

Notice for church bulletin/newsletter/website

Film screening

You are invited to a screening of Lettie, a new short film from the charity Mary's Meals. Named in honour of Our Lady, Mary's Meals provides nutritious meals for more than 3 million children in schools in areas of great need, and Lettie received these meals as a child in Malawi. In the film, she tells her own incredible story and talks about the transformation that began with daily meals in school.

Date & Time:

Location:

Talk for film screening

Before the film

Welcome to this special screening of Lettie, a new film produced by Mary's Meals in which a young woman called Lettie Saidi shares her remarkable story.

Any housekeeping announcements e.g. location of fire exits and toilets, and a thank you to the venue hosting the screening

Today's film begins in Malawi, and this is where Mary's Meals also began over 20 years ago. During a famine in 2002, Mary's Meals' founder, Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow, travelled from Scotland to Malawi to find out about the crisis and what support was required. Meeting a 14-year-old boy called Edward, who told Magnus that he dreamed of having enough food to eat and the chance to go to school, was the catalyst for setting up a

small, community-led school feeding programme in two schools. This project was inspired by Our Lady and her love as mother to all, which is why the charity is named in her honour. Mary's Meals started serving school meals to around 200 children in 2003 and has since grown to reach more than 3 million children in thousands of schools across 16 countries.

Magnus first met Lettie in 2012 when making a film called Child 31 – she had lost both of her parents and was living a difficult life caring for her younger brothers and struggling to support them. Now, many years later, she tells us her story: how Mary's Meals has changed things for her and her family, through food, education and compassion.

We are privileged to share Lettie's story with you.

Talk for film screening

After the film

Thanks for watching. I'm sure you'll agree the film gives a very moving insight into how school meals can make a big difference for children experiencing poverty.

Lettie was propelled into adulthood when she lost both parents while still a young girl, and suddenly the wellbeing of her young brothers became her responsibility. Understandably, it was a huge struggle. School meals made a different reality possible, with the security of a reliable daily meal and the chance to continue at school bringing hope.

We saw that Lettie now works as a Communications Assistant, sharing the stories of children receiving Mary's Meals today, and inspiring people around the world to support this mission.

Lettie's is just one story. Mary's Meals is currently serving meals to more than 1.3 million children in Malawi. Since Mary's Meals began, millions of children have eaten billions of meals. And, as a result, many will have used their education to be more successful farmers, or tradespeople, or set up businesses to help support their families. Others have passed exams, progressed on to secondary school and even further or higher education. In today's film, we saw a small number of these 'children' who are now young adults, studying at college and making their way in the world as independent men and women. There are many more stories we may never hear, but there is joy in playing our part to help children fulfil their potential. We are so thankful to our supporters for helping to make this possible: incredible individuals, families, churches, schools, and companies giving what they can to Mary's Meals.

The growth of our work is also a testament of the power of prayer. Before Mary's Meals began, our founder Magnus' faith was renewed during his first pilgrimage to Medjugorje in 1983, after hearing

reports of apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Today, pilgrims from around the world find out about our work from our local visitor centre in Medjugorje and often return home to spread the word in their own communities. Each day, people around the world pray for the continuation and growth of the Mary's Meals mission, in their families, schools, churches and prayer groups.

Stories like Lettie's are a call to put our faith into action. As Pope Leo XIV shared in his apostolic exhortation *Dilexi Te*:

"No Christian can regard the poor simply as a societal problem; they are part of our 'family.' They are 'one of us.'"

Mary's Meals provides daily school meals to more than 3 million children in communities where hunger, poverty and limited access to education affect children's lives. Across our programme countries there are children waiting for Mary's Meals to arrive in their school, their village, their town. Our vision is that every child receives one daily meal in their place of education and that all those who have more than they need, share with those who lack even the most basic things

On average, it costs us just €22 (EUR) / \$25.20 USD / £19.15 (GBP) to provide a child with Mary's Meals for a whole school year. This works out at just 11c EUR / 13c USD / 10p GBP per meal – small amounts of money can make a huge difference to children living in poverty and experiencing hunger, and can help make a better future – like Lettie's – possible.

I know many of you will be moved to act by what you have seen today. For that, and your presence tonight, I would like to say a huge thank you.

Choose a few calls to action from the next page to suit your audience and event.



Call to action

Pray

Please support our work in prayer, asking Our Lady to intercede for the work of Mary's Meals so it may continue to grow and flourish in her name.

Give

If you would like to give a donation to help us continue providing life-changing school meals to children around the world, we have buckets available on your way out. If you would like to donate online, or to find out more about setting up a regular gift or fundraising, you can speak to us or visit our website.

