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ST JOHN'S CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL, PORTSMOUTH

RELEASE IMMEDIATE

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STARTS

Portsmouth Catholics Raise £11292 for Classrooms for CAFOD

It was a heart-warming celebration on Sunday 27 April as Canon David Hopgood of St John's Catholic Cathedral handed over a staggering £11292 to CAFOD. Catholics in Portsmouth Cathedral had been hard at work raising funds to buy a classroom through the CAFOD World Gifts scheme.

When the Cathedral conceived the idea of Building Blocks for a Classroom scheme throughout Lent 2008, the aim was to raise £3400 for one classroom to be purchased through the Catholic Agency For Overseas Development's World Gifts scheme. Through enthusiastic fundraising, especially the Sunday "bucket bouncers" at the end of each service, the idea soon captured the imagination of the congregation. Through the immense generosity of the parish the Cathedral has now been able to buy two classrooms (at £3400 each), over 500 school starter kits and a community water system. CAFOD - working with partners in CARITAS, the world-wide network of Catholic Agencies second only in size to the Red Cross - is currently building classrooms in Darfur in the Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and in Indonesia amongst other places. School starter kits, which provide materials for children to study, are being used world wide, for example in Tanzania, and a community water supplies initiative has been used extensively in South America.

Canon David Hopgood, Cathedral Dean, said: "This project has really taken off. Our parishioners have been overwhelmingly generous and their funds will go to improve the lives of our brothers and sisters in the developing world in a very practical and tangible way. Thank you to so many people who helped with the campaign."

Lynda Mussell, Portsmouth Diocesan Manager for CAFOD, commented: "We in CAFOD are so very grateful for the fantastic work and generosity of so many people in Portsmouth. This really is a miracle and we will be using the funds through the World Gifts scheme to transform the lives of so many people in the developing world."

ENDS

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