

Parish Newsletter

OUR LADY OF RANSOM

22nd December 2024

4th Sunday of Advent (C)

Psalter Week 4



Six year old Billy was in the restaurant with his parents and asked if he could say grace. Bowing their heads Billy said, *God is good. God is great. Thank you God for the food, and I would thank you even more if I could have ice-cream. And peace to the world. Amen.* Customers around laughed. Except one elderly woman who remarked: “what’s wrong with this country, children don’t even know how to pray. Fancy asking God for ice-cream, really!” Hearing this Billy burst out crying. “is God angry with me, what did I do wrong, he asked?” As his mum and dad were reassuring him, an elderly man approached. He winked at little Billy, and said in Billy’s ear that he happened to know that God thought it was a great prayer. “Really?” said Billy. “Cross my heart,” said the man. Then gently pointing to the woman he said “ its too bad *she* never asks God for ice-cream. A little ice-cream is good for the soul”. Winking again, he walked away. His parents bought Billy some ice-cream. Billy stared at the ice-cream, picked up the plate, and without a word, placed it in front of the woman. With a big smile he told her, “this is for you. Ice-cream is good for the soul, you need it, my soul is good already”.

What is good for our soul? What moves our soul? Will this Christmas affect us deeply in a new way? Or will it be just another Christmas - business as usual? Do we listen to the movements of our souls? This is the stuff of prayer. Mary listens to her soul, the deeper resonances going on inside, she had no-one in authority to talk to, to check the validity of her intuitions. She simply trusted her deeper intuitions. What an example to us. The Angel Gabriel will have spoken to Mary’s soul. Trusting in his dreams suggests Joseph was listening to his own deeper intuitions too. His soul. No rationale, no logic explains all this – only faith. Authentic faith allows us to do some amazing things, and we can even amaze ourselves. Will we allow that possibility? Will we allow this Christmas to affect us more deeply than usual? Will we let it change us in some way, always for the better?

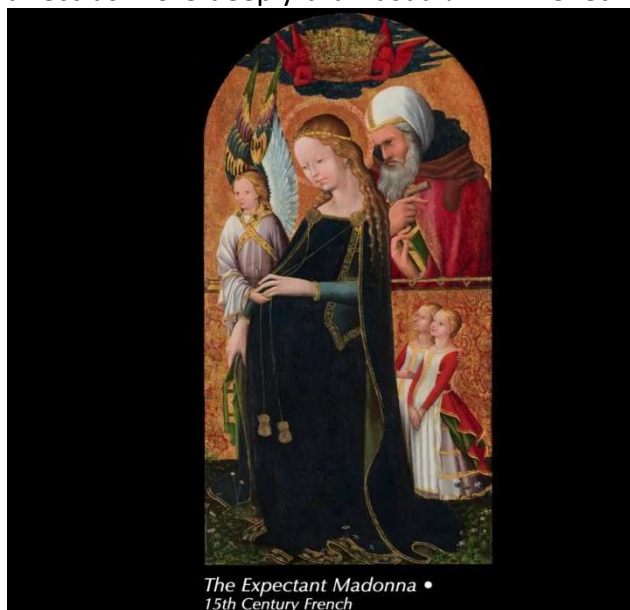
Please God Christmas will bring us all every blessing, and this coming New Year will bring us all that is good. May I wish you all every peace and all good for Christmas and this coming New Year.

