.	In our remembrance, perhaps we can also think about the arms trade and our priorities (see 5, 6), the causes of war and how we can work for peace. Again and again, the Bible calls us to live in the light of our faith, in the conviction of who God is, and engaged with our physical, every day world. What does it mean to live as children of light? *For this interpretation, see Peter B Price, Living Faith in the World, New Way Publications, p60. It is borne out by the facts: see 12,14.
20th Nov- ember Christ the King	Ezekiel 34.11- 16,20-24 Psalm 95.1- 7 Ephesians 1.15-23 Matthew 25.31-46	God the shepherd will seek the lost, the hurt and the weak and feed them with justice. Secure in the assurance of being 'the sheep of his hand', the psalmist joyfully praises God. Christ is above all other rule, power and dominion. Paul prays for the Ephesians that they may know hope, their rich inheritance and God's power. 'I was hungry, thirsty, a stranger, naked, sick, in prison and you....' Compassion, action.	The shepherd king is very different from the rulers of the world. See 5, 7, 12-15. God seeks the lost and the weak and finds the sheep of his kingdom among them. How do we respond to the phrase '[God] will feed them with justice' ? God's reign isn't necessarily obvious; the sheep seem surprised that their small, secret actions were kingdom stuff. Countless examples abound today. A small selection is found in 1-4 and 15.
27th Nov- ember Advent Sunday [World AIDS Day – Dec 1st]	Isaiah 64.1- 9 Psalm 80.1- 8,18-20 1 Cor.1.3-9 Mark 13.24- 37	A cry for God to come down to those who feel bereft, abandoned, reviled, rejected by God and meet with those who persist in doing right. You have fed them with the bread of tears - come and save us. A heartfelt prayer for God to save his people from their misery. Grace and peace from God. Waiting, strengthened by Christ. Jesus will return; the need to live in that knowledge.	'Come and save us'. AIDS is an enormous problem, overwhelming people already suffering acute poverty (2). Rejection is both the feeling and reality of many with HIV/AIDS (1). Tears (10), hardship (1,2) and a vicious circle of poverty and AIDS is the lot of many of God's people today. We can act to break that cycle by changing the world's priorities (5,6), working for poverty eradication (12-14); we can support what is happening on the ground; we can hear stories of those who live with HIV/AIDS and be touched by God.
4th Dec- ember	Isaiah 40.1- 11 Psalm 85.1- 2,8- 13 2 Peter 8- 15a Mark 1.1-8	The coming Lord will bring sweeping, dramatic changes, but he is also tender, like a shepherd. The Lord speaks <i>peace</i> to his people; intimate images of right relationships. Righteousness <i>precedes</i> the Lord's coming. Live in the knowledge of a future reality where 'righteousness is at home'. John prepares the way for Jesus, proclaiming a baptism of repentance (turning).	The big scene, not just individuals' righteousness, reveal God. These dramatic images mirror John's uncompromising call for repentance, a thorough change of perspective and way of living. But the imagery is not cold and severe but warm and beautiful. How do we work out these ideas in the light of the current world scene? See 5-8, 12-15.
11th Dec- ember	Isaiah 61.1- 4,8- 11 Psalm 126 or Magnificat 1 Thess. 5.16-24 John 1.6- 8,19-28	The Jubilee passage and mandate. 'I the Lord love justice, I hate robbery & wrongdoing'. Not only personal salvation but redemption for all. Both the psalm and magnificat talk of changed fortunes: laughter and joy for those who weep... 'Hold fast to what is good. Shun every form of evil.' Test everything. The need for discernment, to make choices and to <i>think</i> . John comes as a witness to the light.	God's purpose and heart are clear. Justice is paramount, robbery is wrong, poverty is oppressive, chains are to be broken (see 12, 14). Redemption involves feeding the hungry, meeting physical needs (1-4, 9). God's reign turns the way the world is upside down (15). But it involves effort, thought and action (8,13). The light of Christ still shines in the darkness.
18 th Dec- ember	2 Samuel 7.1- 11,16 Magnificat or Psalm 89.1-4, 19-26 Romans 16.25-27 Luke 1.26- 38	God chose an ordinary man of faith to play an extraordinary role in God's story of salvation. God of reverses and surprises. The mystery of God revealed in Jesus 'that all nations might believe'. The angel tells Mary of the glorious things which will come from her bearing God's son. Mary's immediate response is eminently practical and down to earth ('how?!'). The magnificat only comes later.	God still chooses and uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things (see 1,2). Do we believe that things can change for the better? (3,4). Can such stories of hope build our faith? In the same way, change can also come at the global level (see 8,12-15). Practicalities matter. Real people doing real things make a real difference in the here and now - and they <i>also</i> have a deeper significance as part of God's ongoing story of redemption.
25th Dec- ember	Options: Isaiah 52.7- 10 Psalm 98 Hebrews 1.1-12 John 1.1-14	Carriers of peace, good news and salvation bring joy. Redemption. Joy, singing, celebration. God will be fair. Jesus shows us God's true nature: the exact imprint of God's very being. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness did not understand it. The word became flesh and lived among us, full of grace and truth.	The wonder of God living with and among us, revealing God's real nature – passionate, caring, joyful, bringing good news and compassion. Redemption is for <i>this</i> world. What is our role as ordinary individuals in the current chapter of God's story of good news? You might find 3,4 and parts of 13 useful today. Happy Christmas!