Volunteer

You can give your time to support Mary's Meals by becoming a volunteer. Our work would not be possible without our volunteers and their various contributions. Whether you can help with raising awareness, fundraising, administration or have other skills to share, we would love to hear from you. Please speak to me or a member of our team.

Feed a School

Individuals, families, churches or groups can choose to fund meals for a whole school through our Mary's Meals Feed A School initiative. This is a great way to support children and make a difference to a whole community, and you will receive a personal report from your chosen school in Malawi or Zambia. If you're interested in finding out more, please speak to a member of our team.

Legacy/Gift in will

In Lettie's story we saw the long-term impact of Mary's Meals for one child, and how this continues to live on as she works to support her own son and tells the stories of today's children receiving hope in the form of Mary's Meals porridge. Leaving a gift in your will is a powerful way to give hope to future generations, helping Mary's Meals to continue to provide life-changing school meals to children impacted by hunger and poverty. If you are interested in finding out more, please speak to me or a member of our team.

Join supporter group

We are forming a Mary's Meals supporter group at this parish and would love to welcome you. Our group will spread the word about Mary's Meals and encourage people to support the mission, including through organising fundraising events and prayer initiatives. Please leave your contact details with a member of our team if you would like to find out more.

Spread the word

You can help Mary's Meals to grow by spreading the word! Share our posts on your social media, share a leaflet with a friend, organise your own screening of Lettie or invite us to give a talk about Mary's Meals to a group, school, church or company.

Please come to speak to us if you have any questions about our work or about the film, and we would be delighted to have a chat with you.

Thanks again for coming tonight, and for your support of the mission of Mary's Meals.

Prayers to share after your screening

Blessed Mother, please comfort children who, like Lettie, have lost their parents and are faced with the challenges of working or caring for their young siblings. We pray that they will be kept safe from harm and supported by those around them as they grow up. Amen

Lord Jesus, we give thanks for the spirit of generosity that inspires people to share with their neighbours and those who are struggling, even when they have little to spare. May this spirit of generosity spread into the hearts of those who have more than they need and prompt them to offer their support to those in need, whether directly or through Mary's Meals. Amen

We pray for children who are malnourished or experiencing poor health because of a lack of food. Heavenly Father, help Mary's Meals and other organisations to reach children in the greatest need so they can grow and thrive. Amen

Loving Father, we pray for all the young people around the world who are inspired to fundraise for Mary's Meals. May their efforts be fruitful, helping to bring hope and opportunities to the next child waiting for Mary's Meals. Amen

Blessed Jesus, we know that You can move mountains and overcome all barriers. We ask for Your help in breaking down barriers to education, including hunger, conflict, and poverty, so that all children and their communities can benefit from the opportunity to learn. Amen

Lord, soften the hearts of all those hearing about Mary's Meals for the first time today – in Medjugorje, through this film, in person, or online. Guide them in how to use their gifts, in line with Your will, to strengthen the work of Mary's Meals. Amen



Discussion questions

Exploring the themes of the film

- Which moment from the film made the greatest impression on you?
- Throughout the film, we see and hear about various barriers to education. Which seem the most significant to you, and how could these be tackled?
- Lettie takes time to visit Anachipeta, a generous neighbour who supported her and her brothers during a very difficult period. What does selfless generosity mean to you? What examples of generosity have you heard about or seen in action that have brought you joy or challenged you to be more generous?
- Lettie's role as Communications Assistant involves sharing the stories of children receiving Mary's Meals and highlighting the impact of this work. How effective are stories like Lettie's in helping us to understand the power of a simple daily meal?
- As Youth Ambassador Martha describes in the film, many people experience a renewal of faith in Medjugorje and go home with a desire to live out their faith in a new way. Have you ever had an experience like this when your faith was renewed, and what was the experience?

Exploring how to respond to the film in prayer and action

- How can we as a church or group consistently support the Mary's Meals mission in prayer?
- With communities losing their crops to flooding during Cyclone Freddy, the chance for children like Chinsisi to receive Mary's Meals is a lifeline. Do you think the public are aware of natural disasters like this and the impact on families already living in poverty? How can our church or group help raise awareness and support Mary's Meals in its efforts to reach more communities in areas of great need with vital school meals?
- What does putting our faith into action mean to us? What do we feel called to do after watching this film?
- Life-long fundraiser Charlie speaks about the little acts of love that make Mary's Meals possible. What is one little act of love we could do this month to help raise funds or awareness for Mary's Meals?