1st Reading: Micah 5: 2-5a

Psalms 80: 2ac, 3b, 15-16, 18-19

2nd Reading: Hebrews 10: 5-10

Gospel: Luke 1: 39-45



*The Expectant Madonna •
15th Century French*

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday 21st December	St. John of the Cross
5.30pm Mass	Pauline Burgess RIP – Barry Burgess and Family
Sunday 22nd December	4th Sunday of Advent
8.00am Mass	Parish Community
10.00am Mass	Mike Geeson RIP (Anniv) – The Geeson Family
Monday 23rd December	
9.30am Mass	Geoffrey Williams RIP (Anniv) – The Williams Family
Tuesday 24th December	
6.00pm Family Mass	Emma Louise Lucibello RIP – Susan and Damian Lucibello
11.30pm Carol Service	
12am Midnight Mass	Gloria Ray RIP (Anniv) – Ken Ray and family
Wednesday 25th December	Nativity of Our Lord (Christmas Day)
8.00am Mass	Alice Nash RIP – Marie Smith
10.00am Mass	Parish Community
Thursday 26th December	St. Stephen
<u>11.00am Mass</u>	Len Smith RIP (Anniv) – Debbie Smith
Friday 27th December	St. John
9.30am Mass	Teresa McGilloway RIP - Mary Butterworth
Saturday 28th December	The Holy Innocents
5.30pm Mass	Parish Community
Sunday 29th December	Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph
8.00am Mass	Ellen Gavillet RIP – Shantel Albayrak
10.00am Mass	Friends/Family of Lucibello and Flower Families RIP

All Church Services are now Live Streamed. To take part please go to

<https://stream.seccomgroup.com/channel/olor>

Masses can be watched "live" or later as a recording

<p>PARISH PRIEST Father Paul Fox 50 London Hill, Rayleigh Essex SS6 7HP 01268 38.24.99 www.olorchurch.org email: rayleigh@brcdt.org</p>	<p><u>Public Mass times:</u> Saturdays 5.30pm Sundays 8am & 10.00am Mondays & Tuesdays 9.30am Wednesdays 10.00am Thursdays & Fridays 9.30am</p>
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The Sacrament of Reconciliation: 4.30pm – 5pm Saturday evenings (not in the confessional box) Please be aware - Times and days of weekday Masses are subject to change. Our Parish is part of The Brentwood Diocesan Trust, Registered Charity Number 234092

† Please keep in your prayers Mrs. Theresa Steward (mother of Gemma Copestick) who died recently. Please also keep Gemma and the family in prayer at this difficult time. May Theresa rest in Peace. †



ANNIVERSARIES Kindly pray for all those whose anniversaries are at this time. Especially.....Lorraine Elmer, Betty Lowe, Mike Geeson, Connie Brilus, Frances Hidveghy, Gloria Ray, James Pamplin and John Enever.

† May they rest in Peace. †

NEWSLETTER ITEMS: Please ensure all items for the parish newsletter are submitted to the parish office by **11am on Thursdays** at the latest. Thank you

A copy of the newsletter is placed on the notice-board for quick reference. Please leave it attached to the notice-board for others to see. Thank you.

Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confessions) will be available (tomorrow) Monday 23rd December from 10am-11am. The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed for this. Please feel free to come and simply, quietly and reverently honour Our Lord in His Blessed Sacrament (even if you do not desire the Sacrament of Reconciliation on this occasion).

Rite of Welcome. Please welcome John, Paula, Harika, Nathan and Jo who are looking to be fully received into the Catholic Church next Easter. At our 10am Mass this Sunday they will formally receive the Rite of Welcome. Please keep them in your prayers.

Holy Communion, when receiving, please consume the Sacred Host IMMEDIATELY. The Sacred Host should be consumed before receiving the Sacred Blood from the Chalice, if you do not receive from the Chalice, then consume the Sacred Host straight away in front of the Altar. Thank you.

Church Car Park: anyone who wishes to leave their car in the church car park overnight, or especially over several nights, must check with the Parish Office first. This is for reasons such as funeral guests having priority parking during funerals, other celebrations occurring requiring

car park use, and possible ground and work maintenance being ongoing, as evidenced recently. Please respect this request. Thank you.

Parish Garden: if anyone has any good and constructive ideas for our garden, do please let us know. A few have already been expressed. Thank you.

Printed Parish Newsletters – Reminder: printed newsletters are left outside the Presbytery for those who have **NO ACCESS** to electronic newsletters. In good conscience, please honour this request. Thank you.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults Programme (RCIA)

All are welcome to come along to our Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults programme and learn more about what it means to be a Catholic Christian. **We will meet again this Monday 13th January 2025 at 8pm in the Bethany Room.**

Perhaps you are completely new to Christianity, or maybe you left the Church as a teenager and now want to return to the Catholic faith. Alternatively, you may just want to informally ask questions to deepen your understanding. Whatever your circumstances, you are welcome to come along and learn more about what it means to be a Catholic Christian.

Please come along to find out more. You do not have to make any commitments at this point.

