



PROJECT COMPASSION

UNITE
AGAINST
POVERTY
this Lent



projectcompassion.org.au

**Upper Primary (3-6)
Teacher Handbook 2026**

Contents

Resources Guide	3
Introduction	4
About the Theme	5
Curriculum: Religious Education and Beyond	6
Live Caritas Q&As	12
Fundraising Online	14
Primary Student Zone	15
Catholic Social Teaching (CST) Guide	16
Lent Link	17
Sisilia's Story (Tanzania): Learning Tasks	18
Monoranjon's Story (Bangladesh): Learning Tasks	25
Manaini's Story (Fiji): Learning Tasks	30
Responding to Emergencies (Gaza): Learning Tasks	35

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IMPORTANT – STUDENT WELLBEING

At Caritas Australia, we believe that all people should be treated with respect and dignity. Everyone has the right to feel safe, especially children and vulnerable adults. Please consider your audience when selecting which stories and activities to share with your class.

Our new Safeguarding animation recognises that learning about challenges to the health, wellbeing and safety of others and our earth can be hard and encourages young people to talk to their teacher or trusted adult if they're feeling worried or upset about anything they have learnt through our resources or activities. The animation also acknowledges Caritas Australia's commitment for children and vulnerable adults to feel valued and heard by encouraging them to share their great ideas with us.

Please use our new animation before sharing the Project Compassion resources with your students.



[Watch Caritas Australia's Safeguarding Animation](#)



STUDENT WORKBOOK AND INTERACTIVE ZONE

The Project Compassion Student Workbook can be printed or used as an online 'fillable' PDF. It is a place for students to complete activities and record their learning and prayers for each Project Compassion story. It is accompanied by an interactive [Student Zone](#), a central place hosting the stories, films, photo galleries and website links to support student research.

Download the Student Workbook [here](#).

Resource Guide

All our resources are online! Access the films and written stories, teaching materials and our fundraising and awareness raising ideas at caritas.org.au/resources/project-compassion. Below is a list and short description of all the resources, as well as suggestions for use.

	Resource	Description/ Suggested Use		Resource	Description/ Suggested Use
For Students	Student Workbook	A printable/fillable PDF where students can input their responses and submit back to the teacher. Tasks include: Fact Check, Map, Global Goals (Sustainable Development Goals), Prayer and Reflection.	Media	Films	Project Compassion Introduction Film . 'Day in the Life' films for primary schools: Tanzania , Bangladesh and Fiji . Story film: Sisilia (upper primary). Fundraising film
	Primary Student Zone	An interactive image with films, photos, stories and information for students to use to complete their student workbook.		Photo Galleries	View photos from the field. Photos for each story are available through the interactive Primary Student Zone.
	Audio Described Stories	Audio described versions of each story.	Prayer and Reflection	Ash Wednesday Liturgy	Liturgy of the Word, including distribution of the ashes.
For Teachers	School's Guide	A guide for the REC, APRE or Social Justice Leader. Includes tips to plan Project Compassion for the whole school.		Prayer (PPT)	The Project Compassion prayer with beautiful images. Use as a daily or weekly prayer for students or staff, or at an assembly.
	Primary Teacher Handbook	Available in Lower Primary , Upper Primary and Secondary versions, provides an explanation of the Project Compassion resources. Briefly explores the curriculum and learning opportunities within Project Compassion. Send to specialist subject learning area teachers (e.g. Visual Art). Use as PD reading if seeking to integrate global education from a Catholic perspective across curriculum areas.	Weekly Reflections	Weekly Reflections	Weekly reflections for staff, linking the Project Compassion stories to the Sunday Scripture readings. Use for weekly staff reflections during Lent.
All Purpose	Introducing Project Compassion (PPT)	Overview of all 4 featured Project Compassion programs and the work of Caritas Australia.		Way of the Cross (PPT)	A reflection following the Way of the Cross, to use during Holy Week. Leaders' Notes included.
	School's Fundraising Guide	Ideas to inspire fundraising and awareness raising activities linked to the Project Compassion stories. Visit projectcompassion.org.au/schools to register your fundraising activities!	Telling Others	Newsletter Notices	A brief insert for your weekly school newsletter, explaining the week's Project Compassion story. Include in print/online school communications. Use on school social media and website.
				Social Media Toolkit	Content and assets to share your support of Project Compassion through your social media channels.

Introduction

Welcome to Project Compassion 2026!

Caritas Australia is the international aid and development organisation of the Catholic Church in Australia and is part of one of the largest aid and development networks in the world – Caritas Internationalis – working in over 200 countries and territories.

Each year, Project Compassion runs during the six weeks of the Church season of Lent. We invite people across Australia to help us raise funds AND act in solidarity with the millions of people across the world with whom we work. We ask you to join us in building a more just and fairer world: a world in balance, at peace and free of poverty.

Project Compassion is an opportunity for students to learn about life in different countries through the personal stories of people who have participated in Caritas Australia-supported programs. The notions of our interconnectedness as one human family are embedded throughout the content and suggested learning tasks. We understand that the curriculum leaves little room for additional content, so we endeavour to offer compelling and interactive content that can be unpacked with high impact teaching strategies, higher order thinking and collaborative learning tasks that capture your students' imagination, intellect, compassion and will to act for social justice.

Resources 2026

In addition to materials for each week, this year we have included general Religious Education tasks to support the ease of integration across Learning Areas:

- **Lent Link (p. 17)** aims to deepen the connection between the Project Compassion stories and the Lenten traditions of fasting, praying and almsgiving. By making explicit links, students are encouraged to see how their actions support the work of the church through Caritas Australia and are an extension of their faith.

- **CST Link** for each story introduces students to Catholic Social Teaching principles and supports them to identify CSTs in action.
- **RE Link** provides discussion questions and suggestions to link Project Compassion stories to the themes and Bible texts in Religious Education curricula across Australia.

We also endeavour to support the integration of a Catholic worldview throughout various Learning Areas.

A series of teacher-led tasks to accompany the written stories are provided. Students encounter a participant in a Caritas Australia project by engaging with their story through the text, films and photographs. Students can witness the challenges and positive changes of people who experience extreme poverty and injustice.

The Project Compassion Student Workbook

This a global education workbook supporting students to learn more about each of the featured countries.

As students reflect on their learning, responding to the stories and issues of social and ecological justice, they practise planning personal and collective responses and can start to see how their local action can have a global impact.

Download the [Student Workbook](#).

For more information about Caritas Australia and Project Compassion, visit our website.

About the Theme

The theme of Project Compassion 2026 is ***Unite Against Poverty***.

It reminds us that when we work together as a global family, we can make a real difference. Poverty is complex, but it is not inevitable. When we act with kindness, courage and generosity, we can help create a fairer world where everyone has what they need to live and grow.

This year's theme invites us to reflect on the example of Jesus, who walked alongside the poor and marginalised and called us to do the same. His message was clear: love one another, stand with the oppressed, and respond to suffering with empathy and action.

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.

Matthew 25:35-36

This is the heart of solidarity. When we recognise the dignity of every person and respond to their needs, we participate in God's mission of love and justice in the world.

Project Compassion 2026 shares the stories of individuals and communities who, with your support and the help of Caritas Australia's partners, are overcoming the challenges of poverty. Their stories show us what's possible when we unite in hope and compassion.

Introducing the Theme to Your Class:

Unite Against Poverty

Help students understand that poverty is not just about lacking money, it can mean going without education, clean water, food, healthcare, or a safe place to live. Explain that by uniting and taking action together, we can make a real difference in the lives of people facing these challenges.

Ask students to think about:

- What does it mean to 'unite'?
- Who are we uniting with?
- What actions can we take as a class or school to show compassion and support?

Invite students to write a message of unity or hope for people experiencing poverty. These could be displayed around a large globe or map in your classroom, showing that we are part of a global community working together to create change.

You might also create a 'Wall of Unity' where students contribute drawings, poems, or pledges that reflect their commitment to ending poverty. These can become prayer or reflection points throughout Lent.

By taking these small but powerful steps, your class can be part of the movement to *Unite Against Poverty*, bringing the message of Jesus to life through action, love and hope.

Curriculum: Religious Education and Beyond

PROJECT COMPASSION AND THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

Linking the themes of Project Compassion with the curriculum is an opportunity for students to engage more deeply with justice and the work of Caritas Australia. The stories and learning tasks featured can relate broadly to the following Australian Curriculum areas.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION THEMES ACROSS AUSTRALIA

There are many Religious Education curricula around the country, however it is not surprising that there are also many common themes. We have drawn on these common themes:

- Living the mission of Jesus
- Catholic Social Teachings: Human Dignity, Preferential Option for the Poor, Solidarity, Subsidiarity and Participation, Care for Our Common Home and The Common Good
- Initiation and belonging
- Action for justice and peace.

