Like many families in her remote village, Doney and her family have often gone months without enough to eat. But with the support of Caritas Australia and local partner CADECOM, the people of Doney’s community have learned to harness their strengths. Today they are building new livelihoods, improving health and growing literacy to create paths towards a better future.

Please donate to Project Compassion 2016 and help people in remote areas of Malawi harness their strengths and pave the way towards a thriving future.

You can donate through Parish boxes and envelopes, by visiting www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion or phoning 1800 024 413.

MASS TIMES

ST THERESA’S
Drummartin St, Albion
9.00 am Friday
10.30am Sunday

MOTHER OF GOD
Blanche St, Ardeer
10.00am Wednesday (Pol)
9.00am Thursday
6.00pm Friday (Polish)
6.00pm Saturday
10.30am Sunday (Polish)

QUEEN OF HEAVEN
Holt St, Ardeer
9.00am Wednesday
9.00am Sunday
4.30pm Sunday
   (Syro-Malabar).

RECONCILIATION
Saturday 20th February, 10.00am at St Theresa’s.

DEANERY LEADERSHIP TEAM
Thursday February, 7.30pm at Our Lady’s, Maidstone.

EVENING PRAYER GROUP
Thursdays, 7.00pm at Queen of Heaven. All welcome.

CLEANERS
Saturday 20th February (QH) L Galea
(MG) J Archabuz, B Wawrowski (ST) M Alexander

THANKSGIVING
Weekly TG Pledge: $1620
Last Week’s Giving: $1386
Presbytery Collection: $541

COUNTERS
21st February
Team 4: J Camilleri, M Buhaguar, J Zammit

READINGS

Today
Deuteronomy 26:4-10
Psalm 91
Romans 10:8-13

Next Week
Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18
Psalm 27:7-8, 9, 13-14
Philippians 3:17 – 4:1

PRAY TO LET THEM STAY
Tuesday 16th February 11.00am at St Patrick’s Cathedral
Following from Archbishop Denis Hart’s letter, a liturgy will be conducted by Bishop Vincent Long to pray for the safety and care of the 267 Asylum Seekers facing deportation back to Nauru. ALL ARE WELCOME.
Inquiries: justice@cam.org.au or Facebook at: https://www.facebook.com/events/1505130539792964/

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER
Preparation Meeting at St Paul’s Parish, Glengala Rd, West Sunshine on Wednesday 17th February at 11.00am.

MARY MACKILLOP CENTRE OPEN DAY Saturday 20 February, 10am–4pm
Mary MacKillop Heritage Centre, 362 Albert St, East Melbourne
In 2016 we celebrate the 150th year of the founding of the congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart by Mary MacKillop and Fr Julian Tenison Woods in 1866. This is our first weekend open day of 2016, our sesquicentenary year. Visit the Mary MacKillop Museum, pray in the chapel where Mary prayed, visit the gift shop and enjoy light refreshments. A local guided walking tour will also take place at 11am. Everyone welcome.
Details: 9926 9300
Doney’s story – learning more, creating change

‘Education is an act of hope’ Pope Francis.

Doney (pronounced door-nee) is a quiet and humble woman, but thanks to an innovative program supported by Caritas Australia, she’s creating big changes— in her life— and in her village.

Doney beams when she talks about how much her life has changed in the last five years. “My life has been transformed,” she smiles. “I am now more knowledgeable on a number of issues and I have a vision.”

Located in East Africa, Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world. Over half the population is living below the poverty line, with more than 80% of people living in rural communities, and relying on farming small plots of land to produce adequate food to live on.

In Doney’s remote village in the Blantyre region, her family have often gone months without enough food. Yet, when Caritas Australia and the local Caritas, called CADECOM (the Catholic Development Commission in Malawi), began a program in Doney’s village, they didn’t simply see poverty, isolation and food shortage, they saw potential.

CADECOM worked with Doney’s community to identify their strengths, so they can build on them to meet their needs. “It is important to use the local resources that we have so that our lives can improve. We have water here, and land, which can move us out of poverty,” explains Doney.

Empowering the community to make the most of their land, CADECOM trained families in new farming techniques, so they can produce more plentiful and reliable crops. “The problem of malnutrition in my household is old song now,” smiles Doney.

As the community looked at their strengths, Doney’s skills and passion for education were quickly recognised. “I was chosen by the community and after that CADECOM took me for training in Adult Literacy as a Facilitator,” she says.

Despite only finishing primary school, Doney’s training gave her the skills to teach literacy and numeracy to adults in the village. “In the past people didn’t know how to read and write. They didn’t even know the direction of the bus as they didn’t know how to read the sign posts,” explains Doney. “Now many are able to read and write as well as know how to count money.”

Knowing how to count, tally and work with money became more important when a Village Savings and Loan group was introduced as part of the program. This enables people to borrow money to invest in starting their own small businesses. “My husband Nedson is a tailor,” Doney says. “When we get funds from Village Savings and Loans we buy materials for him to sew. We sell the products and through this we get money to pay our children’s school fees.”

Doney is determined that her five children complete secondary school. Even though just 7% of 15-24 year olds in Malawi complete secondary education, she has strong hopes. “I encourage my children to attain education so that they can be independent in the future,” she says. “This would make me proud!”

As Doney’s village harness their new skills, CADECOM is working in solidarity with them to improve health and sanitation. The program helped families build hand-washing facilities at their homes, and provided education on hygiene. CADECOM also worked with the community to install a borehole so that people have easy access to fresh, clean drinking water and do not have to use unsafe river water for drinking, cooking and washing. “Here, waterborne diseases were common,” says Doney. “But now there is a reduction.” These days there are far fewer cases of diseases like diarrhoea, which once stopped children from going to school.

Doney is proud of the new skills and fresh hope that her community has gained. Each family— and the village as a whole— has mapped out a vision for the future. It includes a plan to learn new livelihood techniques, like beekeeping and baking, and ways to increase their access to clean water and healthcare. “The village is developing,” she says. “I would like to thank the people of Australia. The support you provide to us is going to the right people, and is helping us.”