1. Circles of Hope

At the former headquarters of the African National Congress in Lusaka, I met Joy Lubinga, a woman who suits her name. Joy is the dynamic force behind Circles of Hope, a project set up by the Council of Churches in Zambia (CCZ) which works to break the stigma and silence surrounding HIV/AIDS in the church. Joy, who is an administrative assistant in the HIV/AIDS department of CCZ, was asked to co-ordinate the project because of her own experience.

'It was not easy to face the fact that sooner or later I'll die because I'm infected with a disease that has no cure. However, one day I had to gain courage and went for the test and tested HIV positive'. Joy is unusual in her openness about her status. 'I've had no problems with my workmates; they've been supportive and encouraging. I think they understand these issues well,' Joy says. Her family too have been supportive. The worst experience though was at church where she could hear gossip, and some people did not want her to take up certain positions because she was HIV positive. 'However, other church members were very supportive and prayed for me'. Joy explained that she decided to publicly disclose her status because she wanted to play a role in breaking the silence on HIV/AIDS, especially in the church.

'In the Church there was a lot of silence, discrimination and stigma and it was thought that if people who are infected come out and speak about it in the church we shall break the silence, we shall break the shame and we shall break the stigma. People are ashamed of talking about HIV because we have linked HIV to promiscuity. So we are saying, 'No, the HIV has come, it doesn't matter how you have got it, let us stand up and have hope' - because we are saying testing HIV positive is not the end of the road.'

Joy now leads teams of HIV positive people who visit churches and talk about their status and experiences. As they do this more people are able to gain the courage to go for testing and many have joined Circles of Hope. After just one year there are 16 groups and their members receive training so that they can help their communities. So far 20 people had been trained as psycho-social counsellors, another twenty trained in nutrition and twenty in income-generating activities. Many HIV positive people lose their jobs because of the discrimination they face – hence the need for the project to confront the stigma.

Joy proudly showed me around the site which is now owned by CCZ and which was about to enter a new phase of life as an HIV testing centre and clinic. The finishing touches were being made to rooms which would serve for counselling, testing and training courses. I was also able to meet several of the people who are now part of Circles of Hope:

Bwalya is 15 years old. She found out her HIV+ status in November last year when she went for testing because she kept getting sick. Bwalya told me she has always been sick from birth. Both of her parents are dead and Bwalya lives with her grandmother. Bwalya came into contact with Auntie Joy and the Circles of Hope when they visited her church and she heard their testimony. *'I feel happy because they have helped me'*, she said. *'We meet every Friday evening to pray and share.'*

Esther Kayumbo is 29 years old. She has had symptoms since she was 14 years old, when her parents forced her into marriage. Within 2 weeks Esther had syphilis and gonorrhoea. She ran away to her family – but they sent her back to her husband. Eventually Esther stole some money and ran away to relatives on her father's side. A year or so later, when she was 15, she returned to Lusaka where her mother eventually accepted her back. Esther is now divorced but after continued sickness discovered she was HIV positive 3 years ago. Esther is a most beautiful, positive and radiant woman. I would never have guessed her horrendous past from meeting her had she not chosen to tell me her story.

Bridget is 25 years old and single. She was previously in a long-term relationship with a partner who became unwell. He refused to be tested for HIV and died in October last year. Bridget subsequently had the test and found out she was positive. She told me she prayed about the result and was able to accept it. Bridget was directed to the anti-retroviral therapy department where she bumped into Bwalya, who introduced her to Auntie Joy. Since then Bridget has had training to become a psycho-social counsellor.

Renos Mwansa knows all about rejection and stigma. Renos first became sick in 1996, and became so ill he lost his job. Then in 1998 his wife became ill, showing severe psychiatric symptoms and died in 2000. On the day of her funeral, her relatives stripped all the belongings from the house, leaving Renos with nothing, but with the children to look after. Renos decided to take his children to his sister, but then he became ill again and was in and out of hospital for a period, during which he lost his sight in one eye. When he got out of hospital he discovered his brothers had taken his remaining possessions – because they had expected him to die. His relations thought he had come back to give them more problems so Renos went to stay with a friend for a time before deciding to return to Lusaka where once again he stayed with one of his sisters who is a nun. However, his stigma stayed with him as he was given a separate set of plates and a separate room in which to stay. His sister was however able to get Renos access to anti-retrovirals and fluconazole – a normally very expensive drug combination. Renos's sister was happy to look after him – until he decided he wanted to disclose his status, at which point she no longer wanted to support him. Renos is now with Circles of Hope – and, needless to say, is very grateful for the acceptance he has at last found.

