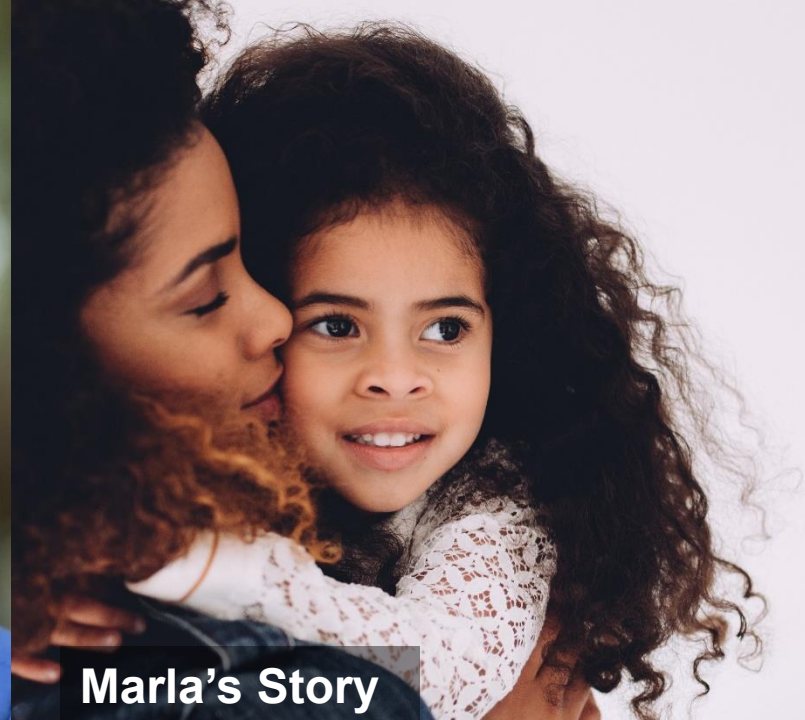




**Alex's Story**



**Ben's Story**



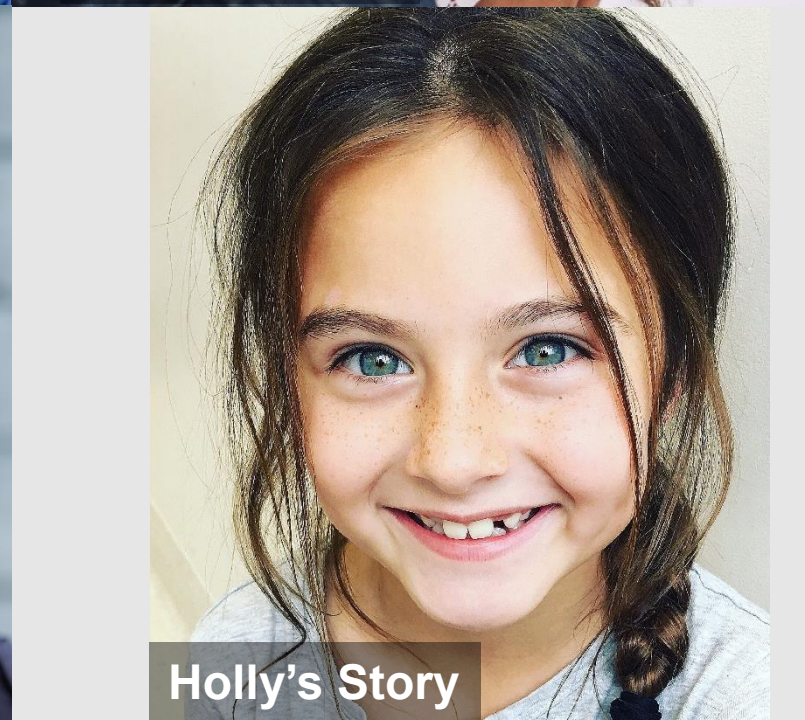
**Marla's Story**



**Daniel's Story**



**Joseph's Story**



**Holly's Story**





## **Alex's story**

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## Alex's story

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Alex is nine years old and lives in a flat with his mum and 13 year-old-brother.

Alex was born with a heart condition and has had many operations throughout his life.

Last year, Alex was told that he would need a major operation on his heart. It would take two months for Alex to recover from the operation- one month in the hospital and one month at home.



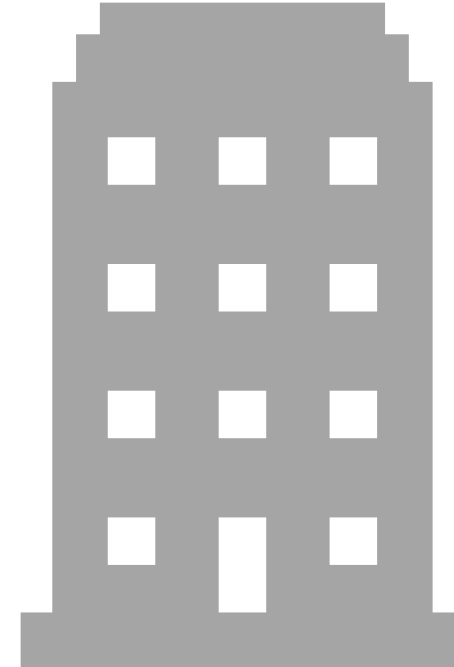
## Alex's story

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Alex's mum works in an office. Her manager told her that she could take the two months off to look after Alex, but she would not be paid.

