

## Fairtrade Producer Visits Downpatrick

26 February 2018

**Downpatrick, NORTHERN IRELAND:** Our Lady and St Patrick Primary School, Downpatrick hosted Father John Joseph, a Fairtrade coffee and spice producer from India on Monday 26 February 2018.

The event was aimed at supporting developing world farmers who grow our food during Fairtrade Fortnight which runs from February 26 to March 11, 2018. It provides the opportunity for pupils to learn more about the benefits of supporting Fairtrade products.



L-R: Pupils from Our Lady and St Patrick Primary School in Downpatrick with Cllr. Roisin Mulgrew; Miss Aine Vance; Fr Murray; Mrs Simone Prenter; Fr Joseph; Cllr. Terry Andrews and Dr Christopher Stange

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Chairperson, Councillor Roisin Mulgrew said, “The simple choice of buying a Fairtrade product can have such a positive effect on the lives of so many across the developing world. It is important for children to learn about Fairtrade as it shows them how they can help make a difference to the lives of people in the developing world in a practical way where both parties are treated equally.”

Cllr Roisin Mulgrew continued, “The Council is committed to continuing its efforts to support Fairtrade goods including serving Fairtrade products at its offices and canteens. The Council also continues to work with communities to ultimately become a Fairtrade district and great work has been done in the Downpatrick, Newcastle and Saintfield areas to work towards achieving Fairtrade Status. Both Newry and Warrenpoint were awarded Fairtrade status by Fairtrade Ireland in 2008 and 2009, respectively.”

Fairtrade Foundation guest - Father John Joseph spoke about the difference Fairtrade makes for his family and community in India. He said, “Fairtrade is a global movement for change to guarantee a

better deal for disadvantaged producers in the developing world to alleviate poverty. It secures better prices, decent working conditions, more environmentally friendly and sustainable practice, as no pesticides are involved, under fair business terms with products produced bearing the Fairtrade certification mark. It also presents producers with the opportunity to compete in the international market.”

Our Lady and St Patrick Primary School Principal, Mrs Simone Prenter said, “The topic of Fairtrade is a part of the school curriculum through learning about the ‘World Around Us’. It is important that children realise that people in the developing world have similar aspirations to ours; they want to succeed in life, they want to fulfil their potential, to be happy, to be treated fairly and to be able to make decisions about their lives and their future, as we do. Fairtrade helps enable them to do this. Today’s talk has brought the topic to life for our children and we look forward to becoming a Fairtrade school.”

Also present at the event was Councillor Terry Andrews, member of the Newry, Mourne and Down Steering group, Mr Liam Conlon and Mr Aidan Vance, members of the School’s Board of Governors, Primary Six staff member Áine Vance from Our Lady and St Patrick Primary School tasked with Fairtrade, Annie Irwin from Suki Tea who donated a Fairtrade basket to the Principal of the school and Dr Christopher Stange from the Consulate of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Secretariat of the All Party Group on Fairtrade who provided Fairtrade samples for the children.

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council’s effort to become a Fairtrade district continues with the setting up of a Steering Committee. If you are interested in becoming a member of the Committee on a voluntary basis, to register to become a Fairtrade School or for more information visit:

[www.newrymournedown.org/fairtrade](http://www.newrymournedown.org/fairtrade)

**ENDS**

Enquiries should be forwarded to the Press Office

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#### **Notes for Editor:**

- Northern Ireland became a Fairtrade devolved region on June 19, 2017. For more information: [www.northernirelandfairtrade.org/projects](http://www.northernirelandfairtrade.org/projects)
- Over 5000 products have been licensed to carry the FAIRTRADE Mark including coffee, tea, herbal teas, chocolate, cocoa, sugar, bananas, lychees, coconuts, dried fruit, juices, smoothies, biscuits, cakes & snacks, honey, jams & preserves, chutney & sauces, rice, quinoa, herbs & spices, seeds, nuts & nut oil, wines, beers, rum, confectionary, muesli, cereal bars, yoghurt, ice-cream, flowers, sports balls, sugar body scrub and cotton products including clothing, homeware, cloth toys, cotton wool, olive oil, gold, silver and platinum.
- Awareness of the FAIRTRADE Mark continues to be high at 93%.
- Fairtrade helps small-scale farmers ensure they earn stable incomes and have long-term contracts with companies. In addition, they earn the Fairtrade Premium, which they invest as the farmer-owned co-operative democratically chooses, in projects that will benefit their business or community.
- The FAIRTRADE Mark independently certifies that products meet economic, social and environmental standards. As such, it is the most widely recognised ethical mark worldwide.

All Party Group on Fairtrade:

Dr Christopher Stange

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