All the people I met called Joy 'Auntie Joy' or 'Mama Joy'. Having that common experience and being able to share it is clearly hugely important to the people involved. They have faced exclusion and discrimination in their own churches and families, so this is like a new family. The group are close to one another and happy to be together. They said how they feel happy when they are together (they often meet at Joy's house on a Friday evening) – and how these times are easy, but that it is hard when they are on their own.

2. Family Health Trust Home-Based Care

On a hot morning in April I met some memorable women whose lives are woven together in a web of care and support. They are all care givers or recipients of a home-based care programme for people living with HIV/AIDS run by the Family Health Trust, a Christian Aid partner in Zambia. I first met Anne Kapaya, who is one of the paid nurse counsellors of FHT and who covers the Kawata District of Lusaka. She took me to Bauleni compound where we met Anna Zulu, one of the volunteer care givers and who co-ordinates the work of other carers in Bauleni. Together we went to visit two of Anne and Anna's clients, Stella and Rosa, both of whom have AIDS and need extra help.

In Stella's home, Anne attended to Stella's medical needs while Stella told me about her life and what the home-based care means to her. *'I don't know what I would have done without the help', she says, 'They have strengthened me.'*

Stella has been a widow for 11 years. She feels she probably became infected through her late husband who had another woman. Stella receives medical and nursing care from the home based care programme, medicines, nutritional supplements and also help with cooking and cleaning now she is sicker.

Stella's household comprises 4 adults, including Stella and another older lady sick with AIDS, and 15 children. Six are Stella's grandchildren and some the grandchildren of the other sick woman. But others are orphans for whom these adults are the nearest living relatives. I was told that most of the children are themselves HIV-positive.

Asked what changes she would like to see, Stella expressed the hope that people would have access to drugs and food supplements, because the main problem was poverty and not having access to enough food. She also spoke of the need of HIV-positive people to know how to look after themselves. She had just attended a hygiene and nutrition symposium held at Holy Cross Cathedral by Home Based Care for people with HIV/AIDS and had benefited from it.

A short distance away lives Rosa Tembo and her 83 year old mother, Michaela. Rosa also has AIDS and struggles with ill-health. *'What a shame my mother isn't here', she said, 'she's out collecting water'.* In the corner of the dark room that is Rosa and Michaela's home stood a pile of logs Michaela had chopped earlier. A few minutes later Rosa's mother arrived back, a huge water container on her head, another by her side. Clearly, this diminutive woman was built of iron. Rosa and her mother are desperately poor. I was told they had no other support apart from what the home-based care programme provides and that their only other source of food help had stopped recently when an EU-funded nutrition programme had ended.

Anne and Anna are both remarkable women – and there are many more like them. Thousands of people volunteer to become carers, receiving basic training from the home based care project and then taking responsibility for a particular area of the compound and staying with the same clients to help build relationships and continuity. So many people see the need and want to respond that the five day training programmes run almost continuously.

Back at the voluntary testing and counselling centre at the University Teaching Hospital (another aspect of Anne's work), Anne told me about the burn out experienced by the carers. It is so hard to constantly go through the process of making friends with clients, seeing them struggle with insufficient food, and in time inevitably dying and the toll of constant funerals. *'Clients and carers become friends and part of your family for 2 or 3 years but then die'.*

3. Vegetable garden flourishes in drought-stricken area

The Matobo district in the southern part of Zimbabwe has suffered from years of drought and food shortages. But in Silonkwe village, Christian Aid partner, the Dabane Trust, has helped villagers to build a water pump, making sure their vegetable garden provides them with food and an income throughout the year.

Ever since Christian Aid partner Dabane Trust helped villagers to build a pump system, their harvest no longer depends on the unpredictable rains. Sibonakaliso Dube is one of the fourteen gardeners. She explains that the nearby river is often dry, and local people used to have to dig deep holes in the riverbed to reach water. Now water can be pumped directly to the village garden.

'We never knew that you could grow vegetables all year round,' she says, 'Now there's always something in the garden.'

As well as putting onions, green leafy vegetables (covo and rape), carrots and tomatoes on the menu all year round, the pump system has also enabled the villagers to grow an extra maize crop.

'I can even buy bread now,' says Sibonakaliso, 'But in the past that was considered such a luxury. We eat onions and tomatoes in our sauce just like people do who live in town.'

For Sibonakaliso and her family the garden is providing much more than just regular meals. The money she has earned by selling food has paid for her children to go to school. She's also been able to afford a kitchen and new roofing for her home. The garden's name, Sizanani, means 'help each other'. Like all projects that Dabane Trust supports, the water pump system was built by local people working together. *'We dug the sand out of the river and made trenches for the pipes,' explains Sibonakaliso, 'It was very hard work but we were all determined.'*

After helping to build the pump, Dabane Trust provided practical training in skills like crop rotation food preservation and business management. They also taught the gardeners how to make sturdy wire fencing, as their wooden garden fence was often destroyed by animals.

