

COMPASSION

MAGAZINE

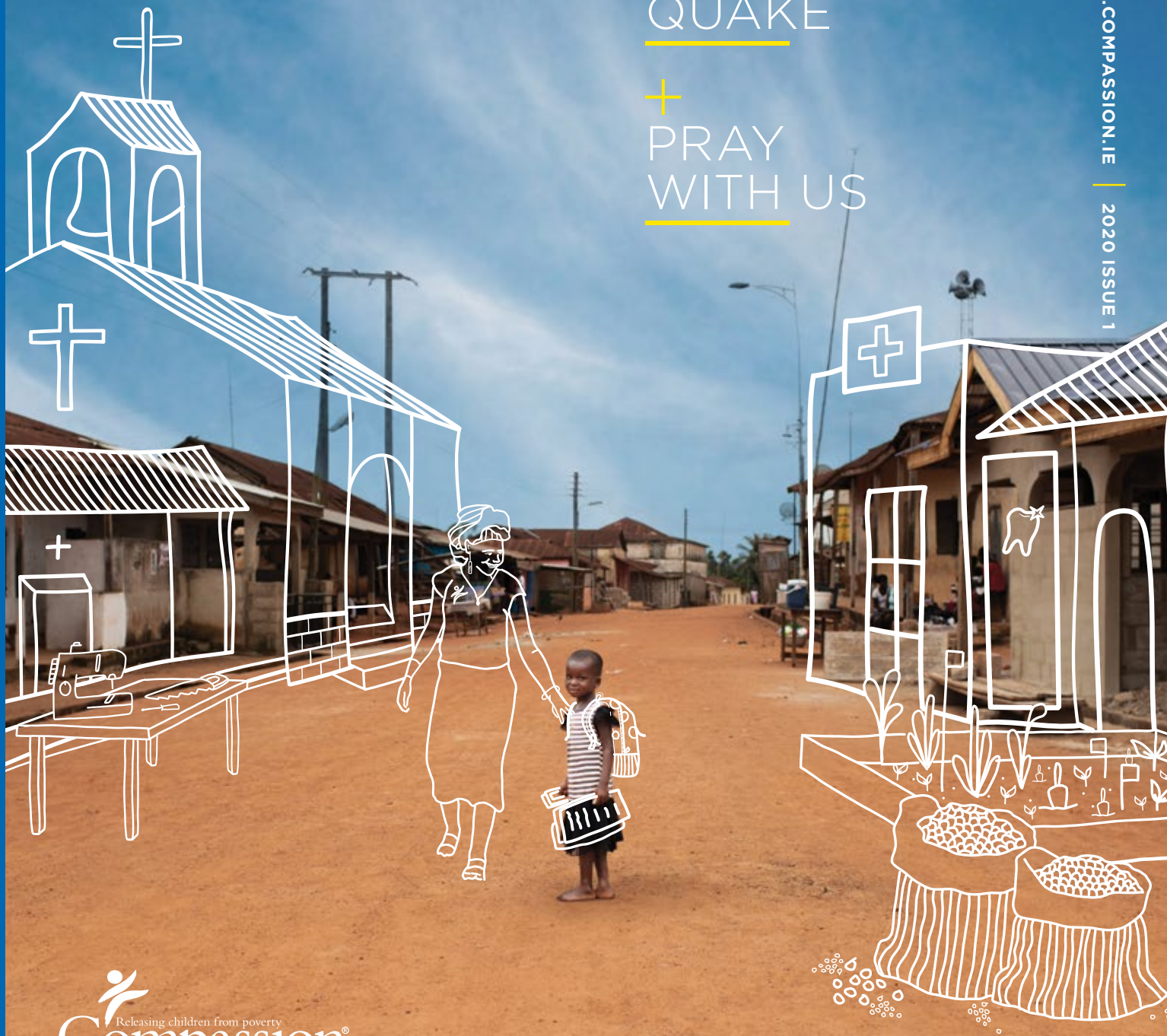
WWW.COMPASSIONUK.ORG

WWW.COMPASSION.IE

2020 ISSUE 1

+ TEN YEARS
AFTER THE
QUAKE

+ PRAY
WITH US



In this ISSUE

- 04 HOPE IN LOREGA
- 06 YOUR WORDS, THEIR TREASURE
- 07 HEART, MIND, BODY AND SPIRIT
- 10 TEN YEARS AFTER THE QUAKE
- 12 LEAVE A LEGACY OF LIFE
- 14 PRAY WITH US



A GROUP OF CHILDREN FROM TOGO OUTSIDE THEIR COMPASSION PROJECT.
PHOTOGRAPHER: BEN ADAMS

EVERY GREAT LEGACY BEGINS WITH A SINGLE MOMENT OF CONVICTION

Your decision to support children through Compassion makes you part of a huge and inspiring movement of God. Your faithful prayers, gifts and words of encouragement are making an enormous difference to children's lives.

You'll know the story that led you here. You may not know that the story of Compassion began in 1952, on a war-torn street in Korea.

Rev. Everett Swanson had flown to South Korea to minister to American troops fighting in the Korean war.

Watching city workers scoop up what looked like piles of rags and throw them into the back of a truck, he walked over to take a closer look. Swanson was deeply troubled to see that the 'piles' were not rags, but frozen bodies of children who had died overnight on the streets.

On the plane home, Swanson heard a simple message resounding in his head. As the engines whirred, he felt the challenge, "What are you going to do? What are you going to do?" over and over again.

By the time his plane landed, Swanson had made a decision: God had moved him with compassion, so he needed to take action.

Swanson knew he could not turn his back on these children. He took a stand, vowing to find a way to help them.

He raised money to support Korean children and soon established a unique programme, linking each child with a caring individual whose generosity provided them with education, food, clothing, shelter and medical care.

Around the globe today, Compassion is releasing more than 2 million children from poverty in 25 developing countries. There are thousands of Compassion graduates who've been released from poverty and are bringing change to their families, communities and nations.

