

Food, medicine, and badly needed connection:

Your Irish Red Cross Volunteers are connecting communities, thanks to you

Meet Peter Malone, Irish Red Cross Volunteer



Peter is a volunteer with the Tallaght Branch of the Irish Red Cross. And he brings us a touching story of how he helped out during the pandemic.

"My name is Peter Malone and I have been a volunteer with the Tallaght Branch of the Irish Red Cross for 9 years now, and I am currently the Unit Officer for my sins.

"I was furloughed from work fairly early on in the pandemic, which allowed me to get really involved in supporting our community during this most difficult time.

Initially, we spent time connecting with the local people, letting them know that we were there for them if required, and doing leaflet drops about how to cope with the stress and isolation of this period in time. We offered help to the vulnerable and self-isolating

people of our community with shopping collections and prescription deliveries.

"I considered it a blessing to be able to help those who needed it most.

"One of my regular prescription drops was to an elderly gentleman who lived alone. His wife passed several years previously. And his children were living overseas. He said to me, on one of my visits, that I was the only person he had seen in 4 months as he was afraid to go out.

"That was the defining moment of this pandemic for me. I suddenly realised that what I was doing (though trivial in my mind) was making such a difference to this gentleman's life. To be able to have that effect in a person's life is such a rewarding feeling and is why I will continue to be of service to my community.

"Be safe people."

With your help, Irish Red Cross inmate volunteers fight COVID-19 in prison communities

Inmates in prison have experienced extraordinary challenges during the pandemic and throughout the lockdown. But with your support, inmate volunteers are working hard to keep the virus at bay.

One of the many goals of our Community Based Health and First Aid Programme is to train inmate volunteers in infection control. Every inmate learns proper hand-washing techniques, as well as sneezing and coughing etiquette. Their work has contributed to cleaner prisons and the prevention of infection.

Before the coronavirus landed in Ireland, volunteers learned about its symptoms and dangers. Through peer education, the volunteers then shared this knowledge with other inmates. Their work helped each

prison population apply effective infection control measures and keep all prisoners safe from the virus for more than five months.

Volunteer inmates lead during lockdown

As lockdown began, inmates lost the in-person supports they would usually have. Teachers, psychologists, chaplains, and addiction counsellors could no longer enter the prisons.

That's when our inmate volunteers stepped up. They

continued to educate their peers about infection control and the necessary precautions to fight the virus. They spoke to inmates facing mental health challenges. They distributed education packs. They did their best to keep up positive morale throughout each prison.

Their hard work paid off. COVID-19 has remained under control in the prison community.

It's your support that makes lifesaving programmes like this one possible. We could not do it without you! Thank you.



To give online, visit: www.redcross.ie/frontline or call the team on Freephone: 1800 50 70 70

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Frontline

Your Red Cross Supporter Newsletter | Spring 2021



▲ Irish dairy farmers are helping feed those in need in Yemen.

Local heroes — Irish farmers came together to support war-torn Yemen

"I watched a father feeding his child a paste of sugar and water, because the child was too far advanced in starvation to consume anything else. In fact, the people there have nothing else to feed to the children."

Mike Magan, Irish dairy farmer

County Longford dairy farmer Mike Magan wanted to bring the entire Irish dairy industry together to support the relief work of the Red Cross in Yemen.

The *Irish Dairy Farmers Appeal* aimed to collect the value of the milk of one cow for one day from every dairy farmer in Ireland. The civil war and famine have left more than 24 million Yemenis in need of aid.

This is the world's single largest

humanitarian crisis.

Mike's idea spread quickly – first through social media. Then farmers began calling other farmers. Thanks to their bottom-up efforts, nearly 100% of dairy processors in Ireland now back the initiative. And to date, they have raised more than €100,000.

You're also a caring person. We're very grateful you choose to show that caring with your support of your Irish Red Cross.

Special thanks is also due to ICOS, the Irish Co-operative Organisation Society, and all the chairs and board members of dairy farming Co-ops all around the country, who so generously lent their support to the appeal.

Mike Magan told RTÉ, "We are a pretty caring bunch. We get up in the middle of the night to save a sick calf. So I thought, why don't we just change that care to caring for our fellow humans that are less fortunate than ourselves?"

Irish Red Cross Youth are sending support to people in Care Homes

They say children learn from what they see. And we can't help but see your generous spirit at work as our youth send letters and cards to vulnerable people in care homes or nursing homes.

Community is about reaching out with compassion. It's about staying connected and sending support to each other. That's why Irish Red Cross Youth is encouraging youth members to take part in An Post's "Care Homes Community Focus" initiative. With An Post, our youth can now reach out to communities

living in care homes across Ireland with free postage. As COVID-19 spread throughout Ireland, too many people were isolated and unable to visit with family or friends. But they could look forward to cheerful cards and letters from caring young people.