Seeing the success of Sizanani, other nearby villages are interested in setting up similar schemes. *'People come and visit us to hear more about the project and how we work together,' Sibonakaliso explains, 'We are a good example of what people can achieve if they put their mind to it.'*

Over the coming year, Dabane Trust will be helping six more communities to set up pumps and irrigation systems for their gardens and more families will reap the benefits.

4. Lorenzo's laughter

The typical sounds of the streets at night in Guatemala City echo the fear that is the product of an increasingly violent society, with 408 reported murders of children and youth in the first ten months of 2002, a 27% increase (Unicef) – and a figure that is still rising.

So the Street Team were surprised this March by the sound of innocent raucous laughter, from a four-year-old little boy, who appeared dressed in a huge borrowed overcoat to protect him from the evening chill. Thrilled by the fun of the Diablo game that Tim, a gap year student, was demonstrating, Lorenzo was a captive audience for the street team who were quickly able to discover his plight and help him.

Lorenzo, like so many children in Guatemala, had fled an increasingly angry home environment, accompanying his brother who now lived on the streets. This was a very fortunate encounter, as the longer children spend time surviving rough on the streets, the more the harsh reality of street life affects them and robs them of their childhood. This 'Early Encounter' with Lorenzo meant that he could come directly into our care, whilst the social worker checked out the boy's family situation and sorted out the legal issues.

We met Lorenzo the day he became homeless and his laughter was never silenced by the fear of the streets.

This story comes from the Toybox Charity, which supports a comprehensive rescue and rehabilitation programme for street children in Guatemala. For more invitation visit www.toybox.org or phone 01494 432591.

Priorities of the powerful

5. 'Nowhere is the cowardice and hypocrisy of international affairs more in evidence than with the arms trade. As the economist Jeffrey Sachs – no enemy of the free market, he – wrote recently, the US will this year spend \$500 billion on its armed forces. US aid to Africa stands at only \$3billion, or two days of the annual military budget. Attempts to tighten anti-corruption rules in the arms trade were watered down in the UK. Weapons manufacturers offer kickbacks as a matter of routine; the poorer the recipient country the more it is awash with arms; the greater the number of arms, the less stable the regime; the less stable the regime, the less likely it is to qualify for debt relief. It does not take a genius to spot the pernicious circle.' Extract from the leader article in the *Newstatesman*, 4th July 2005.

6.

- The UK's aid to Africa is about one fortieth of what it spends on defence.
- The five permanent members of the UN Security Council - the US, UK, France, Russia and China – are responsible for 88% of the world's reported conventional arms exports.
- In 2004, the US alone accounted for 47% of global defence spending.
- The UK is the world's second largest arms exporter. The UK defence industry employs 345,000 people, providing around 3% of manufacturing output.
- In 2004, the UK sold arms to 87 countries, including Algeria, Iraq, Angola, Israel and Indonesia

From The G2graphic on the arms trade, the *Guardian*, 12/09/05.

Quotes and Reflections

7. 'The G8 makes me think of what we Igbo call *'nkali'*, which translates loosely as 'being greater than another': the *nkali* of eight men. Even the magnanimity they are being asked to show is laced with condescension. Africa is the junior brother. A whole continent in the hands of eight men. There is something both enviable and vulgar about this power and I fantasise about sitting at a table with a Zimbabwean and a Ghanaian to decide the economic fate of America and Europe.' From the diary of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Newstatesman*, July 4th 2005.

8. *The church of Jesus Christ is not called to be a bastion of caution and moderation. The church should challenge, inspire and motivate people. It has a message of the cross that inspires us to make sacrifices for justice and liberation. It has a message of hope that challenges us to wake up and act with confidence. The Church must preach this message not only in words and sermons and statements but also through its actions, programmes, campaigns and divine services.* From the Kairos Document, 1985. A Theological Comment on the Political Crisis in South Africa.

9. 'The shopping centre glistens, bright neon lights enticing - you can see it from my house where I'm waiting for the electricity to be connected. The shopping centre shines in the darkness - a beacon of materialism that kicks me in the face'. Kwa Zulu, Natal, 2000, CAFOD.

10. 'We are ready to go to a funeral at any time. If you look in my office you will find a *chitenge* (skirt wrap). If I hear of a funeral, I will go there at the lunch hour to pay my condolences or after 1700 hours. You could be at 5 funerals in a day, but you can't cope, you can't cope with that. So we are always ready to console with friends and family members. It is really sad.' Prisca Chitomfwa, Anti-AIDS project manager, Family Health Trust, Zambia.

11. Dear Friends,

I just heard today of the blasts in London. It is really inhumane to have many people being killed like that. We are praying for you so that by the grace of God he may comfort you and all families affected by these blasts. My condolence to all brothers and sister in London and may the souls of those died in the blasts rest in peace.

