



Oifig an Taoisigh
Office of the Taoiseach

Message from the Taoiseach

Dear Fr. Michael,

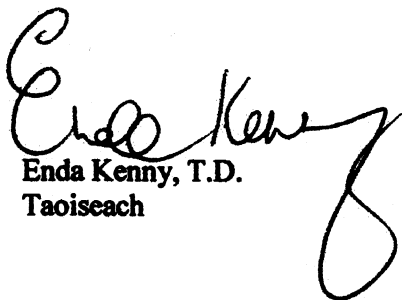
I want to send you my heartiest congratulations as you are honoured in your native town and county.

For over 50 years you have dedicated yourself to the service of the people of Zambia. In particular, you are recognised as a renowned expert in perhaps the greatest challenge on the continent, the scourge of AIDS. We have all witnessed the devastation that this disease has wrought on communities throughout Africa. You recognised the catastrophic effects this would bring in the future, particularly in the education sector and you brought education, and indeed education on the disease to the fore. You have ensured a greater understanding, you called it a 'social vaccine', and your approach has been advocated by the leading bodies and professionals throughout the world.

I had the privilege to meet you last year when you received the Presidential Distinguished Award at Áras an Uachtarán. I was greatly struck by your humility and your deep conviction to the service of others. You are committed to social justice, human rights and the basic dignity of the person. Moreover, you are committed to the very real work of saving lives and communities throughout Africa.

Ireland has a long and wonderful history of commitment to the developing world. Fr Michael, you are a shining example of this tradition and you richly deserve the recognition you have received. To be honoured in the town of your birth is a truly special occasion and one which I hope you thoroughly enjoy.

With my very best wishes,


Enda Kenny, T.D.
Taoiseach

*Full of admiration for
your contribution to our
Common Humanity.
EKK*