It all came from one moment of conviction. Yet the very same belief drives us today. When God stirs our hearts with compassion, we act to share His love.

So, as you read your magazine, I hope you are inspired, refreshed and even a little challenged. Like Everett, I still recall the moment in Haiti when God spoke to me. I pray as you read this edition you too will recall your moment of conviction.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Justin Dowds".

Justin Dowds
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
COMPASSION UK AND COMPASSION IRELAND

A LEGACY OF HOPE IN LOREGA

Welcome to Lorega, the Philippines. You've arrived in a community battling drug abuse and gang violence. A place where even taxi drivers refuse to go. But in the midst of crippling poverty, you hear two testimonies of hope. Sponsors like you are empowering the local church.

Angelica's Testimony: "GOD IS MY REDEEMER"

I saw things happen in Lorega at a very young age. I was exposed to drug selling, drug abuse and drug running. Even in our very own house. My dad was second to the head of the drug lord.

I used to think, 'Angelica, you aren't good enough. You don't belong.' If I had not been part of the [Compassion] programme, I don't know where I would be today. Maybe I would have become a drug addict or a prostitute. I would not have encountered God.

But instead, the project developed my physical

health, my thinking skills, my communication. The most important thing was that I became free. Finding faith in God gave me hope. He has done beautiful things in my life.

I really thank God for my sponsor because through her, I graduated Bible school. I am a teacher so now I can teach more children and students.

My sponsor used to encourage me and say I could be a great impact to this nation. I am so thankful for her prayers for my family. The impact has been great. My family saw me change and now they are changed. Together we have hope.



ANGELICA WITH A GROUP OF CHILDREN FROM LOREGA



Pastor Davis Lorega



BECAUSE OF THE WORK OF THE CHURCH AND COMPASSION, LOREGA NOW IS TOTALLY DIFFERENT."