Fr. Katete Jackson Jones, Parish Priest, Livingstone, Zambia

Sent July 7th 2005

12. Speech made by the Reverend Dr Robert Aboagye-Mensah, head of the Methodist Church in Ghana, in the presence of Gordon Brown at the Assembly Hall, Edinburgh, July 2nd 2005.

I am honoured to be here with you and to have the opportunity to share my thoughts with you on this momentous day.

Just three months ago I preached at the start of the Global Week of Action on trade in Ghana. We were campaigning together with many around the world who were suffering as a result of trade.

That morning I spoke from the passage in the bible where Jesus says he had come to set the poor free. It was a call for social liberation, for loosing the bonds that bind people's lives and prevent them realising the life that God intended for us all.

I have just come from the Methodist conference where I saw for the first time the advert that has been played on your televisions and in some of your cinemas. A click of the fingers signalling the death of a child. Every three seconds.

When this is happening in our world we must do something, we can not sit aside and do nothing.

Poverty anywhere is not acceptable – whether that person is in Africa, Asia, in the America's or in Europe we should feel their poverty as if it were our own brother or sister. We are all part of one family. What has always been true, is especially evident today, as technology has brought us into ever closer contact with each other.

Yet there is a danger that instead of empathy and compassion, people in developed countries increasingly fear the poor. They fear the impact that poor people will have on jobs, on your economies, on security. We fear the consequences of our own indifference.

I hope Make Poverty History is about not running away, not retreating – but facing the challenge of global poverty with a determination to recognise the human being in each of us. Instead of being paralysed by fear, we have to think in terms of mutual benefit. When we see the indignity that poverty creates, as a family we should feel that indignity as if it was visited on us.

Making poverty history will enhance the dignity of all of us. This is our challenge, the question is how do we respond.

Make poverty history calls us to demand trade justice, drop the debt and give more and better aid.

The Global Week of Action for trade justice in Ghana called for a new fairer international trade system that would enable countries such as mine to use the power of trade to help us grow and fight poverty. Even in something as simple as rice we are losing out to other countries. In the North of Ghana we have a region that has produced rice for many years. We like to eat rice maybe three or four times a day, yet the majority of the rice that we eat does not come from Ghana. Instead it comes from the United States and Asia. This is not because we cannot grow our own rice, but because **we can't compete against the mass produced, subsidised rice from other countries.** Our farmers can not hope to launch the advertising campaigns that we see on televisions and bill boards proclaiming the benefits of buying American rice. Despite the thousands of miles that that rice has travelled it is still cheaper than our locally grown harvest.

As a result farmers in Ghana are left with unsold rice stacked in their stores. Their children are taken out of school – not because of fees – but because even the cost of uniforms becomes too much for the family. People don't eat properly, they fall ill but don't go to the hospital because they are unable to cover the cost.

The story is one that is repeated in different industries across the continent. Just the other week textile workers were demonstrating as their industry gradually collapsed under the pressure of competition with imports.

The loss of jobs is felt far beyond the workforce who were once employed there. In Ghana when people lose their jobs they can not turn to a welfare state, instead they turn to their extended family. The generosity of the family stretches already meagre resources and each member of their family makes sacrifices to support the others.

Like most countries in Africa, Ghana does not have the strength to compete with countries that are so much more economically developed than ours. It is – to use a biblical analogy – like David facing Goliath with all the power, strength that Goliath brought against David. On the face of it, it is a losing battle. As a result the continent of Africa now only accounts for less than 2% of world trade. Our trade with our African neighbours is frustrated by the lack of transport between our countries. We produce raw materials. We don't have the industries that produce the finished products that bring the greatest wealth. Despite forty or more years of independence we are still tied to systems of trade that are in many ways still colonial.

A few years ago I said to a visiting Christian Aid staff member that **trade between my country and yours was like a giraffe and an antelope eating the leaves from the top of a tree. The ground beneath their feet may be level but the contest will still not be fair. Inequality in the world today is so great that free trade between us is such an unequal contest we can not hope to succeed.**

If Africa is to make trade work for our development then **we need the flexibility to choose the policies that will work for our situation.** I saw a magnificent mural on the side of St John's church as we made our way on the march this afternoon. A strong African but standing with his hands tied. I ask - **do not tie our hands together and stop us fighting poverty.**

I do believe that trade is what will ultimately enable us to climb out of poverty. But it is absolutely right to look at these issues of trade, debt and aid together. If we really want to make a difference demand trade justice, demand debt cancellation and demand more and better aid.