CROSS-CURRICULUM PRIORITIES

Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia

Collaboration and engagement with the peoples of Asia support effective regional and global citizenship. Australians play a significant role in social, cultural, political and economic developments in the Asia region. **Look for Monoranjon's Story (Bangladesh).**

Sustainability

World views that recognise the dependence of living things on healthy ecosystems, and value diversity and social justice, are essential for achieving sustainability. **Look for Sisilia's Story (Tanzania), Monoranjon's Story (Bangladesh) and Manaini's Story (Fiji).**

GENERAL CAPABILITIES KEY IDEAS

Intercultural Understanding

Intercultural understanding stimulates students' interest in the lives of others. It cultivates values and dispositions such as curiosity, care, empathy, reciprocity, respect and responsibility, open-mindedness and critical awareness, and supports new and positive intercultural behaviours.

Personal and Social Capability

Students gain an understanding of the role of advocacy in contemporary society and build their capacity to critique societal constructs and forms of discrimination, such as racism and sexism. In developing and acting with personal and social capability, students are encouraged to: appreciate diverse perspectives, contribute to civil society and understand relationships.

Ethical Understanding

In developing and acting with ethical understanding, students: examine values (see Catholic Social Teaching Guide page 16), explore rights and responsibilities and consider other points of view.

Curriculum Links – Years 3-4

Year 3	Year 4
<p>ENGLISH</p> <p>Understand that cooperation with others depends on shared understanding of social conventions, including turn-taking language, which vary according to the degree of formality. (AC9E3LA01)</p> <p>Identify how images extend the meaning of a text. (AC9E3LA09)</p> <p>Discuss how an author uses language and illustrations to portray characters and settings in texts, and explore how the settings and events influence the mood of the narrative. (AC9E3LE03)</p> <p>Use interaction skills to contribute to conversations and discussions to share information and ideas. (AC9E3LY02)</p> <p>Use comprehension strategies when listening and viewing to build literal and inferred meaning, and begin to evaluate texts by drawing on a growing knowledge of context, text structures and language features. (AC9E3LY05)</p> <p>Plan, create, edit and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive written and multimodal texts, using visual features, appropriate form and layout, with ideas grouped in simple paragraphs, mostly correct tense, topic-specific vocabulary and correct spelling of most high-frequency and phonetically regular words. (AC9E3LY06)</p> <p>Plan, create, rehearse and deliver short oral and/or multimodal presentations to inform, express opinions or tell stories, using a clear structure, details to elaborate ideas, topic-specific and precise vocabulary, visual features, and appropriate tone, pace, pitch and volume. (AC9E3LY07)</p> <p>Identify the purpose of layout features in print and digital texts and the words used for navigation. (AC9E3LA05)</p> <p>MATHEMATICS</p> <p>Create and compare different graphical representations of data sets including using software where appropriate; interpret the data in terms of the context. (AC9M3ST02)</p> <p>Measure and compare objects using familiar metric units of length, mass and capacity, and instruments with labelled markings. (AC9M3M02)</p>	<p>ENGLISH</p> <p>Explore language used to develop relationships in formal and informal situations. (AC9E4LA01)</p> <p>Identify the subjective language of opinion and feeling, and the objective language of factual reporting. (AC9E4LA02)</p> <p>Identify text navigation features of online texts that enhance readability including headlines, drop-down menus, links, graphics and layout. (AC9E4LA05)</p> <p>Explore the effect of choices when framing an image, placement of elements in the image and salience on composition of still and moving images in texts. (AC9E4LA10)</p> <p>Listen for key points and information to carry out tasks and contribute to discussions, acknowledging another opinion, linking a response to the topic, and sharing and extending ideas and information. (AC9E4LY02)</p> <p>Use comprehension strategies such as visualising, predicting, connecting, summarising, monitoring and questioning to build literal and inferred meaning, to expand topic knowledge and ideas, and evaluate texts. (AC9E4LY05)</p> <p>Plan, create, edit and publish written and multimodal imaginative, informative and persuasive texts, using visual features, relevant linked ideas, complex sentences, appropriate tense, synonyms and antonyms, correct spelling of multisyllabic words and simple punctuation. (AC9E4LY06)</p> <p>Plan, create, rehearse and deliver structured oral and/or multimodal presentations to report on a topic, tell a story, recount events or present an argument using subjective and objective language, complex sentences, visual features, tone, pace, pitch and volume. (AC9E4LY07)</p> <p>MATHEMATICS</p> <p>Interpret unmarked and partial units when measuring and comparing attributes of length, mass, capacity, duration and temperature, using scaled and digital instruments and appropriate units. (AC9M4M01)</p>

Curriculum Links – Years 3-4

Year 3	Year 4
<p>HISTORY</p> <p>Causes and effects of changes to the local community, and how people who may be from diverse backgrounds have contributed to these changes. (AC9HS3K01)</p> <p>GEOGRAPHY</p> <p>The similarities and differences between places in Australia and neighbouring countries in terms of their natural, managed and constructed features. (AC9HS3K05)</p> <p>CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP</p> <p>Why people participate within communities and how students can actively participate and contribute to communities. (AC9HS3K07)</p> <p>HASS – SKILLS</p> <p>Locate, collect and record information and data from a range of sources, including annotated timelines and maps. (AC9HS3S02)</p> <p>Interpret information and data displayed in different formats. (AC9HS3S03)</p> <p>Analyse information and data, and identify perspectives. (AC9HS3S04)</p> <p>Propose actions or responses to an issue or challenge that consider possible effects of actions. (AC9HS3S06)</p> <p>SCIENCE</p> <p>Identify sources of heat energy and examine how temperature changes when heat energy is transferred from one object to another. (AC9S3U03)</p> <p>Pose questions to explore observed patterns and relationships and make predictions based on observations. (AC9S3I01)</p> <p>Use provided scaffolds to plan and conduct investigations to answer questions or test predictions, including identifying the elements of air tests, and considering the safe use of materials and equipment. (AC9S3I02)</p>	<p>GEOGRAPHY</p> <p>The importance of environments, including natural vegetation and water sources, to people and animals in Australia and on another continent. (AC9HS4K05)</p> <p>Sustainable use and management of renewable and non-renewable resources, including the custodial responsibility First Nations Australians have for Country/Place. (AC9HS4K06)</p> <p>CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP</p> <p>Diversity of cultural, religious and/or social groups to which they and others in the community belong, and their importance to identity. (AC9HS4K09)</p> <p>HASS – SKILLS</p> <p>Locate, collect and record information and data from a range of sources, including annotated timelines and maps. (AC9HS4S02)</p> <p>Interpret information and data displayed in different formats. (AC9HS4S03)</p> <p>Analyse information and data, and identify perspectives. (AC9HS4S04)</p> <p>Propose actions or responses to an issue or challenge that consider possible effects of actions. (AC9HS4S06)</p> <p>SCIENCE</p> <p>Pose questions to explore observed patterns and relationships and make predictions based on observations. (AC9S4I01)</p> <p>Use provided scaffolds to plan and conduct investigations to answer questions or test predictions, including identifying the elements of air tests, and considering the safe use of materials and equipment. (AC9S4I02)</p>

Curriculum Links – Years 3-4

Year 3	Year 4
<p>HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION</p> <p>Investigate how success, challenge, setbacks and failure strengthen resilience and identities in a range of contexts. (AC9HP4P01)</p> <p>Describe how choices and actions can be influenced by stereotypes. (AC9HP4P03)</p> <p>Select, use and refine personal and social skills to establish, manage and strengthen relationships.(AC9HP4P04)</p> <p>Describe how valuing diversity influences wellbeing and identify actions that promote inclusion in their communities. (AC9HP4P05)</p> <p>DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGIES</p> <p>Examine design and technologies occupations and factors including sustainability that impact on the design of products, services and environments to meet community needs. (AC9TDE4K01)</p> <p>Describe how forces and the properties of materials affect function in a product or system.(AC9TDE4K02)</p> <p>Describe the ways of producing food and fibre.(AC9TDE4K03)</p>	<p>HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION</p> <p>Investigate how success, challenge, setbacks and failure strengthen resilience and identities in a range of contexts. (AC9HP4P01)</p> <p>Describe how choices and actions can be influenced by stereotypes. (AC9HP4P03)</p> <p>Select, use and refine personal and social skills to establish, manage and strengthen relationships.(AC9HP4P04)</p> <p>Describe how valuing diversity influences wellbeing and identify actions that promote inclusion in their communities. (AC9HP4P05)</p> <p>DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGIES</p> <p>Examine design and technologies occupations and factors including sustainability that impact on the design of products, services and environments to meet community needs. (AC9TDE4K01)</p> <p>Describe how forces and the properties of materials affect function in a product or system.(AC9TDE4K02)</p> <p>Describe the ways of producing food and fibre.(AC9TDE4K03)</p>

