



**Make connections  
that count this Lent**

Christian Aid's bite-size reflections will inspire you to give thanks for the blessings in your life. Through prayers, actions and donations, you'll help to transform lives.



**Elema**



**Bokiya**



**Galgalo**

## Introducing ...

As we journey through Lent, we'll hear from Elema, Bokiya and Galgalo from Ethiopia. They're part of the community featured in Christian Aid Week 2015. To hear more about the community, and to order some great resources for Christian Aid Week, go to [caweek.org](http://caweek.org)

## How to count your blessings

1. Read the daily reflection.
2. Count your blessings and record your response in the space provided.\*
3. Pray for the people, countries and issues mentioned here and give thanks for the blessings in your life. (For more reflections please go to [christianaid.org.uk/reflect](http://christianaid.org.uk/reflect))
4. After Easter, send your total gift to Christian Aid with the form provided. You can also donate online at [christianaid.org.uk/lent](http://christianaid.org.uk/lent)

\* The daily giving amounts are suggestions only. Please give what you can.



### Elema Dulacha

Elema is the heart of her family and her home is a welcoming place. She is also at the centre of her community, campaigning against the practice of early marriage with the help of our partner HUNDEE and offering girls a refuge in times of need.

**'Change is possible. We can make this happen'**



### Bokiya Gooloo

When Bokiya was 13, her parents tried to marry her off to an older man. She refused, knowing that the law concerning early marriage had changed. Her family stripped her of her clothes, so Bokiya walked naked to Elema's home in search of protection. The marriage was prevented and Bokiya is continuing her education. And, like Elema, she is campaigning for change and supporting young girls facing the same situation.

**'I want to continue my education'**



### Galgalo Sora

Galgalo used to beat his wife, and would never ask for her opinion on anything. Now after attending training sessions, run by HUNDEE, he realises her value and that she is his equal. He is very ashamed of how he used to treat her.

**'We have come to understand that all people are equal'**

## Ways to get involved

We've also got versions of *Count Your Blessings* especially for children and young people. To order these or to get more copies of this daily journey

visit: [christianaid.org.uk/lent](http://christianaid.org.uk/lent)

email: [orders@christian-aid.org](mailto:orders@christian-aid.org)

phone: 0870 078 7788



Children's version.



Collective version (for young people). Download your copy or use the Collective version of the app.

## Free Count Your Blessings app

Daily reflections and actions, alongside inspirational photos from our partners, delivered straight to your smart phone or tablet.

Available as a free download from the **Apple App store** or **Google Play**.



## Week 1

18–22  
February

### Food and water

Your total for  
week 1:

### Wednesday 18 Ash Wednesday

We often run water until it's the right temperature. But 748 million people don't have access to safe water. That's the combined population of Brazil, Russia, the UK, US and Zimbabwe.

**Give 10p** every time  
you run water today.

### Thursday 19

162 million young children are still suffering from chronic undernutrition: they are hungry and often ill because they don't get enough vitamins and minerals.

**Give 40p** for every  
food group in your  
fridge.

### Friday 20

Communities often go without enough food because they have a bad harvest and don't have the luxury of a supermarket to top up their supplies.

**Give 20p** for  
everything you eat  
or drink today that  
is produced outside  
the British Isles.



### Weekend 21 & 22

In many parts of the world, women are responsible for feeding their family. Elema explains that grinding the grain, fetching water and making food are duties for women in her community. But it's traditional for the men to eat first and the women to get the leftovers.

**Give 50p** for every meal you  
have had prepared for you  
this weekend.

## Week 2

23 Feb –  
1 March

### Financial security

Your total for  
week 2:

### Monday 23

It's Fairtrade Fortnight! Fairly traded products offer better prices to the hard-working producers, and ensure decent working conditions and fair terms of trade.

**Give 20p** for each  
fairtrade product you  
can name.

### Tuesday 24

In parts of Ethiopia, women don't traditionally have the right to inherit any of their husband's or parents' assets.

**Pray** for our partners  
who challenge the  
structures that keep  
people poor.



### Wednesday 25

Where our money goes shapes the world. Ask your pension fund whether your money is invested in risky fossil fuel projects or is funding a fairer future.

Visit [christianaid.org.uk/greenlight](http://christianaid.org.uk/greenlight) to take action.