Thank you for your great kindness. You set a wonderful example for our young people to follow!

Your kindness began in Ireland and reached around the world this year



From Indonesia to Syria, to Yemen and Nepal and Beirut, you responded to people in need. And when COVID-19 came to Ireland, we knew we could count on you then as well.

When families separated by danger or war are reunited, that's

your support at work. And when our Red Cross Youth write lovely notes to cheer people isolated in care homes, it's because of your care. Emergency medical care and supplies... building back after disaster... everything the Red Cross does, it does with your partnership.

Across Ireland, thousands of volunteers, and supporters like you make our work – here at home and around the world – possible. For every kindness, every generous gift, every moment you have given, we are grateful to you.

Thank you for being so wonderful!

Thank you for sending urgent relief to the people of Beirut

Because of you, critical food parcels and hygiene kits were rushed to Lebanon!

When the blast shattered Beirut, it felt as though the whole world held its breath.

And while it was a relief to learn the cause wasn't terrorism, the awful blast left thousands of people without homes or supplies.

But we know the great kindness of the Irish people. And when we turned to you for help, we were certain you would respond. Your outpouring of generosity was amazing.

Each kit and parcel covers the basic hygiene and food needs of a family of five for one month.



Marco Baldan, a surgeon with the Red Cross.

Food parcels usually include staples like rice, pasta, canned tuna, canned beans, lentils, chickpeas, and sunflower oil.

And even months on, hygiene kits are still needed – and are being sent, thanks to you.

These kits include items such as towels, soap, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes, toilet paper, disposable razors, shaving cream, sanitary napkins and washing powder.

Marco Baldan, a surgeon with the

Red Cross, spoke about the tragic human toll of the blast, saying it's heart-breaking to see what Lebanon is going through. The country had already been experiencing a financial crisis when the coronavirus pandemic hit, affecting Beirut especially.

Thank you for your care for people miles away who need you – today and in the future.

How to care for yourself during lockdown

Self-care tips from Andre Dias, Irish Red Cross Youth Volunteer

Our Positive Mental Health Programme aims to provide young people (and the young at heart!) with the tools to monitor their mental health and well-being.

Andre Dias, from the Terenure/Rathmines branch, put together these handy tips.

Stick to a routine

Make sure you get enough sleep

Try to get daily exercise

Stay hydrated and drink plenty of water

Keep in touch with friends and family

Set yourself goals

Additional Positive Mental Health resources and information are available for free. Simply request them by emailing youth@redcross.ie

You're bringing families together again

Separated by violence or disaster, heartbroken families can turn to us – because you care



Leila was forced to flee her country.

She is a journalist, and her life was in grave danger from extremist groups in the area. She had to leave her parents, sister, and two brothers behind.

Soon, they were also threatened. The oldest brother was abducted and beaten as they tried to find

Leila. Her father was seriously ill and passed away. This added to the family's tremendous stress. They were finally forced to leave their home and go into hiding. They were always on the move as their lives were in real danger.

But because of you, the Irish Red Cross arranged for them to come to Ireland.

We are so pleased that her family were able to leave without being found. The day they were reunited at Dublin Airport, there were tears and joy. Thank you for bringing families together again.

We're sure you're as concerned as we are for Leila's safety, so her name and some details have been changed.

Your monthly gifts do a world of good!

We are especially grateful to a special group of people who give to us each month. Their steady support is crucial to your Irish Red Cross.

We can't know when or where the next crisis will happen. But thanks to our cherished monthly supporters, we can be ready the moment we're needed.

Would you like to become a monthly supporter? You might find it's quite easy to give this way. You can budget ahead of time. And you'll never have to worry

about when you last gave.

Your monthly support would be so important to us. Because life is uncertain. And because when our help is needed, we must act – immediately.

If you would like to become a monthly supporter, simply use the form we've enclosed. We'll be thrilled to welcome you as one of our most committed supporters!

Irish Red Cross

Caring for your Mental Health this winter

- Stick to a routine
- Make sure you get enough sleep
- Try to get daily exercise
- Stay hydrated and drink plenty of water
- Keep in touch with friends and family
- Set yourself goals

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Photo: iStock FatCamera

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My special gift of hope, comfort and lifesaving help to people affected by crisis here or abroad

YES, I want to bring even more help to people in their hour of greatest need

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Phone (optional): _____

Yes, I'd like to receive more information about leaving a Gift to My Will.

Thank you for bringing hope and comfort to people in crisis.

Please return this form, along with your gift to the nearest Red Cross office. Thank you.

You can donate online at: redcross.ie/donate By Freephone: 1800 50 70 70

Irish Red Cross, 10 North Circular Road, Dublin 15, Ireland