Curriculum Links – Years 5-6

Year 5	Year 6
<p>ENGLISH</p> <p>Understand how vocabulary is used to express greater precision of meaning, including through the use of specialist and technical terms, and explore the history of words. (AC9E5LA08)</p> <p>Use appropriate interaction skills including paraphrasing and questioning to clarify meaning, make connections to own experience, and present and justify an opinion or idea. (AC9E5LY02)</p> <p>Use comprehension strategies such as visualising, predicting, connecting, summarising, monitoring and questioning to build literal and inferred meaning to evaluate information and ideas. (AC9E5LY05)</p> <p>Plan, create, edit and publish written and multimodal texts whose purposes may be imaginative, informative and persuasive, developing ideas using visual features, text structure appropriate to the topic and purpose, text connectives, expanded noun groups, specialist and technical vocabulary, and punctuation including dialogue punctuation. (AC9E5LY06)</p> <p>MATHEMATICS</p> <p>Recognise that 100% represents the complete whole and use percentages to describe, represent and compare relative size; connect familiar percentages to their decimal and fraction equivalents. (AC9M5N04)</p> <p>Use mathematical modelling to solve practical problems involving additive and multiplicative situations including financial contexts; formulate the problems, choosing operations and efficient calculation strategies, using digital tools where appropriate; interpret and communicate solutions in terms of the situation. (AC9M5N09)</p> <p>Compare 12- and 24-hour time systems and solve practical problems involving the conversion between them. (AC9M5M03)</p> <p>ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS</p> <p>Types of resources, including natural, human and capital, and how they satisfy needs and wants. (AC9HS5K08)</p>	<p>ENGLISH</p> <p>Identify and explain how images, figures, tables, diagrams, maps and graphs contribute to meaning. (AC9E6LA07)</p> <p>Use interaction skills and awareness of formality when paraphrasing, questioning, clarifying and interrogating ideas, developing and supporting arguments, and sharing and evaluating information, experiences and opinions. (AC9E6LY02)</p> <p>Use comprehension strategies such as visualising, predicting, connecting, summarising, monitoring and questioning to build literal and inferred meaning, and to connect and compare content from a variety of sources. (AC9E6LY05)</p> <p>Plan, create, edit and publish written and multimodal texts whose purposes may be imaginative, informative and persuasive, using paragraphs, a variety of complex sentences, expanded verb groups, tense, topic-specific and vivid vocabulary, punctuation, spelling and visual features. (AC9E6LY06)</p> <p>MATHEMATICS</p> <p>Use mathematical modelling to solve practical problems involving natural and rational numbers and percentages, including in financial contexts; formulate the problems, choosing operations and efficient calculation strategies, and using digital tools where appropriate; interpret and communicate solutions in terms of the situation, justifying the choices made. (AC9M6N09)</p> <p>Identify statistically informed arguments presented in traditional and digital media; discuss and critique methods, data representations and conclusions. (AC9M6ST02)</p> <p>GEOGRAPHY</p> <p>The geographical diversity and location of places in the Asia region, and its location in relation to Australia. (AC9HS6K04)</p> <p>Australia's interconnections with other countries and how these change people and places. (AC9HS6K05)</p>

Curriculum Links – Years 5-6

Year 5	Year 6
<p>CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP</p> <p>How citizens (members of communities) with shared beliefs and values work together to achieve a civic goal. (AC9HS5K07)</p> <p>HASS – SKILLS</p> <p>Locate, collect and organise information and data from primary and secondary sources in a range of formats. (AC9HS5S02)</p> <p>Evaluate information and data in a range of formats to identify and describe patterns and trends, or to infer relationships. (AC9HS5S03)</p> <p>SCIENCE</p> <p>Describe how weathering, erosion, transportation and deposition cause slow or rapid change to Earth's surface. (AC9S5U02)</p> <p>Investigate how scientific knowledge is used by individuals and communities to identify problems, consider responses and make decisions. (AC9S5H02)</p> <p>HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION</p> <p>Investigate how the portrayal of societal roles and responsibilities can be influenced by gender stereotypes. (AC9HP6P03)</p> <p>DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGIES</p> <p>Explain how and why food and fibre are produced in managed environments. (AC9TDE6K03)</p> <p>Investigate needs or opportunities for designing, and the materials, components, tools, equipment and processes needed to create designed solutions. (AC9TDE6P01)</p>	<p>HASS – SKILLS</p> <p>Locate, collect and organise information and data from primary and secondary sources in a range of formats. (AC9HS6S02)</p> <p>Evaluate information and data in a range of formats to identify and describe patterns and trends, or to infer relationships. (AC9HS6S03)</p> <p>SCIENCE</p> <p>Investigate the physical conditions of a habitat and analyse how the growth and survival of living things is affected by changing physical conditions. (AC9S6U01)</p> <p>HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION</p> <p>Investigate how the portrayal of societal roles and responsibilities can be influenced by gender stereotypes. (AC9HP6P03)</p> <p>DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGIES</p> <p>Explain how and why food and fibre are produced in managed environments. (AC9TDE6K03)</p> <p>Investigate needs or opportunities for designing, and the materials, components, tools, equipment and processes needed to create designed solutions. (AC9TDE6P01)</p>

Live Caritas Q&As

Explore the different stories, programs and issues for each of the Project Compassion stories with our Caritas Q&As.

WHAT ARE CARITAS Q&As?

During Project Compassion, Caritas Australia is offering the chance to interact online with our Programs staff.

Caritas Q&As are 30-minute sessions hosted by Caritas Australia on Zoom. The sessions are a unique opportunity for students to connect with Caritas-supported programs and to learn more about the impact of their generous donations.

Caritas Q&As are open to students in Years 4–12 and are available across all time zones.



HOW WILL IT WORK?

Caritas Q&As run across Lent during school term and will focus on a different Project Compassion story and program.

Help prepare your students for a Caritas Q&A by:

- showing them the relevant Project Compassion video
- working through our Project Compassion school resources or relevant social justice resources
- guiding them to create a question to ask Caritas staff.

HOW DO I REGISTER?

Go to the Caritas Australia website to register your class in the session that suits you

[Register your class](#)



Q&A TIMETABLE

All times listed below are AEDT. Please adjust for your time zone.

Note: Times are subject to change prior to Lent, depending on our program partners' availability. Maximum of 10 classes per session.

		Wednesday 25 February	Friday 27 February
Sisilia's Story (Tanzania)	Primary (Y4–6)	9:15 am 2:30 pm	10:30 am 12:15 pm
	Secondary (Y7–12)	11:00 am 1: 00 pm	9:15 am 2:00 pm

		Tuesday 3 March	Thursday 5 March
Monoranjon's Story (Bangladesh)	Primary (Y4–6)	10:30 am 12:15 pm	9:15 am 2:15 pm
	Secondary (Y7–12)	9:30 am 2:00 pm	11:00 am 1: 00 pm

		Wednesday 11 March	Friday 13 March
Manaini's Story (Fiji)	Primary (Y4–6)	9:30 am 2:30 pm	11:00 am 12:15 pm
	Secondary (Y7–12)	11:00 am 1: 00 pm	10:00 am 2:00 pm

Register at <https://www.caritas.org.au/project-compassion/caritas-q-a/>

Fundraise Online

Raise funds the easy way - online!

No cash at your school? No problem!

Setting up your schools online fundraising page is simple!

Visit: projectcompassion.org.au/schools



Tips for success at your school:

- Create teams for classes or houses to add a little friendly competition!
- Share your fundraising page and QR code with your school community to spread the word!
- Access awesome tools and resources to make Project Compassion at your school the best yet!

Register your fundraiser

- 1. HEAD TO:** projectcompassion.org.au/schools
- 2. SEARCH** for your school
- 3. ACTIVATE** your school's profile – just create an account and follow the prompts to complete setup.
- 4. SELECT** how your school is going to fundraise!
- 5. SET UP** teams for each class or homeroom to spark some friendly competition!
- 6. SHARE** your school's fundraising page or class pages with your school community. Note: parents can register their child with all online donations made contributing to your class/school total.
- 7. LET THE FUNDRAISING BEGIN!**

Unite your whole school community and take on **The BIG Water Walk** at your school this Lent. Your school will raise funds to bring clean, safe drinking water to communities around the world!

How to host your School's BIG Water Walk:

- 1. Pick a date:** Choose a day during Lent that works for your school.
- 2. Set your route:** You could plan laps around your school oval, circuits through your school grounds, or even a walk to a local park!
- 3. Consider adding a challenge:** Consider carrying water during the walk to simulate the daily journey faced by vulnerable communities.
- 4. Promote the Event:** Share details with students, parents, and staff to build excitement and support



[Download The BIG Water Walk Toolkit](#)

Primary Student Zone

The Primary Student Zone is an interactive image created as a central location with everything students will need to complete the student workbook. This includes the stories and videos for each of the stories.

Whenever students see any of the below icons in their workbook, they can go to the Primary Student Zone and find the matching icon to access the information needed to complete the activity.

Here are some icons to keep an eye out for throughout the workbook:



 **Caritas**
AUSTRALIA
The Catholic agency
for international aid
and development

**PROJECT
COMPASSION**



STUDENT ZONE

 Sustainable Development Goals

Click [here](#) to view the
Primary Student Zone

Catholic Social Teaching (CST) Guide

Catholic Social Teaching (CST) principles cover all spheres of life – the economic, political, ecological, personal and spiritual. The principles are inspired by scripture and the writings of the Pope and other Catholic leaders about social issues.

Caritas Australia's work is shaped by the tradition of Catholic Social Teaching.

HUMAN DIGNITY

We believe every human being is created in the image and likeness of God and therefore has inherent dignity that should always be safeguarded.