Alex's mum did not know what to do. She needed to look after her son but if she didn't work, she wouldn't be able to pay the family's rent for their flat. The family could be evicted and lose their home.



## Alex's story

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Alex's teacher contacted the Catholic Children's Society to see if they could help.

Within 24 hours, the Catholic Children's Society gave Alex's mum the money she needed to pay the family's rent for two months.

Now the family can keep their home and Alex's mum can focus on caring for her son.



## Reflection

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Spend a minute quietly thinking about Alex's story.

- What problems did Alex and his family face?
- How did the Catholic Children's Society help Alex's family?
- How do you feel after hearing Alex's story?



## Prayer for The Year of the Word

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Living God,  
you walk alongside us  
and speak to us throughout the Scriptures.  
Your Son, Jesus Christ, listens to our hopes and fears  
and shows us how to live for one another.  
Send us the Holy Spirit to open our hearts and minds  
so that we may be your witnesses throughout the world.  
***Amen***

V. Your word is our path and your truth is our light.  
**R. This day and every day.**

Our Lady of the Annunciation  
***Pray for us***

St Matthew  
***Pray for us***

St Jerome  
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## **Ben's story**

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## Ben's story

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Five-year-old Ben lives with his mum, dad and baby sister. Ben's dad works as a cleaner and his mum stays at home to look after his sister.

Last October, the cleaning company that Ben's dad worked for closed and Ben's dad lost his job. He searched for a new job but couldn't find anything.

The family had just enough money to pay the rent for their home and their bills but were left with just £8 per week for food, travel and anything else they might need.



## Ben's story

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This meant that the family only had enough money to eat dinner three times a week and couldn't buy any food for breakfast.

At break times Ben would just sit on his own- he didn't have the energy to run around with his friends.

Ben's teacher asked him what was wrong. Ben told his teacher that he hadn't had anything to eat since his school lunch yesterday.



## Ben's story

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Ben's teacher contacted the Catholic Children's Society to see if they could help.

Within 24 hours, the Catholic Children's Society gave Ben's parents money to buy enough food for the family for two months.

The next day, Ben came into school happy and full of energy. Ben's dad has now found a new job and the family can enjoy breakfast, lunch and dinner.





## Reflection

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Spend a minute quietly thinking about Ben's story.

- What problems did Ben and his family face?
- How did the Catholic Children's Society help Ben's family?
- How do you feel after hearing Ben's story?

## Prayer for The Year of the Word

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## **Marla's story**

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## Marla's story

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Marla is seven years old and lives with her mum.

One Monday morning Marla and her mum woke up to find the floor of their flat completely flooded. The flood water reached Marla's knees.

Marla and her mum were told to leave everything behind and evacuate immediately.



## Marla's story

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The flooding was caused by a burst pipe, and Marla and her mum were told that it would be a month before they could return to their home.

Dressed in just their pyjamas and slippers, Marla and her mum went to a friend's house to sleep on their sofa bed. They had nothing to take with them- everything had been destroyed in the flooding.

Marla's mum had no money to buy any clothes and was very worried about how they would cope with just pyjamas and slippers to wear.



## Marla's story

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That day, Marla's teacher called the Catholic Children's Society to see if they could help.

Within 24 hours they gave Marla's mum money to buy clothes and shoes for her and her daughter.

Marla's mum said:

*"We were so desperate and sad that our home had been destroyed. But it was lovely that you helped us and that someone out there was thinking of us."*





## Reflection

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Spend a minute quietly thinking about Marla's story.

- What problems did Marla and her family face?
- How did the Catholic Children's Society help Marla's family?
- How do you feel after hearing Marla's story?

## Prayer for The Year of the Word

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## Daniel's story

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## Daniel's story

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Daniel is 15 years old and lives with his dad. Daniel loves football and plays for his school team.

But one day, Daniel winced in pain and had to sit out of a match because of his aching back.

Daniel's PE Teacher tried to find out what was wrong.





## Daniel's story

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Daniel's dad had been unwell and could not work. The family had recently moved into a new flat that was completely unfurnished. They had no money to buy furniture.

Sometimes Daniel and his dad would see that someone had left chairs on the street and were giving them away for free. Daniel found a cot bed and took the mattress home to sleep on.