However, if you are not part of the Catholic tradition, and you decide during the programme you would like to commit yourself to the Catholic faith, you may be received into the Catholic Church at Easter in April 2025.

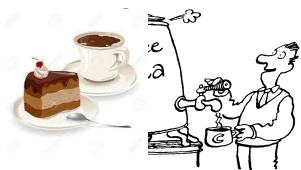
Special Collection Gift Aid Envelopes: For those making their regular donation online/by bank transfer, and would like the Gift Aid envelopes for special collections only, they will be available to collect from the church porch.

Wednesday Coffee Morning

Coffee Morning will take place on Wednesday January 8th 2025....**after the 10am Mass.**

If anyone is willing and able to volunteer to help once each month, please come along and make yourself known. We'd love to see you.





If you are interested in running a coffee morning after the Sunday 10am Mass, for a Charity of your choice, please inform the staff in the presbytery office. Thank you.

Flower arrangements for Christmas



Donations for flowers to decorate the Church at Christmas would be most welcome. Please post in an envelope marked "flowers" through the Presbytery letterbox. If anyone has experience of flower arranging please think about coming along to help. Contact Veronica on 07748 847119 for more

details.

Christmas Flowers: donations towards Christmas Flowers welcome in honour of a loved one who has died. Please hand them in to the presbytery clearly marked Christmas Flowers and for whom they are in memory of. Thank you.

This year's Christmas Flowers are in honour and memory of: Pauline Burgess RIP; Michael Pearson RIP; Emma Louise Lucibello RIP; Pat and Tom Herlihy RIP; Barry Burgess and Family; the Buckmaster and Sugrue Families RIP; and Walenty Krolikowski RIP.

Repository: A very good selection of Christmas cards are now available. Prices range from packs of 5 for £1 sold in aid of the SVP, to boxes of 18 for £4.25. Also Nativity Advent Calendars for £1.99. Other Christmas items are also available. Please visit us after the weekend Masses. Thank you.

APPEAL TO ASPIRING YOUNGER PARISHIONERS FROM THE JMG TRUST

Do you feel you would like to make a personal contribution towards the alleviation of poverty both locally and overseas? The "Trustees" are aiming to recruit like-minded individuals to take on the work of this locally based charity with assets of £1M. We are looking in particular for younger members preferably with some Financial or IT experience, (but not necessarily qualified) to fill some administrative roles connected mainly with the distribution of grants to the "poor and needy". If you feel that this vocational work may suit your Christian ethos, please apply to Christopher Johnson on 07783326732. We meet only twice a year to discuss Trust business matters.



Kids' Bulletin A children's version of the gospel is available weekly. This can be accessed on the following website: www.thekidsbulletin.com and is aimed at primary school children. It can be downloaded and printed out.

Do you have the need of a Wheelchair/ Mobility Aid?

Over a period of time, a collection of Wheelchairs, Strollers, Walkers and other mobility aids have gathered in the Presbytery garage.

If you or a family member have the need for any of the above items, please contact Fr. Paul for more information.

Tel: 01268 382499

These can be very expensive items and there is no cost involved whatsoever. They will be fully sanitised and delivered to wherever they are required in the area. Thank you.

Homeless Shelter

We have been asked if we would be able to put a team of volunteers together to run a homeless shelter this coming winter. The shelter is likely to run from December through to the end of March 2025. The shelter will be central and not at the Sacred Heart Church. If you would like to volunteer, please contact the Parish office by email in the first instance to record your interest.

southend@brcdt.org

As more information becomes available, we will of course share. Thank you.

Thank you for your help. God bless, Liam Rand

Catholic Parish of The Sacred Heart, Southend-on-Sea and St John Fisher, Prittlewell The Presbytery, 418 Southchurch Road, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS1 2QB Telephone (44) 01702 465720

PARISH CHOIR

Do you like to sing? You would be most welcome to join us in the Parish Choir. Just come up to the choir loft after 10am Mass on a Sunday when we are singing. We only sing twice a month, so the commitment is not great. We hold a choir practice on most Thursdays too at 7.30pm for an hour or so. For more details contact Isobel Kennedy (07795 821705.

Headteacher Vacancy for September 2025 -St Peter's Catholic Primary School Romford

[Headteacher - St Peter's Primary School, Romford](http://dioceseofbrentwood.net) (visit dioceseofbrentwood.net for full details).

