

A Christmas message
from your sister Marthe
in the Democratic
Republic of Congo

£1

every £ you donate

£1

£1

doubled by the Big Give

+ giftaid it

= £2.25

Dear <cherished member>

<November 2020>

My name is Marthe, and I'm writing from Mothers' Union in Kinshasa, the capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). As we approach Christmas and look forward to celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ together, I want to thank you for the continued support you give to families and women around the world.

This year, I am excited to bring you some good news for Advent and Christmas. Led by the team at Mary Sumner House, Mothers' Union is taking part in the Big Give Christmas Challenge.

If you can give this Christmas, whatever you give online will go twice as far so we can help more women in the DRC change their lives for the better.

You see, life in the DRC is extremely hard for women and girls, and has been made even tougher as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the past 20 years, I have seen the ongoing civil war tear through our country, bringing with it terrible poverty and a culture of violence that affects every aspect of our society. To grow up as a girl or to be a mother in this environment is hard to imagine unless you have seen it. You have to be strong and take courage in God's grace. And many women do. They wake each morning trusting in the love of God and the strength he gives them to laugh, smile and find joy in their lives.

But, for our sisters who cannot read and write, it is so much harder to be strong.

Illiteracy holds women back here, severely. It simply pushes them to the bottom of society, and robs them of the opportunities and confidence needed to combat the gender inequalities they face on a daily basis.

I recently met one of those women, Theresa at the Mothers' Union business skills training workshop here in Kinshasa.

As a girl, Theresa attended primary school, but when her mother and father died, so did Theresa's education. She was forced to join her aunt, selling food in the market, and when she was still very young, she got married.

Their first child was a girl, which made her husband angry. 'Why do you give us girls?' he would rage. 'Why can you not give us a boy? I need a boy.' Theresa's husband beat her and she cried every day. Eventually, she fell pregnant again and had a boy.

That means
any donations
made online
between 1st and
8th December
will be doubled.

Please turn over

One donation.
Double the impact



theBigGive
CHRISTMAS CHALLENGE
1—8 DECEMBER 2020

Between noon 1st December – noon 8th December
the Big Give will **double** donations made online at the Big Give website
www.mothersunion.org/Christmas up to £46,000.

Don't
forget

Tear me off and stick me
on your fridge, pin board,
or somewhere that will
help you remember to
donate between the 1st
and 8th December



Picture taken before Covid-19

With Christmas around the corner, I am thinking of women like Theresa, and how your gift can make such a difference to their future.

Though her husband worked, he drank a lot, so there was never any money left. It fell to Theresa to put food on the table for her family. She took up dressmaking and provided household support for local ministers. They helped her learn to speak French, but not to read or write. Illiterate, she was still left out of opportunities in her community and unable to challenge the real issues that affected her, especially at home.

Your gift this Christmas can promise a brighter future for women in the DRC by giving them a second chance at education that will enable them to build a future for themselves and their family.

Finally, Theresa enrolled on our literacy and skills programme, where she learned not only how to read and write but how to plan and manage her finances. Her confidence and awareness of her rights, and the support available, grew so much, she left her abusive husband to make her own way in the world with her children.

Today, Theresa’s life has completely changed. She’s a leader in her community now. Not only does she teach other women how to make dresses but inspires them to learn to read and write too. As the saying goes, ‘when you educate a woman, you educate a community’. That’s a gift that can never be taken away.



When I think back to my childhood here in the DRC, I remember my mother’s big family feast on Christmas Day. I cherish those memories, and I wish all our sisters in Christ to enjoy such happy celebrations. But if you’re a woman, living in the shadows of illiteracy here today, a Christmas like that is beyond their wildest dreams. So, this Christmas will you help more women step out from the shadows of illiteracy and into the light?

We know that there will be many calls on you over Christmas, so please only give if you are able. If you are able to support this project by giving online or offline using the donation form below, your gift will truly last a lifetime for someone like Theresa.

I know so many women here who would benefit from our Mothers’ Union support. With your gift, we promise to help more women in the DRC improve their lives with literacy, business skills, a culture of saving and the confidence to fulfil their ambitions and realise their rights.

Christmas Promises and Blessings

Although we’re apart, we share in God’s Grace together and celebrate the birth of His son Jesus Christ. With my letter are six promises for our sisters and brothers in the DRC, and six blessings for you to share with your family and friends this Christmas. May God’s promise of a hope-filled future comfort and bless you and those you will miss this Christmas, and always.



Marthe VIRA

Marthe Vira
Project Coordinator, Democratic Republic of Congo,
Mothers’ Union

PS. If you cannot give online but still want to support women in the DRC, you can simply fill in the donation form overleaf and post it back in the enclosed Freepost envelope. Although your donation won’t be doubled, it will still make a difference.

Additional project match funding kindly provided by



Mothers’ Union Mary Sumner House, 24 Tufton Street, London, SW1P 3RB
T 020 7222 5533 E fundraising@mothersunion.org W www.mothersunion.org

Yes, I want to support women in the DRC this Christmas, but cannot give online.

Please accept my gift of: £

1. My details

2. My donation

Please enclose a cheque made payable to Mothers’ Union or complete the credit/debit card details below.

Visa MasterCard Switch CAF Charity Card

Card No

Valid from m m y y

Expiry date m m y y

Issue No. switch only

Security code

Signed:

3. Please return this form or any cheque donations to:

Mothers’ Union, Mary Sumner House, 24 Tufton Street, London, SW1P 3RB

Tick this box to make every £1 of your gift worth 25p more for FREE.

Yes, I want to Gift Aid any donations made to Mothers’ Union now, in the future and in the past four years until I notify you otherwise.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

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4. Staying in contact

To stop receiving information from us, tick this box or call us on 020 7222 5533 or you can email fundraising@mothersunion.org

To help Mothers’ Union save costs, I do not require an acknowledgement.





CUTTER GUIDE

PERF LINE