### Thursday 26

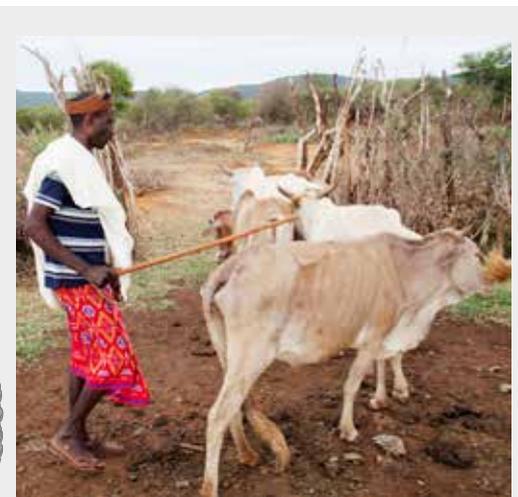
Savings and loans groups provide communities with opportunities to borrow money. When they pay it back, others can then borrow money.

**Give 50p** for each bank  
account that you have  
access to.

### Friday 27

Our UK state pension helps to maintain a decent standard of living when we retire. For many around the world, if they can't work or grow their own food then no one will provide for them.

**Give 40p** for every  
year that you have  
paid in to a pension  
scheme.



### Weekend 28 & 1

Galgalo used to make all the financial decisions in his household. He says: 'If I wanted to sell a cow, I would sell it. Then I would spend the money however I wanted, I might give my wife a bit to spend on the children, or I might not.' Thanks to the work of HUNDEE, Galgalo sees the importance of involving his wife. Now they go to market together so there is no secrecy in how much money is made and spent.

**Give 50p** for each time you  
use a credit or debit card  
this weekend.

## Week 3

2–8 March

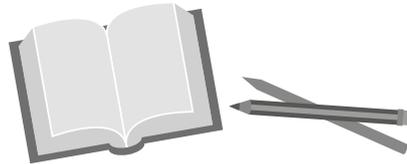
### Education

Your total for week 3:

#### Monday 2

Education opens up opportunities. Bokiya wants to be a doctor when she finishes school.

**Give 30p** for the number of professions you wanted to be as a child. **Give 50p more** if it became true.



#### Tuesday 3

Elema's father wouldn't let her go to school. Now she's in her 50s, she feels it is too late.

**Give 30p** for each qualification you've taken as an adult.



#### Wednesday 4

Every year, 14 million girls get married before the age of 18. At school, girls like Bokiya learn about their rights and the dangers of child marriage.

**Pray** that girls will be courageous and able to stand up for their rights.

#### Thursday 5 World Book Day

Today we celebrate being able to read. But 781 million adults around the world lack basic literacy skills.

**Give 5p** for the number of books on your bookshelf that you haven't read.

#### Friday 6

More than one in four children in developing regions are likely to drop out of primary school for reasons beyond their control.

**Give 50p** for every educational institution you have attended.

#### Weekend 7 & 8

Through community education, HUNDEE helps parents to understand that girls should go to school as well as boys. Bokiya says: 'I like education because I can be a self-helper, a strong woman who can help herself.'

Visit [christianaid.org.uk/reflect](http://christianaid.org.uk/reflect) and use the weekly reflection to consider the gift of education.

## Week 4

9–15 March

### Gender

Your total for week 4:

#### Monday 9

If you take farming out of the equation, only 20% of paid jobs in northern Africa are held by women.

**Pray** for equality for women in northern Africa, and around the world.



#### Tuesday 10

In 2013, almost 300,000 women died globally from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth.

**Give 50p** for each woman you know who has received specialist care during or after her pregnancy.



#### Wednesday 11

Through our partners, women like Elema have found support networks to turn to in difficult times.

**Give 40p** for every woman who supports you in times of trouble.

#### Thursday 12

In many societies, women can't leave home without a chaperone. Our partners support income-generating projects to do at home, such as cultivating silk worms in Afghanistan.

**Give 30p** for each place you go to on your own today.

#### Friday 13

Thanks to HUNDEE, Galgalo recognises that there shouldn't be any supremacy between men and women. He shares the household tasks he previously considered 'women's work'.

**Give 20p** for each chore you think is a job for the opposite sex.



#### Weekend 14 & 15 Mothering Sunday

Elema followed tradition and was proud when her daughter got married aged 12. Shortly afterwards, Elema watched her die in labour. With the help of HUNDEE, Elema now campaigns against child marriage and protects girls like Bokiya who flee from it. 'Not only will my daughters be over 18 when they marry, but I will protect other girls too,' Elema says. Thanks to her, the community has prevented many child marriages.

**Pray** for Elema and other courageous women who challenge traditions to protect young girls.

## Week 5

16–22 March

### Having a voice

Your total for week 5:

### Monday 16

Often we take our own voice for granted. Make sure yours gets heard by joining our network of local lobbyists who regularly contact their MPs to demand a fairer world for all.

Visit [christianaid.org.uk/locallobbyist](http://christianaid.org.uk/locallobbyist)



### Tuesday 17

Since women have been given a voice at community meetings, Elema has noticed changes that are improving the lives of women.