Deadline for applications: 12:00 (noon), Friday 31st January 2025

VACANCY AT ST BERNARD'S HIGH SCHOOL

SCHOOL CHAPLAIN

Part-time, three days a week, term time only, 8.30am – 4.30pm

Salary Scale 9 to 19 - £25,119 - £29,777 (actual salary £13,095 - £15,523)

Are you a practising Catholic with a passion for working with children?

We are looking to appoint a School Chaplain to support the Catholic Life and Collective Worship of our school community. You will need to be proactive and be able to work independently, with excellent time management and organisational skills, arranging events such as whole school masses, form masses, charity fundraisers, retreats. Experience in education or youth ministry would be an advantage.

The Chaplain must be a practising Roman Catholic and should have relevant experience or qualification (e.g. Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies). You will be someone who is skilled in dealing with a wide range of people, and be compassionate, personable and discreet.

Walsingham House Team 25/26: applications are now open for the volunteer retreat team at Walsingham House. If you are in Yr13 or finishing university and enjoy working with young people then a year on the retreat team could be the perfect next step. Live and work as part of a young Catholic Christian community, sharing your faith and helping to run retreats for the young people of Brentwood diocese. For more information then please see the website: www.bcys.net/whabbotswick/be-on-team/ or email clairebailey@brcdt.org

Christmas Eve Family Mass-

Adult volunteers needed to assist with helping the Christmas Eve Family Mass preparation. Please consider helping others to organise this lovely celebration, which has been an important part of Christmas to so many of our families over the years. Please consider sharing some of the responsibility, perhaps with your friends. If you may be able to help, please message Nicola 07801 888787. Thank you.

Christmas Eve Family Mass (6 pm)- Nativity tableau

All children who would like to join in our nativity tableau, for the Gospel at our Christmas Eve Family Mass, please come and put your name down and find a costume from our parish supply, on one of the first 2 dates below! All are welcome! We have 1 more practice/ run-through for all involved this **Sunday 22nd December** before Christmas Eve for all involved (in the church, after 10 am mass)

The Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage, led by Bp Alan, will be from Friday 18 July – Friday 25 July 2025. The flights will be Southend to Lourdes. Details, including how to book, will follow. We hope you will join us

READINGS FOR THE SEASON OF ADVENT: Fr Adrian Graffy, parish priest of Gidea Park and member of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, has prepared reflections on all the Mass readings for the Season of Advent. To access these go to www.whatgoodnews.org and click on 'Scripture Readings' and then 'Advent Readings'

ISLAM STUDY DAY

Our next study day will consider Islam, in the year when we mark 60 years of the promulgation of *Nostra Aetate* -

In 2025 we mark sixty years since the promulgation of *Nostra Aetate*, the inter-faith document of Vatican II. We are delighted to welcome Sidra Naeem, distinguished teacher and chair of Havering Interfaith, who will speak about Islam. The talk will take place on Saturday 18th January 2025 from 11.00 (11.00 GMT) in the hall at the Catholic Church of Christ the Eternal High Priest, in Gidea Park. The talk will also be available by livestream free of charge at www.whatgoodnews.org and will be available subsequently on the same website. The church is close to Gidea Park station (Elizabeth Line). Please bring a packed lunch. Coffee available from 10.30. Do join us.

Class Teacher - Key Stage 1

MPR/UPR ~ Full time ~ Required September 2025

Our Lady of Ransom Catholic School is looking to appoint an enthusiastic and highly-motivated class teacher to join our friendly and dedicated team.

The successful candidate will need to be a strong practitioner committed to achieving high standards of pupils' learning and capable of teaching imaginatively.

They will be willing to be involved in all aspects of school life.

The post would suit an experienced teacher who is either a practising Catholic or willing to support the strong Catholic ethos of our school.

The Governing Body is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The appointment is subject to satisfactory references, medical and enhanced DBS checks.

Visits to the school are welcomed and encouraged.

For more details please contact Mr. Parascandolo (Head Teacher)

via the school office (01268 785741)

For an application form please visit the school website www.olorcps.net

Closing date: Thursday 16th January 2025 (4pm)

Interview date: w/c 20th January 2025

We reserve the right to call for interview and appoint prior to the closing date



DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD

Foundation Governor Vacancies

Vacancies for Foundation Governors have arisen at a number of Catholic schools across the Diocese and expressions of interests are being sought from practising committed Catholics for the ministry.