SOLIDARITY

We believe we are part of one human family and have a responsibility to help each person achieve their full potential.



PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR

We believe in prioritising the women, men and children most vulnerable to extreme poverty and injustice.



SUBSIDIARITY AND PARTICIPATION

We believe all people have the right to participate in decisions that affect their lives. Subsidiarity requires that decisions are made by people closest and most affected by the issues and concerns of the community.



THE COMMON GOOD

We believe the good of each human person is intimately related to the good of the whole community. We are all responsible for each other.



CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME

We believe that care for our common home is vital for the common good of all people. We believe a true ecological approach is a social approach. We are to be protectors of creation and of one another.



For more on Catholic Social Teaching, including classroom activities, short films and other resources, visit our [CST Toolkit](#).

Photo credits: Caritas Jerusalem (middle left). Caritas Australia (remaining photos).

Lent Link

ABOUT LENT

Class discussion:

What do you know about Lent?

What significance does it have for you?

Explaine that every year throughout Lent we commit to strengthening our faith through prayer, fasting and almsgiving. These are the three pillars or traditions of Lent.

Pope Francis said:

...in Lent, to act also means to pause. To pause in prayer, in order to receive the word of God, to pause like the Samaritan in the presence of a wounded brother or sister. Love of God and love of neighbour are one love... For this reason, prayer, almsgiving and fasting are not three unrelated acts, but a single movement of openness and self-emptying.

[\(Pope Francis's Lenten Message 2024\)](#)

Through Project Compassion, we can think about the faces and stories of those in need and learn how, with our support, Caritas Australia is working with local partners around the world to help end poverty, uphold dignity and promote justice. Over the coming weeks, we will hear stories of hope from Tanzania, Bangladesh and Fiji.

Let's focus on how we can be people of hope in our family, our school community and with our global family – for all future generations.

PRAYER - During Lent, Christians pray for themselves and others. We are encouraged to pray for the people and communities we learn about through the stories shared during Project Compassion.

FASTING - Fasting is about giving something up for a time. Many people give up something they love to eat. This can help us understand a little more about what it's like for somebody who is different from us. We can also give up something we like to do, like spending time watching television.

ALMSGIVING - Almsgiving means donating money or items to people who have less than you. It is a way to show that we care for others and that we are thankful for all God has given us. Caring for others is part of many faiths. Let's be brave enough to give generously this Lent.

What can we go without during each week of Lent? Maybe it's a snack or treat that we have each week. We can place the money saved in our Project Compassion boxes. Our support of Project Compassion is a way of saying we care about creating a fairer world.

Pray – Start with the [Project Compassion Prayer \(PPT\)](#). Each week, students are also invited to write a prayer for the community they are learning about in their Project Compassion Student Workbook.

Fast – discuss what students might consider to 'give up' for Lent this year?

Give – Discuss way we can give. Look at the '[Your donation counts](#)' poster to explore what your collective community efforts can achieve.

Sisilia's Story

Tanzania

Water is essential for daily life, but not everyone has access to this vital resource at home or at school. What happens when they don't?

13-year-old Sisilia lives in a remote village in northern Tanzania, with her family. They live in a small home with one bed and no toilet.

'My mother does small farming and sometimes sells vegetables to get money. We don't have a regular income because my father passed away many years ago. Life is hard, but we try our best,' Sisilia said.

In Tanzania, nearly 40% of people do not have access to clean drinking water and 75% do not have access to basic sanitation. ([World Bank](#)).

Prior to the installation of a water tap in her village, Sisilia had to walk 30 mins, 3 times a day to collect water from a dirty canal.

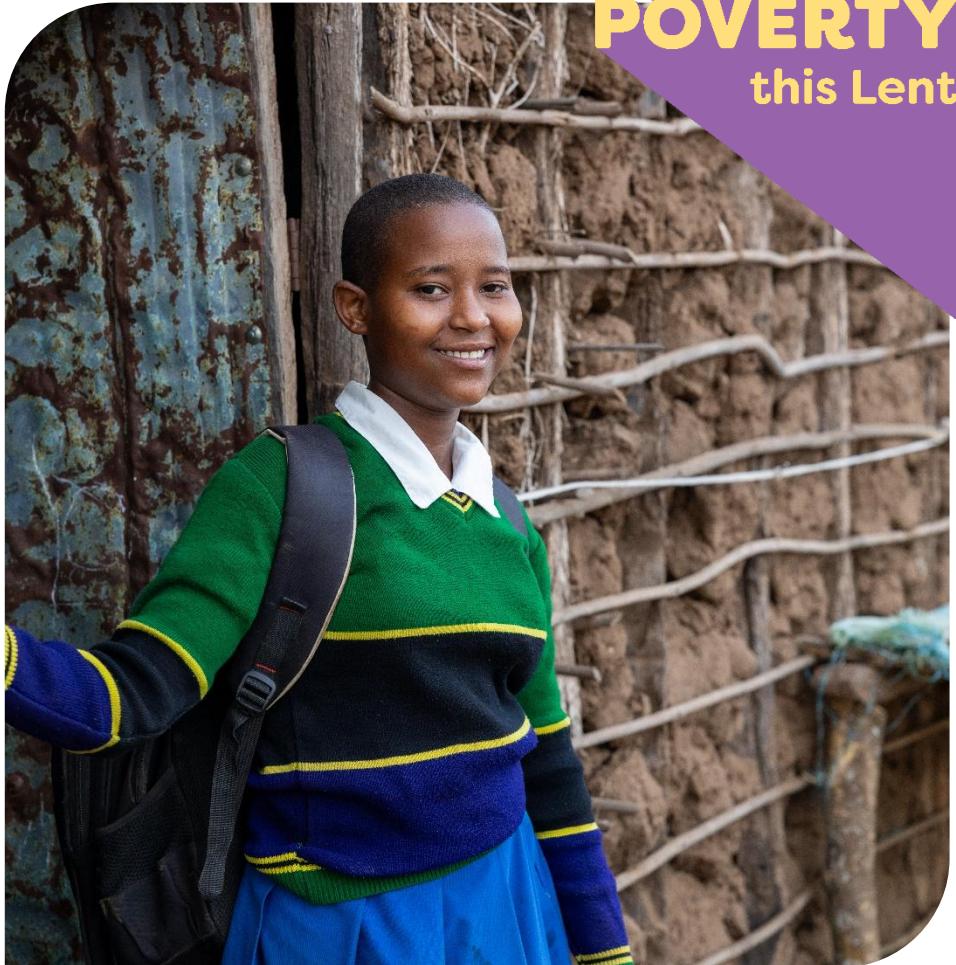
Sisilia said:

I got very tired. Carrying heavy water containers every day after walking long distances was not easy. Sometimes my arms and back hurt. Sometimes I got home late and tired, and it was hard to focus on my homework or revise for exams. The water we fetched came from an irrigation canal, which was not treated and often unsafe for drinking ...we often had stomach problems.

Other dangers existed too. Sisilia shared:

I feared wild animals like hyenas and elephants, especially in the evenings when it was getting dark. Sometimes there is flooding, and it made the journey more dangerous. I also worried about slipping near the canal because the ground can be very muddy.

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Sisilia preparing to go to school. Photo: Caritas Australia.

With the support of Caritas Australia's partner in Tanzania, the Diocese of Mbulu Development Department (DMDD), Sisilia's community and school joined the A+ Successor Project. The project has helped improve access to clean water in Sisilia's village and school. While Sisilia still collects water 3 times a day, she only needs to walk 2 minutes to a tap near her home, and her school now has water taps too! At school the children can now wash their hands, drink clean water and water the school garden to grow food that they can eat for lunch.

Through the project, Sisilia participated in a SWASH (School Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) Club where she learnt about the importance of handwashing and keeping the classroom and toilets clean.

'We also teach other pupils about hygiene and sanitation through songs and poems. Sometimes we even talk to our parents about good hygiene and sanitation practices,' Sisilia said.

'I feel proud when I teach others about hygiene and sanitation through SWASH club.'

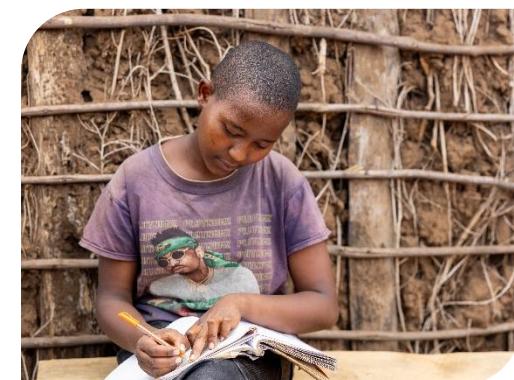
As a result, Sisilia has become a confident leader, promoting hygiene, sanitation and awareness of human rights in her community.

'I have gained confidence to speak in front of others and to educate people in my community about hygiene and sanitation as well as their rights and responsibilities,' Sisilia said. 'I now talk to parents in my neighbourhood about the importance of sending their children to school. I explain that education is a basic human right.'

Sisilia is determined to continue her education. Her favourite subjects are Science, English and Maths. She shared, 'I like learning about the human body, the environment, and how things work – it helps me understand the world better and how we can solve problems like poor sanitation.'