I am encouraged by the focus on more and better aid. In Ghana we have in the past received aid in the form of rice. Rice that, when it went on the market, meant that our local farmers could not sell their crops and as a result lost their incomes. Aid such as this is aid that cripples. But in the same way - **aid that requires us to open our markets before we are able to compete, is like a nourishing meal laced with poison. How can it be right to give us aid, but in the same action stop us earning a livelihood?**

The same questions must also be asked about debt cancellation. People in Ghana have welcomed the debt cancellation that the country has received. It is a burden that has been lifted from our people. It will give the government money to invest in health care schemes that will begin to spread the benefits of health care to people who previously would have gone without. There are new proposals to provide food for children at primary school. Aiming to ensure that they will receive at least one decent meal a day. But if debts are cancelled but we are still left crippled by unfair trade then what is our future? Will we find ourselves burdened by new debts in five or ten year's time? Debt cancellation is a noble cause to fight for – but do not stop there, ask what will be expected in return. An obligation to use the money well – to ensure the benefits are realised by people who need support is only right. **But it is not right to tell us how to run our country, where to spend every dollar.**

Poverty is a curse that kills the spirit. When we were young we watched our parents building structures in our villages. Not out of stone – but sturdy structures that offered shelter, gave us a place to store our crops. But now when we go back we see these structures collapsing with age, but with nothing being built in their place. There was at that time real optimism – we must find a way to bring that optimism back. It is only with hope that we can build.

I spoke earlier of the story of David and Goliath. A seemingly impossible fight. But just as David's faith gave him the strength to succeed **I believe we too can succeed in our struggle. Speaking as a Christian I believe that we are God's instruments to bring about change. Being involved in social and political change is part of the gospel we proclaim.**

I am inspired by history – in 2007 we will mark the bicentenary of the abolition of slavery. The end of an exploitative trade that degraded Africa and all the countries that took part in it. Let us join together as the abolitionists joined together with the enslaved people to fight against the injustice that we see in our world today. It can happen. We can make a difference. If we abhor the pain and suffering of poverty then gathering together as a world of nations we can make history.

I hope that you have had a good day today – that you have enjoyed the exhilaration of being with so many people fighting for a cause together. I hope that tomorrow we will wake up to see reports in the newspapers and on the television. I hope that when the G8 meet later this week they will hear our calls for justice and their policies will change.

But I call on you to continue in your struggle. Do not rest – remember that today is about making poverty history. We will know that we will have made an impact when each African child can grow up with the opportunities and the life that they deserve.

And finally I want to give my message to the G8:

Millions of lives lie in your hands. You are in a truly privileged position – your actions can make such an enormous difference not just to the millions who live in poverty, but also to the state of this world – the state of the human family. **To waste such an opportunity would be a sin, to seize it with both hands would be a truly blessed act...**

13. Extracts from a speech by Gordon Brown, Chancellor of the Exchequer, 2 July 2005, Edinburgh

When today 30,000 children will die unnecessarily - each one a life a precious life destroyed; when on Monday 110 million children cannot go to school because they have no school to go to:

- **you are right today to demand 100 per cent debt relief,**
- **you are right today to demand a doubling of aid,**
- **you are right to demand trade justice,**
- **you are right to say that instead of being impoverished Africa's poorest should be empowered.**

And in all humility we who have some responsibilities say to you we accept that it is our duty to answer your call for action.

And let me say it is because of your efforts and your demand that the rich countries meet their obligations to the poor, that I can tell you now that we have already decided that in this year, 2005, 18 of the poorest countries of the world – then 28 and then 38 – will for the first time have 100 per cent of their debts written off: \$40 billion of debt written off immediately. A historic act that means that instead of repaying debt these countries will be able to pay for health care, education and safe water for their people.

And because of your efforts, because you have exposed the fact that the world's Millennium Goals to halve poverty, schooling for all, will not be met as promised in 2015, but not for one hundred years – already in advance of Gleneagles, by your efforts, European Union countries have agreed that European aid will double from \$40 billion last year to, by 2010, \$80 billion. And of that \$40 billion we will ensure for Africa's poorest \$25 billion a year more.

When people say debt relief and aid doesn't work - let us tell them what really doesn't work is doing nothing.

As a result of aid there are already 4 million more children at school in Uganda, 1 million more in Kenya, another 1 million more in Tanzania and Mozambique, **don't let anyone tell you that today's march, this month's demonstration, this year's crusade isn't making a difference.**

And it is because of your moral outrage against poverty and because you know that Africa – the cradle of the human race, the centre of the world – has today become the test of all the world's humanity, that thirty years after the churches made the demand that nations act and set a target for 0.7 per cent of their income devoted to aid, one by one European countries have joined together to set a timetable for 0.7 per cent.

And it is because of your plea that fundamental to justice is trade justice that Finance ministers also agreed only three weeks ago to demand the right for poorest countries themselves to decide their own trade reforms, rather than be directed from outside, and demanded for the first time a timetable for the end of export subsidies.

And I am determined that the road to the WTO agreement in Hong Kong be the road to trade justice for the poorest of the world.

And while we have come a long way we know we have still a long way to go.

