

Peru Update March 2018

Through CAFOD's Connect2 scheme, you are reaching children in a very poor part of Lima. Children list their main problems as violence at home, family problems caused by poverty, and neighbourhood insecurity.

You are helping fund safe spaces where children learn about their rights and have their own campaign organisation, reading and homework clubs.

Giving with love

When children gathered for a show recently at the Warmi Huasi reading club, the cost of entry was not money but milk, sugar, rice and noodles.



The next day they visited two families living in extreme poverty; an elderly couple living alone and a mother with cancer, to deliver the gifts.

As the children said: "We have done this with love. For us, it's not just about receiving, but about giving, too. We didn't want someone to go without food and be sad."

Organiser Luz says: "It was so lovely to see the children's happy faces when the elderly couple thanked them. The children's commitment is bringing me closer to the very poorest people."

"I thank God for giving me the chance to get to know them, to be part of Warmi, and to carry out this wonderful act with the children."



The children themselves had decided that they wanted to help the poorest families locally with food baskets. So when 70 children came to the show, the organisers ended up with food for four hampers.



Inspired by Pope's visit

CAFOD's partner, Warmi Huasi, say January's visit by Pope Francis to Peru has given them new energy for their work with children in Lima.



"Pope Francis' visit was full of faith and messages of hope," says team member Dany, who went to a Mass said by the pontiff. "But he also gave us all tasks to focus on, concerning care for our Mother Earth, wealth distribution, and the care of children."

The team was especially struck by the Pope's message to children in the Amazon town of Maldonado:

"Do not curb your curiosity. Get in touch with your roots, but at the same time open your eyes to new things. Share what you learn with the world, because the world needs you to be yourselves - who you really are, and not an imitation of someone else."



Message to Peru

When children at the parish school of St Laurence's, Cambridge heard about the Connect2: Peru scheme, they decided to get involved too.

So they made a video of themselves singing a song they had written specially for the children of the Warmi Huasi project.

"There were plenty of smiles!"

When CAFOD's project staff visited, they showed the song and photos to a crowd of Lima's most disadvantaged kids, and explained the English lyrics to them.

"There were plenty of smiles," says CAFOD's Illari Aragon. "They were curious about England, and although they were very young I could tell that they loved the song and the gesture itself."

"A song by children in England dedicated to them was definitely a novelty!"

**"The Pope's message inspires us in our work and renews us in our faith and hope in Jesus who watches over, guides and consoles the most vulnerable."
Milka Rosas, director,
Warmi Huasi**



Clearing up after floods in Lima in 2017

CAFOD's Peru programme officer Illari Aragon gives a personal account of how climate change is impacting her country.

When I was growing up in Lima, life seemed as stable as the weather. We knew there was inequality, of course: we could see the shantytowns, but they had not yet exploded in size. In winter we would escape to the tranquil countryside around Barba Blanca.

But last year Barba Blanca was practically wiped off the map, as Peru experienced its worst landslides, flooding and drought that anyone could remember. When I visited, I found the fertile farmland devastated.

Extreme rains had caused landslides that engulfed houses, farmland and roads in a torrent of mud and boulders, robbing the inhabitants of lives and livelihoods.

In a nearby village, most families were still living in tents and surviving on a daily meal provided by CAFOD and other aid agencies.

A warming world, migration from rural areas to cities, and growing inequality

have forced people to build their home on the most fragile land, making them even more vulnerable at times of crisis.

Such disasters always hit the poorest hardest. CAFOD will start vital new projects this year to help people in shantytowns in Lima build up resilience to a changing climate.

My country is badly impacted by climate change, despite causing only a fraction of world CO2 emissions. We need Pope Francis's message about global warming to touch the consciences of the nations who bear the greatest responsibility for causing it.



Illari Aragon, CAFOD