Pastor Davis' Story: PASSING THE BATON OF HOPE

I first used drugs at the age of 12. Lorega has always been my home and my mother's family used to be the drug dealers in this place. It wasn't long before I was selling drugs and I became the youngest member of the Handsome gang. We fought, we killed members of other gangs, we did robbery.

Over time, my life became worse. When I had my own children, I neglected them.

My son was sponsored by Compassion at the church nearby. That's how I heard the church had started a Bible study. I don't know what happened, but one day I found myself there.

The pastor read a passage from John 14:6. He said, "I am the way, the truth and the life"

and I was so struck by those words. I asked God, Lord, if you are the way, please help me find that way. I'm so tired of my life. I'd been using drugs for more than 20 years.

On that day, God touched my heart. I began to get involved in church activities and eventually I went to study in seminary. I heard others say that in Lorega, people are hard to reach. But God gave me the word that I must be the shepherd for the sheep he brings to my pastures.

One of my mentors says, "love the people and God will supply all your needs". Our partnership with Compassion is part of this.

It instils into children that there is hope, in spite of poverty.

I remember asking a group of parents from this community, "what are your dreams?" and most of the mothers cried. So, I changed the question and said, "ok, if you don't have a dream for yourself, what are your dreams for your children?" And they cried more. This time because Compassion really brings hope for children to dream again.

Because of the work of the church and Compassion, Lorega now is totally different. Before, there were shootings. Today, Lorega is open to the gospel. Families are being transformed.

Use the Compassion UK App to hear more about the ripples of hope moving through Lorega thanks to Compassion's partnership with the local church.



YOUR Words THEIR Treasure



Kimberly
El Salvador

Kind words are like honey – sweet to the soul and healthy for the body. *Proverbs 16:24 (NLT)*

Like our favourite Bible verses, we store up words of affirmation to help us through the tough days.

Your sponsored child is no different. The words you write become their treasure for years to come. Each message is lovingly stowed away in a box, tucked inside a Bible or pinned to the wall, ready to be read over and over until the paper wears thin.

BE INSPIRED BY THE DIFFERENCE YOUR LETTERS ARE MAKING

“My sponsor’s letters reinforce our friendship like cement to a building. I have been touched by his encouraging words to do well in my studies. It warmed my heart and changed my mind about the future.” – Edwigne, 14 years old, Burkina Faso

“I keep my letters in my closet to prevent them getting lost. Whenever I read the letters from my sponsor, I know there is someone who cares for me.” – Marlon, 14 years old, Indonesia



I KEEP [MY LETTERS] IN A SHOEBOX THAT MY AUNT HELPED ME DECORATE. MY SPONSOR’S LETTERS ARE A DEMONSTRATION OF LOVE. THEIR WORDS MAKE ME FEEL SPECIAL.”

– Kimberly, nine years old, El Salvador

HEART, MIND, BODY AND SPIRIT

Every day, our local church partners go to extraordinary lengths to ensure children receive the holistic care that they need, so they can step into a bright, hope-filled future.

From community to community, this care is personalised to meet the specific needs of the children. Your generous sponsorship donations allow us to

provide nutritional support, opportunities for education, health-checks and the care of a local church, while focusing on four key areas of development: physical, economic, emotional and spiritual.



Use your Compassion App to bring this page to life and see the difference your sponsorship makes.



THE SPONSORSHIP RATE IS CHANGING



YULEICY AND A FRIEND IN PERU

“ Thanks to the support of the church, Compassion project and my sponsor, I was able to study a professional career. When you receive a once-in-a-lifetime gift like education, you receive the keys to your future. I can truly say that the Compassion programme set me free from poverty!”

- JOHN, A COMPASSION GRADUATE FROM PERU

We are committed to providing exceptional care in every area of your sponsored child's life. It's what God has called us to do, and it will never change.

