



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Social Development and Family Services

## MEDIA RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **“Know your self-worth,” says new centenarian Ira Kitson**

“Don’t let anyone take advantage of you. Always know your own self-worth” said Tobago-born new centenarian Ms. Ira Christiana Kitson who celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday at her Maraval home on October 15, 2022. Offering strong words of advice, Ms. Kitson indicated that the cycle of dependence must be broken as after being widowed, she took care of her children and built her home without depending on others.

“As a young woman, be self-sufficient and don’t rely on handouts from your male counterparts. Every citizen of this generation, should help to build up this country, stop in-fighting and show love for one another in whatever way possible. Your family legacy must be able to break the cycle of dependency. Stop reaching your hand out to take and reach your hands to lift up your nation. God helps those who help themselves” she said.

When asked about her secret to longevity, Ms. Kitson fondly called Ira indicated that it is God and God alone. **“God and God alone, has been responsible for my life, all one hundred years of it.** When I became a widow early in my marriage, it could only have been God who helped me to look after a toddler and a babe in arms as a young single parent. My diet was also the well-balanced nutritious diet that we ate in those days and not the Fast food that is the custom nowadays” she continued.

The mother of two, grandmother and great-grandmother of three also provided some insight into her life growing up. “I attended primary school in Moriah, Tobago, where both George Toby, my father, and James Kitson, who became my father-in-law, were joint Principals. On moving to Trinidad, I first attended St. Rose’s Girls Primary and then Tranquility Government School.”

Ms. Kitson further indicated that following the completion of Secondary School, she successfully completed her Diploma and began a brief career teaching in primary schools in Cunupia and San Juan after which she pursued a career in the Government Civil Service in several Government Ministries before retiring.

Ms. Kitson was visited by Mr. Ernest Webster, Inspector I of the Division of Ageing who presented the new Centenarian with her Certificate of Honour and Achievement, a fruit hamper, and a birthday cake sponsored by the Kiss Baking Company.

The Ministry of Social Development and Family Services was pleased to honour our latest centenarian and encourage persons to salute our nation’s centenarians for recognition under the National Centenarian Programme by visiting Ministry’s website at [www.social.gov.tt](http://www.social.gov.tt). For more information, persons may contact the Division of Ageing at 623 – 2608; Ext 2001 to 2009 or 800-OPIC (6742).



All glammed up – Ms Ira Kitson celebrates her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.



Ms. Kitson receives her Certificate of Honour and Achievement from Mr. Ernest Webster, Inspector I of the Division of Ageing.