**Give 30p** for each group you are part of where your opinion counts.



### Wednesday 18

Saudi Arabia and Vatican City are the only two states in the world where women are denied the right to vote.

**Thank God** for all those who have fought for years in order to achieve universal suffrage.

### Thursday 19

We have so many ways to share our thoughts with the world, but for many this freedom of speech is denied.

**Give 50p** for each method of sharing your opinion you use today.

### Friday 20

In 36 countries, women now hold more than 30% of seats in national parliament in at least one chamber.

**Give 50p** for each female head of state you can name.

### Weekend 21 & 22

It is custom in many societies for a woman not to speak in public meetings, but to tell a man what she wants to say and they may say it for her. HUNDEE has worked with Galgalo and his community to change this. Now women attend and speak at these meetings too. Galgalo says: 'It is a useful thing to do; it helped us to see that women are valuable and they bring a lot.'

**Thank God** for all the women's opinions that you are able to hear.

## Week 6

23–29 March

### Emergencies

Your total for week 6:

### Monday 23

Emergencies often leave women alone and vulnerable, having lost men who were either at work or stayed behind to protect their property.

**Pray** for those trying to rebuild their lives.

### Tuesday 24

Long periods of drought plague Zimbabwe. We're helping communities to build dams to survive.

**Give 30p** for each way you use water today.

### Wednesday 25

In the Philippines, natural disasters happen regularly. Communities are learning to recognise the warning signs so they have time to evacuate.

**Give 60p** for every smoke alarm you have.

### Thursday 26

Emergencies destroy a community's way of earning a living. We help people to develop sustainable ways to earn money.

**Give 40p** for each job you've had.

### Friday 27

Climate change hits the poorest people hardest, yet they did the least to cause it. For the love of your global neighbours, join the movement for climate action.

**Act now:** [christianaid.org.uk/climate-summer](http://christianaid.org.uk/climate-summer)



### Weekend 28 & 29

In Ethiopia, HUNDEE gives goats and cows to poor women so they can have milk for their children and a way of earning money. Galgalo says this is how the community used to help each other, but poverty forced them to stop. Our partners work hard to get to know communities and meet their needs. This also helps them to know their way around and reach communities quickly in emergency situations.

**Give £1** if you know the route to hospital. Would you know an alternative way if that route was blocked?

**Week 7**  
**Holy Week**  
30 March–  
5 April

**Climate change**

Your total for week 7:

**Monday 30**

Concentration of CO<sub>2</sub> has increased by 40% since pre-industrial times. Car emissions and gas and electricity usage all contribute to this.

**Give 40p** for each car journey and **20p** for each journey on public transport you make.

**Tuesday 31**

If we don't act fast, climate change could cause a global temperature rise of up to 4.5°C.

**Count the number of radiators you have in your home. Give 30p** for each one.

**Wednesday 1**

Today, thousands of people all over the world will go without food as part of the Fast for the Climate movement.

**Join in and find out more at [christianaid.org.uk/fastfortheclimate](http://christianaid.org.uk/fastfortheclimate)**

**Thursday 2**  
**Maundy Thursday**

Galgalo has to find water for his cattle, but it is getting harder because the rains are more erratic.

**Give £1** if you have checked the weather forecast today.

**Friday 3**  
**Good Friday**

Our partners are teaching alternative farming techniques to help farmers cope with changing climate conditions.

**Praise God** for innovative techniques that allow people to adapt to changing weather patterns.



**Weekend 4 & 5**  
**Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday**

When Elema was growing up she remembers that the cattle were fat, the children always had milk to drink and it rained regularly so it was good for the area. But now this isn't the case. 'We are facing poverty, we are facing hunger because of the ever-changing climate in this area,' she says.

**Pray** that more people understand the effects of climate change and demand a stop to it.

**Thank you for counting your blessings**

Your total:

**£45** could buy two goats for a woman living in Ethiopia. They will provide milk for her children and an income when she sells off any leftover milk.

**£54** can provide a day of training in basic business skills for 30 women.

**How to donate**



Visit [christianaid.org.uk/lent](http://christianaid.org.uk/lent) and donate online.



Call 020 7523 2269 quoting the reference number below to donate by credit or debit card.



Send a cheque with the form below. (Please write 'Count Your Blessings' on the reverse of the cheque.)

**Please return this form, along with your donations, to: Count Your Blessings, Christian Aid, 35 Lower Marsh, London SE1 7RL.**

We would love to hear your thoughts on *Count Your Blessings 2015*. Please email [info@christian-aid.org](mailto:info@christian-aid.org) or write to us at the address above.

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Today's date

To qualify for Gift Aid, you must pay an amount of UK income tax and/or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax that all the charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that you donate to will reclaim on your gifts for that tax year (currently 25p for every £1 given). Other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not apply. Tax year is 6 April one year to 5 April the next.