Something that has changed in recent years is the cost of providing this holistic care. Since 2014, our sponsorship rate of £25 a month has remained the same, but these funds no longer go as far.

Today, it simply costs more to provide the same programme than it did six years ago.

We never want to compromise the care our children receive, which is why, after carefully reviewing our finances, consulting sponsors, and

much prayerful consideration, we have decided to increase the sponsorship rate to £28. This increase of £3 a month is not a decision we've taken lightly but will allow us to continue to provide children with the same level of care, while funding broader interventions that underpin our sponsorship programme.

THANK YOU

As a sponsor, we'd like to express our thanks for the vital part you are playing and for standing with us as we continue to work as the Body of Christ to transform the lives of children.

If you have any questions, please contact us on 01932 836490.

HOW WE STEWARD YOUR MONEY

The principle of stewardship is more than a priority for us. It's a deeply held value.

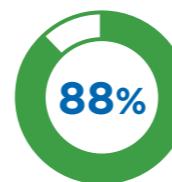


Thanks to you, our generous supporters, children all over the world are being empowered to step out of poverty and into a new future full of hope.

As the sponsorship rate increases, we want you to feel confident in how your giving is impacting children in poverty.

HOW IS MY MONEY USED?

Last year, 88% of your sponsorship donations were spent on charitable activities. 81% to directly benefit children in poverty and 7% for support costs. The remaining money spent was used to get the next child sponsored and to raise funds for life-changing interventions.



Donations spent on charitable activities.



Directly benefits children in poverty.



Support costs.

WHAT DOES MY SPONSORED CHILD RECEIVE?

Children and families who are assisted by Compassion don't receive your sponsorship donations as cash. Instead, children receive goods and services as part of a development programme run by their local church. We believe that developing children holistically will empower them to change their futures.

WHAT IS COMPASSION DOING TO CUT ITS COSTS?

We regularly review and question all our overheads. Compassion is investing in a new paperless sponsorship experience for those who want it, which will provide long term savings by reducing printing and mailing costs.

We're passionate about doing things with excellence, including the way we manage our finances. You can find a copy of our Annual Report by visiting: compassionuk.org/financial-integrity

TEN YEARS AFTER THE QUAKE

Ten years ago a 7.0 magnitude earthquake devastated Haiti. The country continues to face a multitude of challenges, but local churches are providing hope in the heart of communities across the nation.

Can you remember where you were at 4.50pm on Tuesday 12 January 2010? Jesus Robson, who was 11 at the time, has vivid memories of that fateful day. *“I was in the exact zone where the earthquake happened, working on grammar homework,”* he recalls.

In a matter of minutes, villages, towns and cities were reduced to rubble. More than 220,000 people died; close to 2.3 million were displaced; and a generation was traumatised.

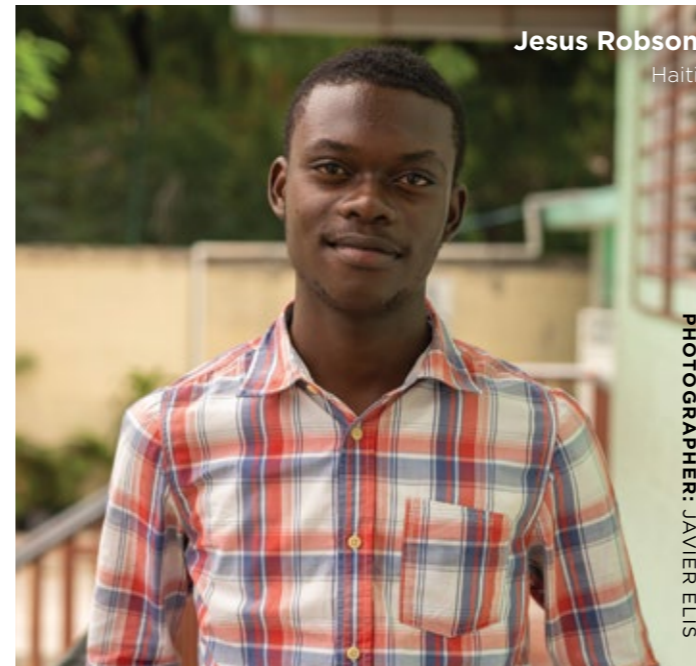
In many respects, Jesus, who attended the Jacquet Child Development Centre in Port-au-Prince, was one of the lucky ones. As a sponsored child, he had the support of his project, his church and the wider global Compassion family.

