



POVERTY AND HOPE APPEAL 2025/26

A message of encouragement from Bishop Simon

Eighties nostalgia is back, if it ever went away. BBC iPlayer's documentary, 'Live Aid at 40: When rock and roll took on the world', is a fine example.

Forty years on, there's wider awareness of colonialism and white saviour syndrome in Western attitudes to Africa.

But Bob Geldoff is characteristically unrepentant about one thing. Money saves lives. Always has, always will.

This is what makes the 83 percent cut to US aid, and the reduction in the UK foreign aid budget from 0.5 percent to 0.3 percent, potentially so devastating.

According to Lisa Wise of Save the Children, the UK's cuts alone are on course to cut vital lifelines from more than 62 million people.

It's part of the reaction to globalisation and the reassertion of hard national boundaries and defence budgets in a precarious world.

But there will be a life or death tradeoff for some of the world's most vulnerable amid those cuts.

Are individual people also becoming more hardened to helping the world's poorest? I don't think so.

The 80s were branded a selfish 'me' decade, but Live Aid erupted in the middle of it, capturing hearts and minds. When people know money goes to good projects, they give today as well.

Throughout these changes, Poverty and Hope has burrowed deeply into specific and localised needs across Latin America and the Caribbean, Brazil, Myanmar, and the West Bank.

More recently, it's supported projects in our companion dioceses of Zimbabwe and Tanzania, making tangible life-altering differences to people facing drought and harvest failure.

And it will do so again in 2026.

In the letter of James in the New Testament, the writer says, "If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, 'go in peace, keep warm and eat your fill', and yet you do not supply their bodily needs. What is the good of that?"

That's a pioneer of the early church channelling his inner Geldoff.

I know that times are hard for people right now, especially with the cost of living. So, anything you can give would be really appreciated.

As Bob Geldoff says, money saves lives.

Bishop Simon Burton-Jones

Bishop of Tonbridge

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