So let us send this message from this great hall, from which for centuries rulers have been called to account to the people. That **as long as there is poverty, deprivation and preventable diseases, our work is not done. As long as there is powerlessness, hopelessness, and injustice, our work has only just begun.**

And why? Because **we know that our destinies are linked across the world.** Why? Because we now know the fortunes of the richest people in the richest country are bound inextricably to the fate of the poorest people in the poorest country of the world. And in John F Kennedy's words **if we cannot help the many who are poor, we cannot save the few who are rich.** Because we know from the impact of global trade and the threat of global terrorism that across the continents and around the globe we depend upon each other, each of us stands in Martin Luther King's words in an inescapable network of mutuality, together woven into a single garment of destiny.

14. Extracts from a speech made by Dr Daleep Mukarji, Director of Christian Aid at the Assembly Hall, Edinburgh, July 2nd 2005.

On aid, it is a disgrace that, as an international community, we still fall so far short of the UN agreed target of giving 0.7% of national income. We welcome the fact that under the chancellor the UK has doubled aid and that we now have a timetable to meet the 0.7% target by 2013. However compared to the size of our economy the UK is still only the 11th biggest aid giver from a list of 23 rich countries. Therefore we will continue to press the chancellor for a deadline of 2010. Given the HIV/Aids crisis devastating the lives of so many across the developing world there is a particular need for a firm commitment to fund universal care and treatment for those living with HIV by 2010. We believe this is the very least that rich and developed countries such as ours should be prepared to do.

On debt, again we welcome the significant progress that the chancellor has announced. The fact that 18 countries will now receive significantly more debt cancellation is excellent news. **Contrary to what the naysayers foretold we know that this debt cancellation does make a real difference to poor people's lives. Across the developing world there are children who are now receiving an education as a result of debt cancellation, there are families who have access to safe drinking water thanks to debt cancellation, there are lives that will be lived because children did not die for lack of health care.**

But we must be clear that this is not the 100% debt cancellation that we were calling for in Birmingham. The fact is that we are still calculating how much debt to cancel according to economic equations that do not take account of the level of poverty and human need in each country. If we were to take that step – several more countries would be eligible for debt cancellation and millions more would benefit. Rich countries also continue to deny the fact that many of these debts are themselves illegitimate. In some of the world's poorest countries today's populations are paying the debts incurred as a result of loans given to dictators in the 1980s. In the business world the lender would have to take responsibility for such bad loans – but not in this case – even though the burden and pain is visited on those that can least bear it.

But it is not just a question of numbers – quantity over quality. Christian Aid is also very clear that we are concerned about how that debt cancellation and aid are delivered. The scandal is that the enormous benefit that aid and debt cancellation can bring poor people is being undermined by the strings that are attached to many aid and debt relief programmes. In return for aid and debt cancellation, poor countries are too often required

- To open their markets exposing vulnerable producers to the full force of international competition,
- to cut vital support for farmers and industries leaving them unable to develop and grow
- to privatise services and industries when there is little or no developmental argument for doing so.

At one level there is a very simple self interest argument as to why this must stop. It is a shocking waste of resources. Christian Aid's own research has shown that **these liberalisation policies have cost Africa alone \$272 billion – enough to have paid off Africa's debt, to have provided primary education for all and to have immunised all her children from infectious diseases.** The very reason that Africa is on the agenda of the G8 this week is recognition of the lack of economic progress on that continent for the last twenty years. If these programmes continue to come with these 'free trade' or liberalisation conditions attached then we are undermining the very benefits that we are seeking to deliver. It is not good use of our aid money – but more importantly it has a devastating impact on the poor. Farmers who have left their farms, people who worked in industries who have lost their jobs, lives destroyed and opportunities lost.

In Ghana Christian Aid staff met Khofi – a man who used to farm his own land, but now works in a quarry breaking stones for twelve hours a day. He lost his farm when free trade policies imposed on Ghana by the IMF meant that there was no longer a market for his produce. In Haiti Christian Aid staff met Muracin – another farmer this time from Haiti who sold his farm when the local market was opened to imports. With the money he received Muracin bought a place on an illegal crossing to the United States. The boat never made it – it drifted for some days before being washed up again in Haiti. But, prospects in Haiti are so bad, that he says given the chance he would do it all again.

These are the stories we hear time and again when we meet with communities in the countries where Christian Aid works. We can not say that we are supporting poverty reduction if these practices persist. So we will continue to campaign on the conditions that are attached to aid and debt – ensuring that these do not harm the very people we are aiming to help.

Trade is the final – but for Christian Aid - the most important part of the package. There is almost universal agreement that ultimately it is only when trade works for poor people that poor countries will begin to experience a sustainable exit from poverty – and yet it is in this area that **we pursue the most hypocritical practices.** Therefore we are also calling for fundamental reform of the way that international trade is governed. We are calling for the reform of rich countries subsidies that lead to the dumping of cheap products on poor countries' markets. There is absolutely no justification for our continuing to harm some of the world's poorest farmers in this way. Export subsidies – the most damaging form of subsidies should be banned immediately.

But this is not enough in itself. The world's poorest countries will not reap the largest benefits from a reform of rich countries' subsidies. These countries in particular also need the right to protect vulnerable producers and support new sectors so that they can manage their development and fight poverty at the same time. Let me be clear we are not calling for government intervention in every aspect of the economy. We are calling for poor countries to be able to adopt a pragmatic mixture of openness and protection, of free market economics and intervention.

