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## COMPASSION

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*Compassion* is a charity that St Michael's has supported for a number of years whose mission is 'releasing children from poverty in Jesus' name'. *Compassion* is 3 C's:

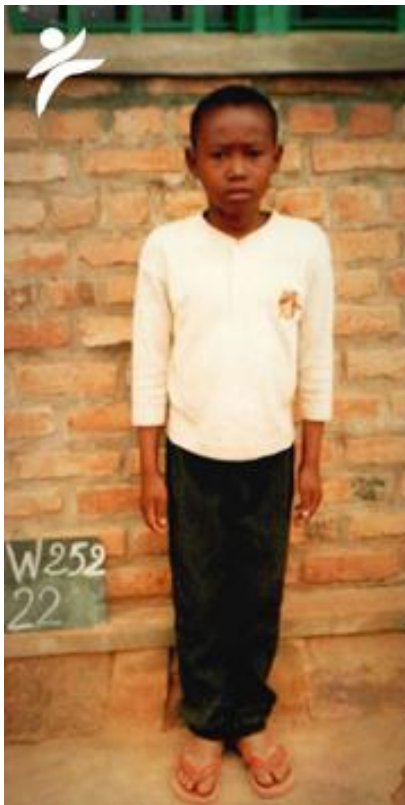
**Children** – *Compassion* identifies children that are in poverty in 25 of the poorest counties in the world.

**Church based** – *Compassion* then identifies churches in those areas with a heart for children and partners with them to help those children with funds from sponsors in the UK and 12 other countries.

**Christ based** – the love of Jesus is central to everything *Compassion* does and is responding to God's call to care for the poor and show love to those in need.

Funds are obtained and used in two ways: one is from individuals sponsoring children, as a number in the St Michaels congregation do (we sponsor 3).

– the other way is through one off gifts (such as St Michael's church gives) that are used to address various needs in the community, such as clean water.



Sponsored since the age of four, Fils is now all grown up and supporting his family as a mechanic.

Orphaned when they were children, Fils and his sisters were raised by their elderly grandparents, who struggled to provide for them. Help came through the support of the local church, when Fils was registered at a local *Compassion* project in Rwanda and given opportunities to thrive.

When he struggled academically at school, *Compassion* staff helped him register into a mechanic vocational training course. With a wrench in hand, he soon found a passion for repairing cars and motorbikes.

Now 20, Fils has finished his training and works at a local car garage! The income he makes helps him cover his grandparent's medical bills and school fees for his siblings.

"I'm so grateful to my sponsor and project staff for not only taking care of me, but also for giving me career guidance and the opportunity to gain skills, as well as make some money to take care of my family," says Fils.

*Compassion* staff couldn't be prouder of how far he's come.

"Today, Fils can compete in the job market. He is still gaining more skills as a mechanic, and who knows—one day he will open his own garage and start to employ other people," says *Compassion* Project Director, Jean de Dieu.

What an inspiring young man of God. Your future is bright, Fils!



Before *Compassion's* local church partner intervened, residents of a village in southern Togo collected water from the contaminated river. Many children were late to school because they spent their mornings retrieving water from the river. Waterborne illnesses were common throughout the community.

But now the community no longer needs to drink from the river, thanks to a new borehole well at the *Compassion* center. The local chief, Blaki, says “The coming of *Compassion* International to the village has changed our lives”.

*Compassion* is very grateful for the continued support of St Michael's – thank you!

**Jon Toohey, Charity Champion**



ECO-CHURCH



We have just received the results of our energy audit for the Pastoral Centre, with the one for the church due soon. It will be sent to the PCC to read for the July meeting, and I'm hoping that I will have a summary of the findings and recommendations ready for the August newsletter. It should help us to become more energy efficient and reduce our carbon footprint.

The policy of leaving the wild flowers to bloom in the churchyard before mowing has paid off with the increase of range and species this year. We even had an orchid appear along with the buttercups and daisies. Our predecessors at St Michael's would have been familiar with the seasonal cutting of

grass for hay in June, whereas now it's seen as environmentally friendly land management and great for biodiversity, then it was a necessity to provide fodder for animals. I'm looking forward to our 'staycation' this year, camping in Devon. One of the things we enjoy doing when we're away is eating locally produced food. This means that I will have to force myself to eat cream teas, shop in local bakeries and delicatessens, and look for good, quality cheese and meat. We'll avoid chain coffee shops in favour of independents (where Ken will inevitable sample home made cakes), and support restaurants with a good Westcountry sourced menu. Can't wait!

**Catherine Wilkins, Churchwarden**



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