Daniel was much too big for the mattress and found it difficult to sleep. Without bedding, he would just use his coat as a pillow.

This was giving him a sore back and stopping him from playing football.



## Daniel's story

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Daniel's PE Teacher called the Catholic Children's Society to see if they could help.

Within 24 hours the Catholic Children's Society gave Daniel's dad money to buy them both beds and bedding.

Now Daniel sleeps well every night and is back to scoring goals for his football team.



## Reflection

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Spend a minute quietly thinking about Daniel's story.

- What problems did Daniel and his family face?
- How did the Catholic Children's Society help Daniel's family?
- How do you feel after hearing Daniel's story?

## Prayer for The Year of the Word

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## **Joseph's story**

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## Joseph's story

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Joseph is 10 years old and lives with his grandparents.

Joseph's teacher noticed that Joseph had stopped speaking to his friends in school. At lunchtime he would sit on his in in the classroom.

Even in lessons, Joseph would move his chair to sit as far away from his classmates as possible.



## Joseph's story

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Joseph's uniform had started to smell musty and damp. Joseph was embarrassed by the smell and was worried about what his classmates would say.

Joseph's teacher spoke to his grandparents. They told his teacher that their washing machine had broken last month, and they had no money to buy a new one.

Joseph had been washing his clothes by hand in the sink using a bar of soap. This meant that his school uniform couldn't be washed or dried properly.



## Joseph's story

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Joseph's teacher contacted the Catholic Children's Society to see if they could help.

Within 24 hours, the Catholic Children's Society gave Joseph's grandparents the money they needed to buy a new washing machine.

Now Joseph comes to school wearing clean clothes and is happy to spend time with his friends again.





## Reflection

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Spend a minute quietly thinking about Joseph's story.

- What problems did Joseph and his family face?
- How did the Catholic Children's Society help Joseph's family?
- How do you feel after hearing Joseph's story?

## Prayer for The Year of the Word

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## Holly's story

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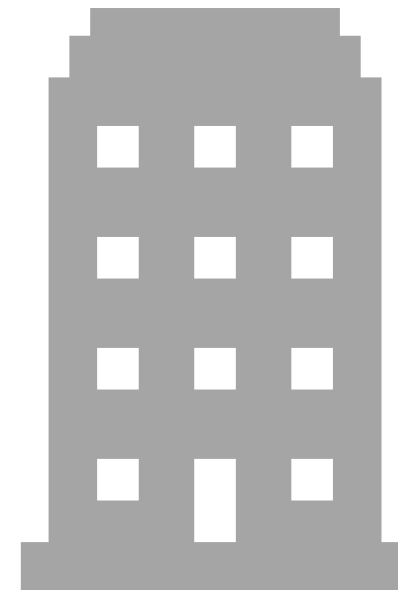
## Holly's story

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Holly is eight years old and lives in London with her mum and two-year-old sister.

Holly's family had lived in their flat for three years. One day the landlord came to the flat and told Holly's mum that she would have to leave the flat within a week.

Holly's family had nowhere to go and no family or friends to turn to.





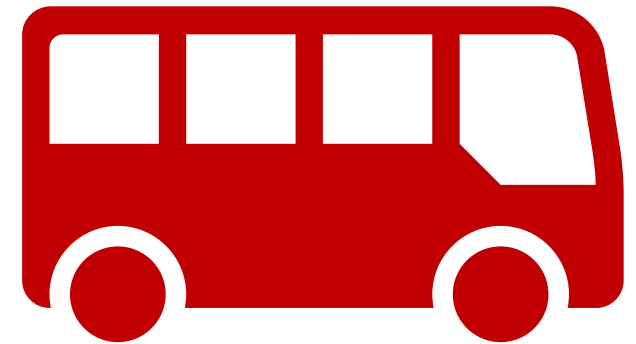
## Holly's story

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Holly's mum tried to find a new home but couldn't find anywhere. The landlord came to the flat and told the family they had to leave.

Holly's mum took a few bags - all that she could carry - and got on a bus with her two children. They travelled to the end of the bus line, then got onto another bus. Holly's family travelled between buses all night. They were too scared to sleep.



## Holly's story

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The next morning Holly's family arrived at school looking tired and very upset.

Holly's mum explained to the Headteacher what had happened. The Headteacher called the Council to help the family find a new home. They were told that they would have somewhere available in two days. In the meantime the family would be homeless.

## Holly's story

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Holly's Headteacher called the Catholic Children's Society to see if they could help.

That day, the Catholic Children's Society gave Holly's mum the money she needed to pay for somewhere to stay whilst they waited for a new home.

Holly's mum was so happy and relieved that her children would have somewhere safe to sleep.



## Reflection

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Spend a minute quietly thinking about Holly's story.

- What problems did Holly and her family face?
- How did the Catholic Children's Society help Holly's family?
- How do you feel after hearing Holly's story?



## Prayer for The Year of the Word

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