Sisilia hopes that the time she saves collecting water can be used to focus on her studies and achieve her dreams, such as building a strong and comfortable home for her family and becoming a pilot!

'I want to be a pilot so I can fly all over the world and see new places,' Sisilia said. 'Also, I want to help my family live a better life. If I can study without spending so much time fetching water, I know I can achieve my dream.'



Sisilia's Story – Learning Activities

Read Sisilia's Story (Tanzania) and watch '[A Day in the Life](#)' film and [Sisilia's Story film](#).

TASK 1: DISCUSSION

- Where did Sisilia's family get water from?
- What has having clean water at school meant for Sisilia and the other students? What happens now, that didn't happen before?
- In what ways has the SWASH Club changed Sisilia's life?
- How did Caritas Australia help?
- How has Sisilia helped her community?
- Where will you share Sisilia's story?

Curriculum links: English, HASS

TASK 2: STUDENT WORKBOOK

Complete tasks for Sisilia's Story (Tanzania) section. Download/print the [Student Workbook](#) and direct students to the [Student Zone](#) to help them complete the activities.

Curriculum links: HASS, English, Mathematics, Religious Education

TASK 3: PHOTO GALLERY

As a class, view the Photo Gallery for Sisilia's story via the [Student Zone](#). Ask students:

- What do the photos tell you about Sisilia's life?
- Which photo do you like the best? Why?
- What photos of Sisilia's life would you like to see?
- What questions would you like to ask Sisilia?
- What do the photos make you think about?

Curriculum links: English

TASK 4: HANDWASHING SONGS

Washing your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds is the best way to prevent the spread of disease. During the COVID pandemic, people around the world were reminded of the importance of this and were encouraged to sing the 'Happy Birthday' song twice, or something like it, to make sure everyone was washing their hands for long enough. Sisilia teaches these kinds of songs in her village through the SWASH program.

Students create and then share a handwashing song, rhyme or poem to remind people that this is the best way to stop diseases spreading. They might use a familiar tune or rhyme and change the lyrics or they may create something new.

Curriculum links: English, Health and Physical Education

Sisilia's Story – Learning Activities

TASK 5: DREAM OUT LOUD

Sisilia dreams of becoming a pilot so that she can fly all over the world and see new places. Students respond to the question: What do you dream of? (It might be an occupation, situation, experience or place to visit). They then write 5-10 reasons and facts about their dream. As a challenge students fit their reasons on a single Post-it note sized piece of paper, practicing note-taking.

During her time in the SWASH program Sisilia grew in confidence as she learnt to speak in front of others.

In groups of 4 or 5, students share their dreams with each other using the information they have recorded. The aim is to speak for at least one minute. Other students in the small group are to listen and at the end may ask one or two clarifying questions. This short presentation does not require any visual aids, can be done seated or standing and can be completed in a single lesson.

Curriculum links: English

TASK 6: MATHAMTICALLY SPEAKING

Facts:

- 40% of the population in Tanzania do not have access to basic water facilities.
- 75% of the population in Tanzania do not have access to basic sanitation.

([World Bank](#))

Activity

Using a search engine, find the total population of Tanzania and Australia. Then:

1. Calculate approximately how many people this means do not have access to clean drinking water.
2. Calculate approximately how many people this means do not have access to basic sanitation.
3. How do these populations without clean drinking water or basic sanitation compare in size to Australia's total population?
4. What does this make you think about?
5. What questions do you have about this information?
6. What can be done about it?

Curriculum links: Mathematics

Sisilia's Story – Learning Activities

TASK 7: CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

In 1990, all countries in the United Nations (UN), except USA, ratified* the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention, is an international agreement between countries with 54 articles (paragraphs), which address various rights for children. The UN define a child as anyone under 18 years old.

The basic ideas of the Convention are:

- All children are equal and have the same rights.
- Every child has the right to have his or her basic needs fulfilled.
- Every child has the right to protection from abuse and exploitation.
- Every child has the right to express his or her opinion and to be respected.

Here is a children's version of the [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#). Discuss the Convention and what it contains. What surprises students? What would they like to learn more about?

Draw student's attention to Article 28 – Access to Education. It reads:

Every child has the right to an education. Primary education should be free. Secondary and higher education should be available to every child. Children should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level possible. Discipline in schools should respect children's rights and never use violence.

The 2025 SDG (Sustainable Development Goal) Report states 272 million children around the world are still out of school. Indicating that while access to education is a right, many children are denied this right.

* Ratified – give formal consent, make it officially valid. The USA signed, but did not ratify it, so it is not legally binding in the USA.

Write the following statement: All children should be able to go to school. Use the [Three Whys Thinker Key](#) to engage students in deeper thought and then discussion around this.

Write the following statement: Not all children of school age around the world are going to school. Repeat the [Three Whys Thinker Key](#). Students discuss responses with each other and the class.

Curriculum links: English, Health and Physical Education, HASS

TASK 8: VIRTUAL WATER

Virtual water is the hidden volume of water used in the production of everyday items we consume. For example, whilst a cup of coffee might only appear to use 250ml of water, it uses closer to 140L to get it into the hands of the person who is going to drink it. This includes water used to grow the coffee beans, production and transportation costs.

Using this [virtual water table](#), calculate how much water it might take to have lunch consisting of a cheese and tomato sandwich, a packet of chips and your choice of juice or milk. Calculate the amount of water for a different selection of food for lunch. List what you think adds to the hidden volume of water in some of the items listed.

How might people be able to reduce the amount of water they use, both the actual volume and the hidden volume? Create a visual representation for saving water.

Curriculum links: Mathematics, Design and Technologies, Science

Sisilia's Story – Learning Activities

TASK 9: CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING LINK – COMMON GOOD

Common Good

- something "belonging to all and meant for all", e.g. the climate (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* n23)
- an idea that ensures people reach their full potential as individuals and communities
- what happens when individual rights to personal possessions and community resources are balanced with our collective responsibility to meet the needs of others.

Student-friendly explanation

- We should always try to think about what is good for everyone, not just ourselves.
- It's about living together in a community.

A. How is the Common Good demonstrated in Sisilia's story?

B. How is supporting Project Compassion one way you can demonstrate a commitment to the Common Good?

For more teaching resources on The Common Good refer to our [CST Toolkit](#)

Curriculum link: Religious Education

TASK 10: RE LINK AND PRAYER

When we speak of the need to care for our common home, our planet, we appeal to that spark of universal consciousness and mutual concern that may still be present in people's hearts.

Those who enjoy a surplus of water yet choose to conserve it for the sake of the greater human family have attained a moral stature that allows them to look beyond themselves and the group to which they belong. How marvellously human! The same attitude is demanded if we are to recognize the rights of all people, even those born beyond our own borders.

(Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti* n117)

Fratelli Tutti is an encyclical, or open letter, written by Pope Francis asking us to reach out to our sisters and brothers in need. We are challenged to turn outwards and think of ourselves as one global family, becoming neighbours to all. *Fratelli Tutti* calls us to put human dignity at the centre.

- Discuss the quote from *Fratelli Tutti*, pulling out the themes of solidarity, being in a global family and working for the common good of all.
- Students brainstorm how they can conserve water for the sake of others at school and at home.
- Mark **World Water Day – 22nd March**

Sisilia's Story – Learning Activities

TASK 10: RE LINK (CONT.)

Create a Tapitas* Water Wall with a picture of a tap at the top and then water droplets cascading down. Students write a prayer on the droplet before adding their droplet to the display wall. Combine prayer and almsgiving encouraging students to donate \$5 (or a gold coin donation) per droplet to raise money for Project Compassion.

Download the Tapitas template [here](#).

*Tapitas is just a play on the word Caritas

Conclude with a class prayer:

*God of life,
help us to appreciate your gift of water.
As we drink, wash, cleanse and grow,
remind us how brilliant water is
and how precious it is too.*

*We pray for people living without clean water,
and for those who must travel
long distances to collect it.*

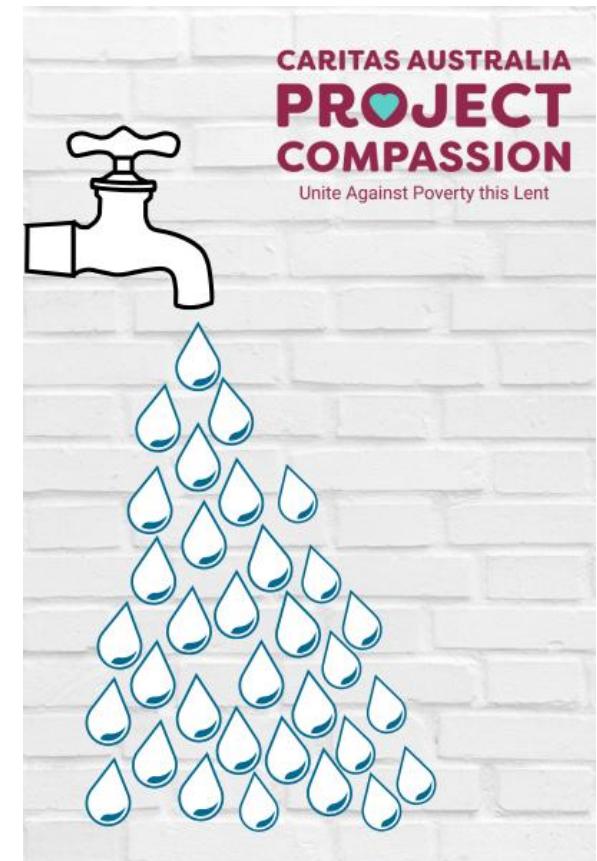
We pray that we use water wisely so not to take more than we need.