The term of office is for four years from the date of appointment.

Foundation Governors are personally appointed by the Bishop to Diocesan schools to represent his interests and those of the Catholic community as a whole.

Our schools would benefit from people with a range of skills and experiences including Finance, Education, Special Needs, Legal and Administration.

Anyone interested in the role and mission of Foundation Governor should not be put off by a lack of experience. Appropriate training is available during the period of service.

If you are interested in becoming Foundation Governor please email your expression of interest to governanceappointments@brcdt.org.

Thank you.

Can you volunteer at the St John Bosco Children's Camp next summer? Applications are now open for anyone aged 17+ to volunteer for a week at the end of July 2025. From helping in the kitchen to running sports and other activities, your skills will mean that 100 children have a wonderful holiday. For most of the children, it is their only summer holiday. The Camp is a special work of Caritas Brentwood. More information - including training date and DBS requirements, along with volunteering FAQs - can all be found at www.boscocamp.co.uk. Applications for children to come to Camp will open in the spring.

HARP. Every year with the help of fantastic generous donations, HARP provide a small chocolate selection box to each of our residents and rough sleepers.

This year our amazing fundraiser Lisa went on to pastures new supporting YMCA, Lisa was the one who organised all of this in previous years, this year it will be me 😊

Can you support me with this? That would be fabulous.

Our target is 500 selection boxes, I have added a picture below of the type of selection box we are looking for, although it does not need to be Cadbury



Thank you and I look forward to reaching our target with your generosity 😊

Stevie 'Chocoholic' Hickman (she/her)
Volunteer Coordinator – HARP (Southend's Homeless Charity)

Usual Working Hours: Monday - Friday 8am - 4pm

Central Office : 104-106 The High Street, Southend-on-Sea, SS1 1JN

Email: stevie.hickman@harp-southend.org.uk

Mobile: 07969 727 046



As we approach this special time of year, we want to take a moment to express our deepest gratitude to each of you our incredible supporters. Your kindness and generosity have truly made a difference.

This Christmas, your donations and support have helped us provide **Help, Hope and Opportunities** to countless families and individuals in need. From food parcels and warm clothing to emotional support and pathways to independence, you have been a vital part of keeping the light shining for so many.

Thanks to you, the **Door of Hope** remains open for those struggling this season. Whether it's through financial contributions, volunteering your time, or spreading the word about our mission, every act of kindness has brought hope to someone in need.

As little as £1 per person can make a difference and being match funded that makes £2. Please share this to as many family and friends as you can.

[Daniel Cauchi is fundraising for St Vincent De Paul Society \(SVP England and Wales\)](#)

Checkout our Website and Facebook

www.svp.org.uk/st-vincents-southend

St Vincent's Southend [Facebook](#)

Thank you.

Nesper Maregedze Centre Office Nesperm@svp.org.uk

07549128877 01702 592980 Unit 9,

Victoria Business Park Short Street

Southend

SS2 5BY



DONATIONS NEEDED

We are in desperate need of the following items:

Toiletries

Deodorant (Men's & Women's)

Shower gel

Shampoo/Conditioner

Sanitary Pads (All sizes)

Toothpaste

Toothbrushes



Clothing

Sleeping bags

Tracksuit bottoms (All sizes)

Jumpers (All sizes)

Underwear and socks (All sizes)

Trainers (All sizes)

Warm Coats (All sizes)



Unit 9, Victoria Business Park, Short Street, SS2 5BY
01702 592980 southendsupport@svp.org.uk

WINTER VOLUNTEER SHOUT-OUT ❄️

At St Vincent's Centre, we are the Door of Hope. Your involvement can help us open that door and shine a light on the lives of those in need. Let's work together to clear a path and turn frowns into smiles.

We are urgently seeking **VOLUNTEERS** especially **DRIVERS**. Can you spare an hour or more a week?

How You Can Help: Other Roles:

Food Pickup & Delivery

Furniture Pickup & Delivery

Event Support

And More.