PROVIDING IMMEDIATE SUPPORT

As night fell on 12 January, chaos ensued. With infrastructure, electricity and communications disrupted, co-ordinating the relief effort was especially tough in the slum communities like the one where Jesus lived.

“These communities are often the last places government and other NGOs are focusing their attention,” explains Herb Ehresmen, Compassion’s Interventions Programme Director.

And so, project directors like Marie Romain, who heads up the programme that Jesus attended, joined church



Jesus Robson
Haiti

PHOTOGRAPHER: JAVIER ELIS

members to lead the initial relief work on the ground. *“I think the partnership between Compassion and the church in this community is amazing,”* she says.

In the all-encompassing chaos, Marie’s project, like hundreds across Haiti, became an oasis – offering food, water, hygiene kits, shelter, and spiritual support to children and their families.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

When the situation stabilised, rebuilding began in earnest. Compassion brought in specialist engineers to train Haitian teams how to construct buildings to withstand future disasters.

As Marie explains, *“They built the centres to international seismic standards. If another earthquake happens, kids are safe.”*

To date, Compassion has helped build 30 earthquake-proof centres across Haiti. But compared to the rebuilding work that needs to take place in individuals’ lives, this was the easy part.

Trained counsellors supported more than 9,000 traumatised children and around 575 mothers in the months that followed the earthquake.

The work of rebuilding hope, trust and faith continues and churches remain central in this process.

GROWTH

The scars of 12 January 2010 can still be seen across the nation of Haiti, which battles a multitude of social, political and economic challenges. But hope can rise in the most unexpected of places.

“Everyone thought there was no life after that day,” explains Gary Saint-Louis, Pastor of John Wesley Church in Port-au-Prince. *“The church allowed the people to have a different view.”*

Since the earthquake, our ministry in Haiti hasn’t just got back to normal – it’s grown. We now have 121,866 registered children attending 338 projects across the nation. Many, like Jesus who lost everything in the earthquake, are now studying at university and planning for a bright future.

Jesus has just two words for those who journeyed with him over the years, and they say it all, *“Thank you.”*

“

I had the privilege of working alongside the Haitian people as a medical team pharmacist in the years leading up to the earthquake and I’d always been struck at the depth of faith I saw in so many of my Haitian brothers and sisters.

Just a few days after the earthquake I vividly remember visiting the destroyed remains of a church near the epicentre. As I drew closer I saw Pastor Menard with a sweeping brush and a red hat. On the hat was “Jesus is my BOSS”. In the midst of death and destruction, this great man of faith, a Compassion graduate, had already set his hands to the rebuild and his heart to loving his people through the immense challenges they faced.

His faith never wavered and his determination to see a better future for those in his community inspires me to this day.”

- JUSTIN DOWDS, CEO

LEAVE A legacy OF life

Give the gift of clean water in your will – and you'll save children's lives for generations to come.



12



Mary
Togo

Imagine being seven years old. You've got a full day of school ahead, but first, you've got a job to do.

You must walk for miles to collect water for your family. If you don't, your family can't drink, wash or cook for the day. After the backbreaking journey, you're exhausted. You probably haven't had any breakfast, so your stomach aches and your energy is low. You arrive at school late and in trouble before the day's even started.

How are you supposed to concentrate on maths?