*Bless Caritas Australia's work, supporting families to access clean
water.*

Amen

(Prayer adapted from CAFOD's Water Assembly)

Curriculum links: Religious Education



Monoranjon's Story

Bangladesh

Climate change causes extreme weather events such as floods, heatwaves, droughts and melting ice caps as well as causing sea levels to rise. Bangladesh is a densely populated country and is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

Monoranjon lives with his wife, Anita and two children Sushmita, aged 14 and Chandon, aged 5 in a small village in the southwest region of Bangladesh. In this area, almost 10 million people are facing poverty, and of those, almost 6 million cannot meet their minimum daily needs. Monoranjon, like many people, relies on agriculture to provide for his family ([World Bank](#)).

'In this dry season no seedlings come out from seeds. Due to heat of the sun and lack of water, plants are dying,' Monoranjon said.

There is a strong chance that much of the region Monoranjon and his family lives in will be under water within the next thirty years. The area is already highly affected by climate change, experiencing extreme heat waves, droughts, floods, cyclones and rising sea levels. Rising sea levels have increased the salinity (saltiness) of crop soil, which makes it harder for plants to grow, and have threatened the survival of the mangrove forests near where Monoranjon lives. These mangrove forests are the largest in the world and play a vital role in protecting the coast against climate change. In the dry season, severe water shortages increase the risk of families running out of water. As a result, many farmers have had to supplement or replace their incomes with prawning, crabbing, and fishing.

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Monoranjon lives in a region in southwest Bangladesh that is highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Photo: Caritas Australia

Prior to joining Caritas Bangladesh's Community Managed Sustainable Livelihoods and Resilience Program (CMLRP-II), Monoranjon struggled to make ends meet, facing the constant threat of natural disasters. Without enough income from his crops and fishing, Monoranjon was at risk of being unable to afford to send his children to school.

Joining the livelihood program brought hope back into Monoranjon's life. Through peer learning sessions, he gained knowledge and new skills to improve the life of his family and community. Monoranjon takes part in local groups that grow mangroves and raise awareness about their role in the climate crisis. He has learnt climate-resilient organic vegetable farming; how to grow salt-tolerant vegetables and skills such as mulching, composting and producing and using organic fertiliser and pesticide. Monoranjon has also learnt poultry and livestock rearing, and fish polyculture (growing multiple fish species in the same pond) to increase the number of fish he can grow and sell. In addition, Monoranjon has also been able to add to his income through beekeeping! As a result of these great new skills and activities, his family's financial situation has improved. He is now able to continue sending his children to school, provide them with better nutrition, and improve their overall well-being and health.

Dr Satanu Roy from Caritas Bangladesh told Caritas Australia:

We discuss disaster planning with them, and they prepare their own disaster plan so that they can be aware about the timings of disasters, and because of climate change what will be the challenges they have to face. Now they have learned in advance.

Monoranjon, before joining the project, knew farming, but the organic method of farming – the modern technology in farming, he didn't know about the technology.

The community has embraced climate-smart farming practices and disaster risk reduction strategies. Monoranjon's involvement in the program has also elevated his standing within the community, as he is able to share his knowledge with his neighbours and local community.

Monornjon shared, 'Getting this training from Caritas, I am very happy. In my personal training and with the help of them I have learned a lot. I understand how to keep our livestock well, and how we live in our area, about climate.'

Looking ahead, Monoranjon sees a future where he continues to thrive as an experienced and progressive farmer, guiding others towards a path of sustainable development and resilience.

Along with your generous support, this program is also supported by the Australian Government, through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP).



Monoranjon's Story – Learning Activities

Read Monoranjon's Story (Bangladesh) and watch '[A Day in the Life](#)' [film](#).

TASK 1: DISCUSSION

- What climate changes are happening in Monoranjon's community?
- What is Monoranjon's job?
- How did Caritas Australia help Monoranjon?
- Name 5 things Monoranjon learnt from the Community Managed Sustainable Livelihoods and Resilience Program (CMLRP-II)?
- What is causing the soil to become salty?
- What does Monoranjon want for his family?

Curriculum links: English, HASS

TASK 2: STUDENT WORKBOOK

Complete tasks for Monoranjon's Story (Bangladesh) section.

Download/print the [Student Workbook](#) and direct students to the [Student Zone](#) to help them complete the activities.

Curriculum links: HASS, English, Mathematics, Religious Education

TASK 3: PHOTO GALLERY

As a class, view the Photo Gallery for Monoranjon's Story via the [Primary Student Zone](#). Ask students:

- What do the photos show you about Monoranjon's life?
- Which photo do you like the best? Why?
- What is something similar about your life and Monoranjon's?
- What do you want to learn more about?

Curriculum links: English

TASK 4: EXPAND YOUR VOCABULARY

The dictionary defines agriculture as *the art and science of cultivating the soil, growing crops, and raising livestock for food*. The person who does this is called an agriculturist.

What is an *aquaculturist*?

What is an *apiarist* or *apiculturist*?

Which of these is Monoranjon?

Extension activity Look up the following prefixes and suffixes to find their meanings: aqu-, agri-, poly-, apis-, -ist

Curriculum links: English

Monorajon's Story – Learning Activities

TASK 5: HOW DO WE PREPARE?

The Community Managed Sustainable Livelihoods and Resilience Program taught Monorajon and his community about *disaster risk reduction*, also known as *disaster preparedness*. In Australia we also learn how to prepare for disasters. Create a [mind map](#) or [one-page document](#) to show some of the disasters we learn how to prepare for and in what ways we prepare for them.

Curriculum link: HASS, English

TASK 6: SALTY WATER

Rising sea levels have increased the salinity in the soil in parts of Bangladesh. This has had an impact on Monorajon's farming. Conduct one of the experiments in FAO's (Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations) [Salty experiments with soil for children and guide for teachers](#) booklet to see what happens to plants when water is salty or what happens when soil is watered with salty water.

Curriculum link: Science, HASS, Mathematics

TASK 7: WEATHER VS CLIMATE

Weather refers to the short-term atmospheric conditions at a specific time and place while climate is the long-term average of weather patterns over many years, typically 30 years or more.

Use the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) website to look at the current weather. Compare the current weather to last week's weather. Predict what might happen next week. Compare this with the forecast.

Extension activity – Calculate the average temperature over the past two weeks.

Use [this page](#) on BOM's website to show the temperatures + or – 1 degree outside the average over the past 115 years.

Discuss what students notice. How have things changed? What was the hottest year? The coldest? What do you predict will happen in years to come, based on what this data is currently showing.

Curriculum link: HASS, Mathematics, Science

Monorajon's Story – Learning Activities

TASK 8: CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING LINK – PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR

Preferential Option for the Poor

- the act of prioritising the needs of the poor over the desires of the rich, the rights of workers over profits and the preservation of the environment over its exploitation
- a way of responding in love to the unjust circumstances in which millions of people live.

Student-friendly explanation:

- The Bible teaches us to take extra special care of the most vulnerable people in society.
- We should try to create a fairer world.

A. How did Caritas Australia respond in love to Monorajon?

B. How is supporting Project Compassion upholding the Catholic Social Teaching of the Preferential Option for the Poor?

For more teaching resources on the Preferential Option for the Poor refer to our [CST Toolkit](#).

Curriculum link: Religious Education

TASK 9: RE LINK AND PRAYER

Read Matthew 5:14-16

Take a torch (or similar) and place it under a bucket or basket. Ask students what do they notice. Then place the torch on top of a desk or at a level higher than where the students are sitting. What do they notice now? How much light can be seen?

Jesus asked us to let our lights shine. Discuss with the class, what are our lights and how we can make them shine and be seen:

- at school
- at home
- in the community
- or communities like Monorajon's

Create a large light image to display in the classroom e.g. a sun with rays coming off it, a torch with a beam of light or a lamp with light beams. Each student can add a way they can be a light to the world onto the light source. If using the sun, each student might be one of the sunrays. If using a torch or lamp, each student could write their response on a Post-it sized piece of paper and add it to the light beam.

Conclude by writing a class prayer about being a light for others. Pray it throughout Lent.

Curriculum link: Religious Education

Manaini's Story

Fiji

Fiji is a popular island holiday destination in the Pacific Ocean. Yet, almost a quarter of Fiji's population lives in poverty. In remote areas, the rate is higher. Having access to fresh food, knowing how to best use it to meet your family's needs and working together as a community all contribute to ways in which lives can be changed.

