

*For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.*

**—Matthew 25:35-36**



**TUESDAY IN HOLY WEEK, APRIL 11**

The great commission that we have received from Jesus Christ is to serve him by preaching the Gospel to others in our acts – by doing the work of feeding, clothing, comforting and encouraging our brothers and sisters.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), we partner with Episcopal Relief & Development to strengthen religious leaders and communities in their responses to and prevention of gender-based violence. In this partnership, we aim to physically and spiritually feed vulnerable people by teaching them new methods of livelihoods and telling them about God's love for them. Thanks to this important work, religious leaders in the Diocese of Aru in the DRC rejected the custom of forcing a girl to marry the man responsible for her pregnancy. Because they confronted this custom, our religious leaders have helped reduce early marriages and early pregnancies. They also help women access health care, education, information, income-generating activities and justice to achieve positions of responsibility for the development of their communities.

Lent invites us to reflect on the love of God and neighbor and to assess what we have done for thousands of vulnerable women and girls in my country that is torn by hatred, injustice, murder and wars.

**—Louise Bashige**