Children pay the price for the lack of clean water in communities in poverty such as Djakpata, in Togo, where the majority of seven-year-old girls

in the Compassion project are compelled to collect water before school.

THE COST OF DIRTY WATER

Without access to clean water and good hygiene practices, child health suffers. Compassion has 21 centres across the Haho region of Togo. At any one time, 60 per cent of the children attending these centres are suffering from water-related diseases such as diarrhoea, bilharzia, filariasis, anaemia, skin infections and typhoid.

Thanks to the generosity of Compassion supporters who have left legacies, there's something we can do to help these children. Compassion is providing 19 solar-powered

“ I HOPE GOD WILL CONTINUE TO BLESS THE DONORS AND THAT THEY WILL BE HAPPY FOR HAVING SUPPORTED ME AND MY FAMILY.”

boreholes and 57 tap stands to the communities. As part of the project, there'll be a plan for the whole community to work together to remove open defecation.

This initiative will improve the physical wellbeing of 4,587 children living in extreme poverty in Togo. It's also a brilliantly practical way to show their communities that they are loved and to offer hope. To tell them poverty doesn't have to be permanent.

PROOF THAT CLEAN WATER WORKS

We know that providing clean water works wonders in improving children's lives. Janet, who cares for a family of six, benefited from Compassion's clean water intervention in her community.

She says that before the safe water came, her family, "continually suffered from waterborne diseases such as typhoid as well as headaches."

Now she says, "We only have a short distance to travel in order to reach the new water point."

Now, there are fewer cases of waterborne diseases in Janet's family and across her community. This has transformed their lives. "I hope God will continue to bless the donors and that they will be happy for having supported me and my family," says Janet.

What an incredible legacy to leave – clean water for a community, for life.

You too can leave a lifesaving legacy. Many of our supporters, after remembering their family and friends, choose to leave a gift in their will to support Compassion's work. Your gift, large or small, will empower vulnerable children to break out of the cycle of poverty.

Take the next step by downloading a free pack here: compassionuk.org/gifts-in-will

THE PRAYER OF A RIGHTEOUS
PERSON IS POWERFUL AND
EFFECTIVE.

JAMES 5:16 NIV

Pray WITH US



When God broke Rev. Everett Swanson's heart for the plight of the Korean children in 1952, his first response was prayer. When we pray, the power of God moves.

Today, prayer is still our first response and we are so thankful for the multitude of faithful supporters who join us in praying for children in need, for their families and for their communities.

Here are some incredible answers to your prayers from 2019...

KAUANY'S VICTORY OVER CANCER

In 2018, we shared the story of brave 11-year-old Kauany from Brazil, who was battling cancer for the second time. Many of you prayed, and in 2019, we were able to report the wonderful news that Kauany is in remission!

FLASH FLOODING IN INDONESIA

On 19 March 2019, we asked for your urgent prayers for those impacted by the flash flooding and mudslides in Indonesia's Papua Province. We especially asked you to pray for the safety of a missing Compassion supported child.

Six days later, we were overjoyed to share that the missing child had been found safe and sound!

DIFFERENT PATH APPEAL

Prayers were answered as our 2019 Different Path appeal saw an incredible £2.2 million raised by generous Compassion supporters, including matched funding from the UK government! The goal: to help local church partners in Togo to provide vital support to vulnerable mothers, like Ama, and their babies.

Ama says, "My life has completely changed because my needs and those of my family are provided for by my Child Survival project. I am grateful to Compassion supporters. I thank them a lot and pray God blesses them."

YOUR PRAYERS ARE GREATLY VALUED. PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY WITH US IN 2020!

May we never underestimate the power of prayer to change the world, for "This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God... In their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you... Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!"
2 Corinthians 9:12-15 NIV

Calling all prayer warriors! Sign up for our fortnightly prayer email at compassionuk.org/pray to receive the latest stories and prayer requests.

THANK
you