Manaini, mother of six and grandmother of two, lives in a remote village in northern Fiji. She relied on small scale farming and mat weaving for income. Manaini and her family's meals were simple and not always balanced with the nutrients they needed. She had to make do with the small amount of money she had. Life was challenging.

Manaini joined a Caritas Australia-supported project run in partnership with FRIEND (Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises and Development). She was part of the first meeting FRIEND held in the community when the project was introduced. She attended the food processing training when it first began. Before the training, Manaini shared that she often relied on processed foods from the supermarket for her family when she could afford it, and that she threw parts of her fresh crops away because she didn't know she could use them.

Manaini explained:

All the leftover root crops would be thrown to the pigs and chickens as we had not realised the importance of it.

After the food processing training, we learnt how to make use of the food that was available. We learnt a new skill which allows us to make use of the food. For example, drying all types of root crops such as breadfruit, cassava, taro, and yams to make varieties of flour. Making roti out of leftover boiled root crops.

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Manaini sells fresh fruits and vegetables that she and her community have grown and packaged on their farms, by the roadside in a small village in Fiji. Photo: Caritas Australia

The FRIEND programs are specific to community needs. They focus on cultural values, traditional knowledge, and participation in a way that enables each community to drive its own progress.

After consultation, Manaini and her neighbours were provided with seeds for their gardens. She and her village are now able to sell chillies and other vegetables on a street stall to make extra income for their families.

Having even a small amount of extra income has had a big impact on Manaini's life. 'The things I worry about the most is my kids' education. But my hope after what we've learnt, it'll help me earn and meet my children's educational needs.' Programs like this are essential for keeping children in school and breaking the cycle of poverty.

Manaini values the tools and skills the project has given her. 'I now make my own flour from local and available root crops. We no longer misuse our earnings after the financial literacy training. In addition, I have my own backyard garden from the seeds given by FRIEND.'

The program's focus on growing fresh produce and drying local foods has led to healthier eating habits and has reduced diseases such as type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

The project has also improved safety in the village. 'In the village, very few households had their own solar lights, but the installation of these streetlights ensured safety for everyone,' Manaini said.

Before the solar streetlights, families used kerosene lamps, when they could afford the fuel. If there was no money, they were unable to use their lamps, and everything had to be done during the day. This limited social activities, made evening study difficult for students, and left the elderly at risk of falls.

Manaini said: 'The project as a whole has a lot of value in my life as it totally changed the life of my family and even the community.'

Along with your generous support, this program is also supported by the Australian Government, through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP).



Manaini's Story – Learning Activities

Read Manaini's Story (Fiji) and watch '[A Day in the Life](#)' film.

TASK 1: DISCUSSION

- What challenges did Manaini face?
- What did Manaini do with her leftover crops of vegetables? What does she do now?
- How did Caritas Australia help?
- What impact has the program had on Manaini's life?
- How will you share Manaini's story with others?

Curriculum links: English, HASS

TASK 2: STUDENT WORKBOOK

Complete tasks for Manaini's Story (Fiji) section. Download/print the [Student Workbook](#) and direct students to the [Student Zone](#) to help them complete the activities.

Curriculum links: HASS, English, Mathematics, Religious Education

TASK 3: PHOTO GALLERY

As a class, view the Photo Gallery for Manaini's Story via the [Student Zone](#). Ask students:

- What do the photos show you about Manaini's life?
- Which photo do you like the best? Why?
- How do the photos make you feel?
- What questions would you like to ask Manaini?
- What do you want to learn more about?

Curriculum links: English

TASK 4: VEGETABLES

Manaini grows a range of vegetables that may not be readily available across Australia such as breadfruit, cassava, taro and yams. Students choose one of the vegetables and find the following:

- Two pictures – one that shows inside and one that shows outside
- A list of places where it grows
- 5 facts about it
- A recipe that uses it.

Present the information on a single page (handwritten, Word, PowerPoint, infographic template) to share with the class.

Curriculum links: HASS, Design and Technologies

Manaini's Story – Learning Activities

TASK 5: MIND MAPPING

Manaini and her community have faced many issues, including

- Sometimes buying expensive processed food
- Throwing food to animals
- Eating unbalanced meals
- Going without when there was no money
- Not having lights after dark which meant limited social activities, difficulty studying at night and safety risks.

In pairs or small groups, students choose one or more topics and complete a [mind map](#) showing how Manaini and her community were assisted to face and/or overcome these issues. Add an additional layer to the mind map that shows what the impact of these solutions might have on their lives. Share these with each other.

Extension Activity: Choose a classroom, school or wider community issue that you believe needs addressing. Complete a mind map offering possible solutions and impacts for those involved.

Curriculum links: English HASS, Health and Physical Education, Religious Education

TASK 6: FOOD SECURITY

Food security is when all people have enough safe and nutritious food to live a healthy and active life. ([FAO – Food and Agriculture Organisation](#)) Food insecurity is when all people **do not** have enough safe and nutritious food to live a healthy and active life.

Food insecurity can be a result of some or all these factors; conflict, insufficient or inadequate land, climate change, lack of water and food wastage.

In Australia, the average household wastes 4.22kg of food per week. That equates to 2.5 million tonnes across Australia each year or approximately 7.7 million edible meals every single day. This means we are contributing to food insecurity and to greenhouse gas emissions by what we throw away. Look at the following two infographics regarding [SDG Goal 2](#) and [SDG Goal 12](#). Brainstorm ways in which either individually or as a class you can make a difference to food insecurity. Remember, when everyone does something small, big things can happen.

Extension Activity: Look at the [5 key solutions to food insecurity](#) and determine which ones are being addressed in Manaini's story. Explain your reasoning.

Learn more about food security [here](#). For more activities on food security visit [Middle Primary](#) or [Upper Primary](#) resources.

Curriculum links: HASS, Health and Physical Education

Manaini's Story – Learning Activities

TASK 7: SOLAR POWER

The sun is a powerful and renewable energy source.

More communities around the world are using solar power as an alternative to fossil fuel. Manaini's community uses solar powered lights in the evening for study and safety. What are other uses and advantages of solar power?

Investigate solar-power experiments. Choose one to complete as a class. Some suggestions are included below.

[5 Easy Solar Power Experiments for Kids](#)

This is an interesting art form using the sun. This would need to be shown with care. [Solar Painting](#)

Curriculum links: Mathematics, Science

TASK 8: CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING LINK – SUBSIDIARITY AND PARTICIPATION

Subsidiarity and Participation

- from the Latin word *subsidiū*, meaning support or assistance
- the idea that people and groups have the right to participate in decisions that affect them and, when they can't meet their own needs, other parts of society (e.g. the government) act according to their duty to assist with resources and support
- an approach to common life that promotes participation and ensures people are architects of their own development

Student friendly explanation

- All people should be able to participate in their community and have a say in decisions that affect them.

A. How is subsidiarity and participation demonstrated in Manaini's story?

B. How is supporting Project Compassion one way you can uphold subsidiarity and participation?

For more teaching resources on Subsidiarity and Participation refer to our [CST Toolkit](#)

Curriculum links: Religious Education

Disclaimer

This story was prepared in September 2025. The humanitarian crisis in Gaza continues to evolve daily and circumstances on the ground may have changed since the resource's production.

Content Warning

The following story includes real images and information from Gaza, which some readers may find distressing. Please read the story before sharing with your students.

This story is shared with care and compassion.

Responding to Emergencies

Gaza

Emergencies happen without warning. They take the form of natural disasters like cyclones, floods and earthquakes as well as war or conflict.

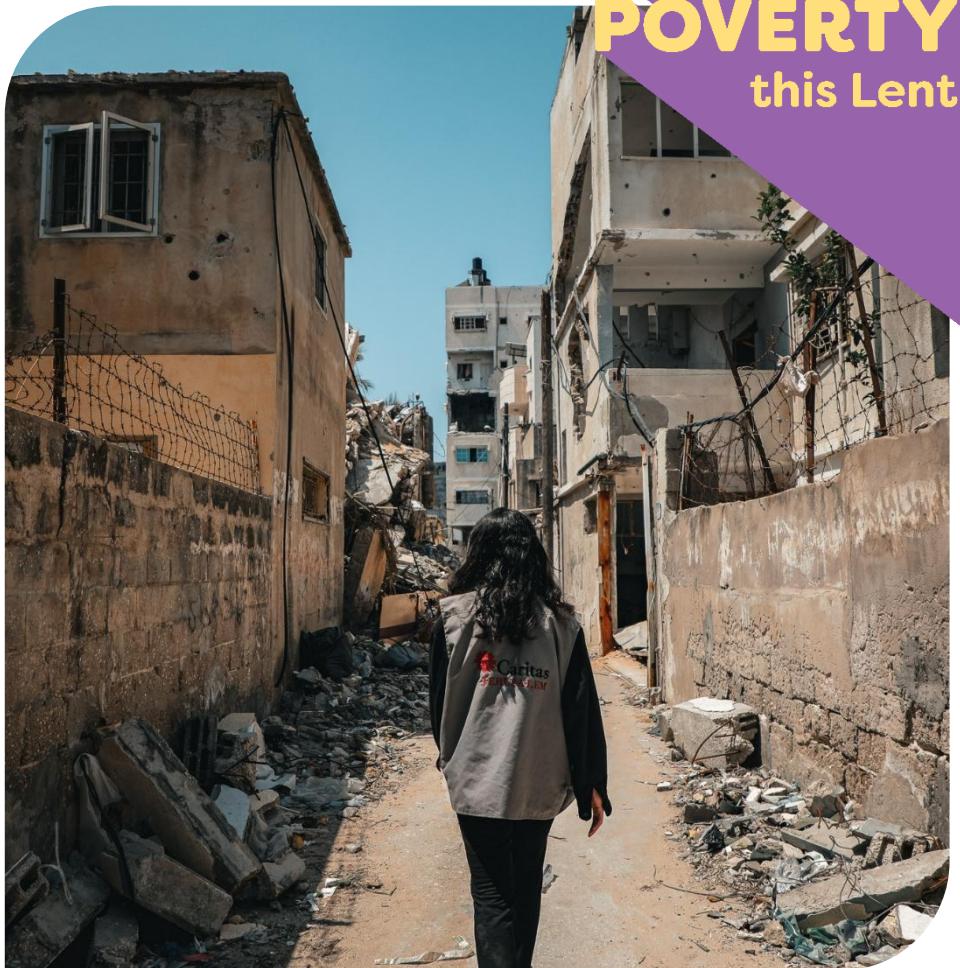
Immediately following an emergency, Caritas Australia and our partners around the world provide urgent relief to communities affected by the crisis, through the distribution of food, clean water, shelter, hygiene kits and other emergency supplies.