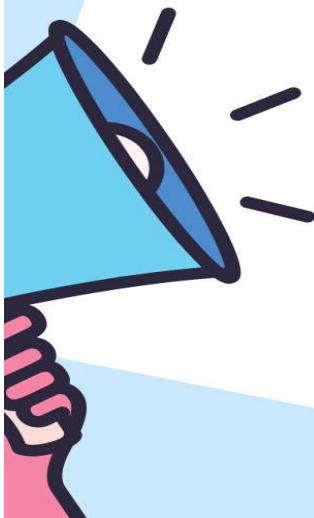
For more details, contact: lilyd@svp.org.uk

St Vincent's Centre

Unit 9, Victoria Business Park,

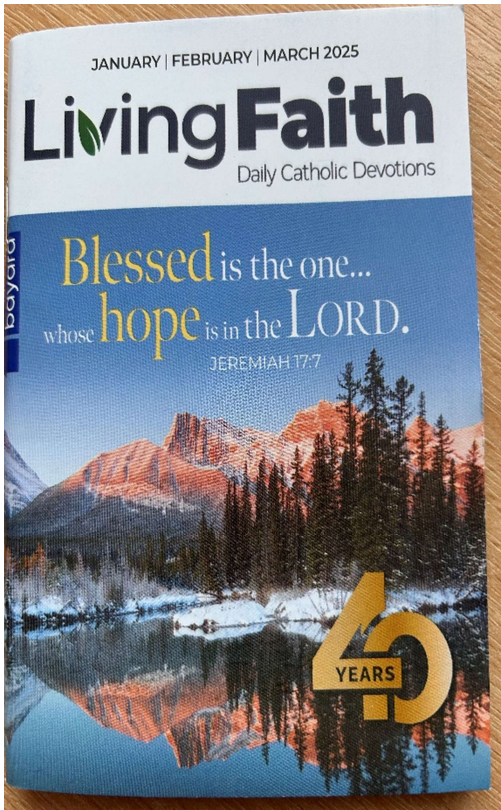
Short Street, SS2 5BY

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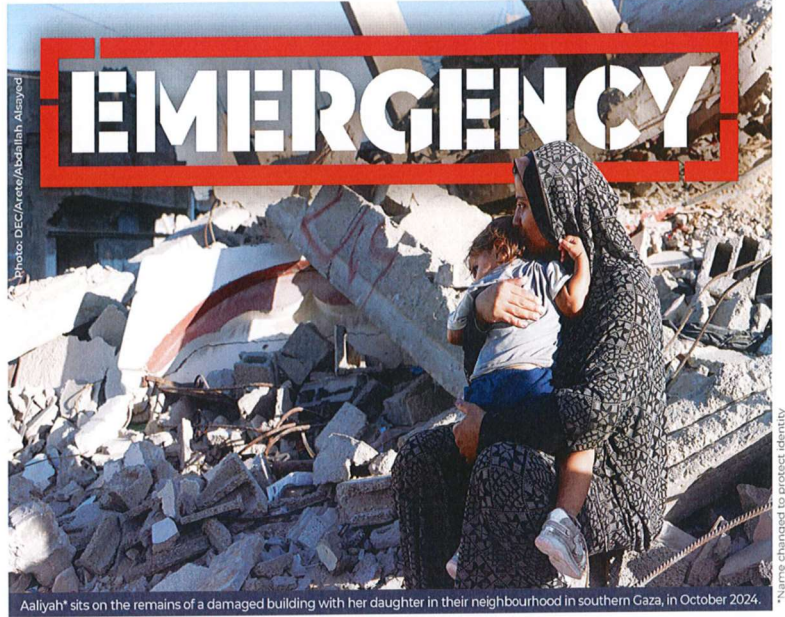




Available Now.



CAFOD Catholic Agency for Overseas Development



Aaliyah* sits on the remains of a damaged building with her daughter in their neighbourhood in southern Gaza, in October 2024. *Name changed to protect identity

Middle East Humanitarian Appeal

£10

gives displaced families emergency water

£120

gets emergency shelter to three households

Millions are fleeing airstrikes in Lebanon and Gaza. CAFOD and our Church partners are already there, responding.

Please pray and please give. Every gift is needed.

GIVE TODAY
cafod.org.uk/give

or call **0808 58 588 85**

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