

## FOR YOUR DIARY



**22 March—World Water Day— Buy a share in a [water tank](#) for thirsty Ugandans?**

**4 April [International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action](#)**

**7 April [World Health Day](#)— Protect yourself from vector-borne diseases.**

**17 April [Global Day of Action on Military Spending](#)**

**22 April [Earth Day](#)**

### Share Your Blessings:

***Give thanks for the Harvest. Worship and other resources are available. Will you share your blessings?***



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## Give thanks for Water



*Photo: ACT Alliance/PJeffrey*  
Aged 6, Heart enjoys clean filtered water thanks to ACT Alliance in Tanauan, Leyte, Philippines. *Photo: ACT/P Jeffrey*

The United Nations has designated 22 March as [World Water Day](#). Drinking safe water is a luxury that 780 million of the world's population don't have. Drinking unsafe water can be deadly—more than 3.4 million people die every year from water, sanitation and hygiene related diseases.

The [Ecumenical Water Network](#) is making a pilgrimage for water justice during Lent. In the first week's reflection George Zachariah from India's Mar Thoma Church quotes Revelation 22:17, "Let everyone who is thirsty come." He says water should not be bought and sold as a commodity but is "a free gift for all". He challenges readers to take action to reclaim water for the whole community. The Centre for Community Solidarity (see over) is passionate about clean water for orphans of HIV and AIDS in southwest Uganda. Show your support by buying water from [Gifted](#) or making a donation marked Water for Uganda.

### South Sudan: Little Sign of Breakthrough

The third round of mediation talks on the situation in South Sudan is due to begin on 21 March—please join local churches praying for peace. Both sides in the conflict have violated the January agreement to cease hostilities. ACT Alliance members [report](#) roughly a quarter of buildings in Bor were razed during combat. Government troops have retaken the town. ACT was one of the first to restart humanitarian relief to civilians. Wadalla Peter from CWS partner the Maridi Service Agency has been part of a civil society forum calling for greater involvement, noting it is the people who are dying not the leaders. More than 700,000 people have been displaced since fighting began in December.

## Uganda: Water brings Life



CWS partner the Centre for Community Solidarity reports that school attendance and achievement has markedly improved now that HIV and AIDS orphans no longer have to make long treks for water. They have more time to do homework and help with household chores, collect firewood and tend animals. With a little more income the families can now afford to run an electric light bulb to help the children study. Better water, improved hygiene and attention to sanitation needs means the children are healthier. CWS has supported communities build 540 water tanks since 2008. Buying water from the [Gifted](#) range will enable CCS to build more.

## We Remember Ron O'Grady

CWS was saddened to hear of the recent death of Rev Ron O'Grady. Ron played a key role in the National Council of Churches where he held a number of positions, including for a short period acting director of CWS. He was a powerful advocate for deeper relationships with Asia, working with the East Asia Christian Conference later the Christian Conference of Asia. He was instrumental in drawing global attention to the exploitation of children as a founder of ECPAT (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking) and Asian Christian art. Through his writings, he shared his wide knowledge, clear insights and strong analysis, including through the Churches Agency on International Issues' publication on [tourism](#).

## Sri Lanka: Oppose Seed Act

CWS partner MONLAR is part of the National Movement for the Protection of Seed Rights. Recently around 500 people protested the new Seed Act saying it will cause harm. The movement believes this legislation which says a person cannot import, export, sell, supply or exchange seeds or planting material without certification by the Department of Agriculture will undermine farmers' rights and threaten biodiversity.

"Poor and small farmers in Sri Lanka cultivated and conserved thousands of different seed varieties for centuries to be used in the future generations and have been able to prevent hunger among all communities making this country self-sufficient in food. But the introduction of open economy and green revolution destroyed the agriculture in the country allowing local and international agri-business giants like Monsanto to take over the agriculture by introducing their agro-chemicals and seeds only for the sake of increasing their profits. Now their newest introduction is genetically modified seeds which have destroyed the theories of nature and terminated the regenerative capacities," said convener Rev. Mahamankadawala Piyarathana Thero.

## 31 March: Receipts

Making a donation that we receive on or before 31 March means that you can claim a tax credit at the end of the financial year. Download and send in an [IR526 form](#) to make a claim. CWS will be sending out annual receipts to [Regular Givers](#) shortly. Please consider giving your tax refund back to CWS so more people have safe water and new hope.

## Mothers Day Gifts

Look no further than the CWS [Gifted](#) range of products for something special for your mother on Mothers Day. If she taught you to garden, maybe buy [seeds](#) for a family in Sri Lanka or set up compost bins in Tonga. If you grew up on a farm, try [goats and sheep](#) for a Palestinian family. CWS will send you a card or magnet to send to your mother. And if you are a mother who likes the idea of giving to someone who needs it more, drop a hint to your children. Catalogues are available from [Emma](#).



## About Update

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