We use churches and agencies that are trusted by the local community to reach affected households. They prioritise resources in terms of what is needed, where they are needed and who needs them. These local networks rely on skilled people in the area who understand the local environment, helping us reach people in need in remote areas.

In 2025, The United Nations reported that 305 million people would require emergency assistance throughout the world. This included those affected by wars, famine, hunger, displacement and severe natural disasters in such places as Sudan, Gaza, Ukraine and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. ([Crisis and Emergency Response | United Nations](#))

Caritas continues to respond in each of these places. Last year, Caritas Australia directly supported 285,100 people through 23 projects across 15 countries.

UNITE
AGAINST
POVERTY
this Lent



Caritas Jerusalem staff walks amongst the rubble of destroyed buildings in Gaza.
Photo: Caritas Jerusalem

An emergency cannot use a single solution as there is rarely a single issue. They create many issues that require many solutions with many different levels of support. The conflict in Gaza hasn't only had the immediate threat for personal safety of its citizens, soldiers and humanitarian aid workers. There is ongoing health and safety threats for all, that have changed over time.

Since war broke out in Gaza in October 2023

- Famine has been declared in Gaza
- Homes, hospitals and essential water and sanitation structures have been destroyed.
- 1.9 million (or 9 out of 10) residents have been displaced (forced to leave their homes)
- 92% of housing has been severely damaged or destroyed.

As a result, urgent food, clean water, shelter, hygiene kits and other emergency supplies are needed.

Caritas Jerusalem staff member Ahmad has been directly affected by this war. His life and work transformed overnight. Like most people in Gaza, Ahmad and his family have been ordered to evacuate their home many times. Each time, they left their home carrying almost nothing.

Through these repeated displacements, Ahmad found strength in his work as part of Caritas Jerusalem's Media and Communications team.

'Thank God we work at Caritas, allowing us to serve people in the most challenging conditions despite the lack of medicine,' he explains. 'How beautiful it is to see a mother or child come to you for help and to be able to provide them with support in the most difficult circumstances. This organisation helps us make our voices heard, which has brightened our days.'

'I hope this ordeal ends so we can go back to rebuild Gaza, our children's future, our country, and our organisation.'

Ahmad's story is a reminder that Caritas's mission is lived not only through its programs, but through the courage and resilience of its frontline staff.

It takes months, and sometimes years, for a community to recover from an emergency. Despite dangerous and challenging conditions, Caritas Australia's partners on the ground are continuing to deliver emergency aid and adapt their response as situations change.

Through your ongoing support, Caritas Australia's local partners can continue to work on the frontline of emergencies and with affected communities, helping them to rebuild and recover.



Responding to Emergencies – Learning Activities

Read the story on Caritas Australia's emergency work.

TASK 1: DISCUSSION

- What are some examples of emergencies that Caritas Australia responds to?
- What is often provided in an emergency?
- How does Caritas Australia respond in an emergency?
- How long can it take for a community to recover from an emergency? Why do you think this is the case?
- What might help or stop people getting the support they need in an emergency?
- What is Ahmad's hope for Gaza?

Curriculum links: English, HASS

TASK 2: STUDENT WORKBOOK

Complete tasks for the Responding to Emergencies section.

Download/print the [Student Workbook](#) and direct students to the [Student Zone](#) to help them complete the activities.

Curriculum links: HASS, English, Mathematics, Religious Education

TASK 3: PHOTO GALLERY

As a class, view the Photo Gallery for emergencies via the [Primary Student Zone](#). Ask students:

What do the photos show you about emergency situations?

What do you think the photos don't show you about emergency situations?

What do you want to learn more about?

Curriculum links: English

TASK 4: REFUGEES

In many cases humanitarian crises result in people being displaced and an increase of refugees around the world. Several books have been written for children about refugees, asylum seekers and their experiences. These are a great way to begin conversations around this topic. Read and discuss one or two of these stories. Some titles include:

- *Teacup* by Rebecca Young and Matt Ottley
- *The Little Refugee* by Anh Do, Suzanne Do and Bruce Whatley
- *The Treasure Box* by Margaret Wild and Freya Blackwood
- *Four Feet – Two Sandals* by Karen Lyn Williams & Khandra Mohammed
- *The Silence Seeker* by Ben Morely
- *My Beautiful Birds* by Suzanne Del Rizzo
- *The Arrival* by Shaun Tan

Please see the [Caritas Resources page](#) for more information and resources on refugees and forced migration.

Curriculum links: English, HASS

Responding to Emergencies – Learning Activities

TASK 5: KITES

Kites have many uses around the world including human flight, science and meteorology, photography, generating power and recreation. They are also a symbol of hope, especially in Palestine. In 2011, 12,350 kites were flown simultaneously in Gaza by children.

There are many fascinating facts about kites such as; you do not need wind to fly a kite, and the longest kite fly record is 180 hours. Students research kite facts. Set a time limit for them to find as many facts as possible. If focusing on research skills, students should record their sources.

As a class, watch a short video ([like this](#)) or explain the science of kite flying. A student-friendly resource can be found [here](#). Students could then make their own kites.

For further information about kites as a symbol of hope in Gaza and as an act of solidarity, download the [Kites in Solidarity Guide](#).

Curriculum links: English, Design and Technologies, Science, Religious Education

TASK 5: CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING LINK – SOLIDARITY

Solidarity

- a firm and persevering commitment to the common good, which reminds us that everything is related
- the act of standing shoulder to shoulder with others
- a way of saying, 'I'm here with you'.

A. In emergency situations, how is Caritas Australia responding in solidarity?

B. How can we respond in solidarity to emergency situations?

C. How is supporting Project Compassion upholding the Catholic Social Teaching of the Solidarity?

For more teaching resources on the Solidarity refer to our [CST Toolkit](#).

Curriculum link: Religious Education

TASK 6: RE LINK AND PRAYER

Read Matthew 7:12

This Scripture text is known as The Golden Rule. All religions around the world have a version of The Golden Rule, whereby people are asked to treat others in the way that they would wish to be treated.

Emergency situations have an ability to draw the best out of people especially when they see others hurting. They want to know how they can help because if they were in the same situation, they would hope that someone would come to their aid.

Students spend some time reflecting on a time when they have either followed The Golden Rule or they have seen someone else follow it.

They then fold an origami kite, like [this one](#), and write on the inside of the kite their memory of The Golden Rule, a prayer thanking God for a time when they have seen it being followed or a prayer asking God to help them to follow it. Attach a tail to the kite. Create a classroom prayer space display of all the kites, with their messages inside.

Responding to Emergencies – Learning Activities

TASK 5: CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING LINK – SOLIDARITY (CONT.)

Or

As we lift our prayers for those in mourning, for the wounded, and for those who remain steadfast in the land of their forefathers, we remember the promise of Scripture: “The Lord upholds all who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down” (Psalm 145:14). May the God of mercy strengthen the afflicted, soften the hearts of those who hold power, and bring forth a peace that upholds justice, preserves human dignity, and safeguards the presence of all people in the land to which they belong.

**The Patriarchs and Heads of the Churches in Jerusalem,
February 2025**

With the students discuss this statement made by the Patriarchs and Heads of the Churches in Jerusalem in response to the conflict in Gaza. Questions to consider in the class discussion:

- How can we strengthen the afflicted?
- How can we soften the heart of those who hold power?
- How can we bring forth peace that upholds justice?
- How do we preserve human dignity?
- How can we safeguard the presence of all people in the land to which they belong?

These questions can be in response to the conflict in Gaza or any other social justice issue the students are aware of in the world or in their own community.

Curriculum link: Religious Education

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