Returning from our Birmingham to Gleneagles Make Poverty History Debt March (sponsored by Jubilee Debt Campaign) we all waited eagerly to hear Tony Blair's statement from the summit. Would the efforts of so many people in so many different ways lead to real progress on tackling the scandal of global poverty?

Well, Blair's statement suggests that real progress has been made which, if the proposals are implemented, will prevent the unnecessary deaths of millions of people. This is something we should acknowledge and celebrate. At the same time **there is real frustration that these concessions to poor countries have had to be wrung out of the world's richest countries after so many years of struggle.** Moreover, even now, the proposals fall short of what is needed to truly make poverty history. There is a four year delay on the increase in aid. The debt cancellation programme still doesn't extend to all the poor countries who need it and too many conditions remain attached. An end to rich country export subsidies still has no fixed date.

Why is it so hard to get the world's richest to act decisively in favour of the world's poorest? It is almost as if the G8 and the other organs of global economic power, like the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO are guided by a "spirit of meanness", **a deep seated reluctance to release their grip on accumulated wealth and power.** I am struck by this "spirit of meanness" precisely because on the Make Poverty History Debt March we encountered an entirely different spirit amongst so many people as we walked to Gleneagles – a "spirit of generosity".

On so many occasions we were overcome by an almost reckless generosity coming, very often, from complete strangers in the street. People would regularly offer us bottles of water or juice from their car or shopping bag, sometimes whole boxes of drink. At times the support car was almost overloaded with the bottles and cartons we received. We were spontaneously given a big box of chocolates by one passer by and another insisted on giving us £20 to cover the cost of blister treatments we were buying in Boots. On one occasion I went into a shop to buy safety pins for our banners and the shop keeper refused to take any money and wouldn't let me leave the shop until I had accepted a bottle of ginger beer from her! There were many other similar incidences.

We also experienced this generosity in the churches where we stayed. There were offers of food at places where we had expected to be cooking for ourselves, offers of showers, clothes washing, even a doctor and a physiotherapist from one church found time to come and treat our walking injuries, aches and pains.

This overflowing generosity stands in marked contrast to the "spirit of meanness" which appears to guide the actions and decisions of the G8. I believe it reflects an alternative economic model which so often remains hidden because it takes place at a grass roots, informal level. There is something natural and fully human about it. It is the economics of generosity and plenty which Jesus speaks of and witnesses to – water into gallons of wine, the good seed which produces a staggering harvest, the twelve baskets full of leftovers at the feeding of the five thousand, the disciples who, in giving all away, receive a hundredfold in this age of houses, family and fields. **This is the economics of the kingdom and until this "spirit of generosity" triumphs over the "spirit of meanness" we will always have work to do.**

And this brings me to my second reflection upon the march. In one sense it was just that – a march, a physical journey, step by step, from Birmingham to Gleneagles. But the walkers were involved in a longer journey too. Not just Bob Geldof's "long march to justice" which continues on beyond Gleneagles but also, as Christians (all but one of the core **walkers were active Christians from a variety of denominations**) we march as pilgrims on the journey to the promised land.

I think this fact means that Christians have a particular contribution to make in the world of campaigning and the struggle for peace and justice. We are never satisfied. **It is never enough for us until "justice flows like a stream and righteousness like a river that never runs dry", until the blind recover their sight, the oppressed go free and the dead are raised to new life.**

This attitude is extremely annoying to the G8 leaders and others who operate in the world of *realpolitik*. At the post G8 summit press conference Tony Blair was visibly angry with those whom he felt were always saying "it is not enough", wrongly claiming that they were often the ones who were not prepared to get their hands dirty. It is the aid agencies, the NGOs, the faith communities with their direct links to poor country communities who precisely do get their hands dirty and for that very reason know that what was announced at the G8 summit is not enough to end global poverty and all its associated suffering and agony.

So Mr Blair will have to get used to it. Whilst there is genuine delight at what has been achieved at the G8 summit, for faith led campaigners it is not enough, for our faith leads us on to the promised land. Until we and the world in which we live have reached the promised land we will not be satisfied.

Simon Topping 9.7.05

Our Father
who is in us here on earth
holy is your name
in the hungry who share their bread and their song.
Your kingdom come,
a generous land where confidence and truth reign.
Let us do your will
being a cool breeze for those who sweat.
You are giving us our daily bread
when we manage to get back our lands
or to get a fairer wage.

Forgive us
for keeping silent in the face of injustice
and for burying our dreams.
Don't let us fall into the temptation
of taking up the same arms as the enemy,
but deliver us from evil which disunites us.
And we shall have believed in humanity and in life
and we shall have known your kingdom
which is being built for ever and ever.

Christian Aid

(Harvest for the World compiled by Geoffrey Duncan, Canterbury Press 2002, p 137)