

LITURGY OF HOPE

IN TIMES OF DISASTER

Introduction

This resource suggests a lesson on the disaster which has just occurred, allowing students to research and to prepare elements of the liturgy. It also offers a script for the liturgy itself, and information and suggestions for a further lesson on Caritas Australia's emergency responses. Curriculum links can be found on page 6.

- Part 1 – Lesson One: Preparing to pray together
- Part 2 – Setting up the prayer focus
- Part 3 – Liturgy
- Part 4 – Lesson Two: How Caritas Australia responds to emergencies before, during and after the headlines

Part 1 – Lesson One: Preparing to pray together

Aim: To tune students in to the issue and prepare their own contributions to the liturgy.

What you need:

- Newspaper articles with pictures about the disaster
- Video clips from news programmes
- Maps of the region where the disaster took place
- Atlases
- Cards or post-its for students to write on, large strips of paper to use as headings.
- Wool or coloured string, blu tack, sticky tape, push pins
- CD, CD player and lyrics of Joe Cocker's song *Just Pass it on* from **Hymn for Soul** album, 2007 (Page 9)
- Coloured paper (the colour for hope of the affected culture + green for Catholic symbol of hope)

Classroom activities:

1. 'Tune' students in to the disaster by listening to an account of someone who experienced it or watching a video clip. (Check Youtube, particularly for videos from Caritas Australia or other Caritas agencies).
2. Students journal about their reactions had they been in such a situation - What would they have heard, seen, felt? Discuss with class.
3. 'Natural disaster' is a term used when a natural hazard, such as an earthquake or volcano, overwhelms the capacity of a vulnerable community or population to cope.
Go to www.factmonster.com/ipka/A0775896.html to learn about the different types of natural disasters and complete the activities which follow. Other helpful websites are: <http://earthquake.usgs.gov/> and <http://www.globaleducation.edna.edu.au/>

4. Discuss the recent disaster – causes, casualty figures, areas affected, reasons for the scale of the disaster.

Students locate and shade the affected area on a map. Shade Australia on map and, using map or atlas scale, determine distance of affected areas from where students live. To give a sense of the real impact of the disaster, students imagine a town in their own region that has a similar population. If this disaster had occurred in Australia, would the impact have been so great? How does poverty affect a community's ability to prepare for and cope with disasters? How much is the scale of the recent disaster due to injustice?

5. Look at newspaper clips. Divide class into five groups. Allocate one of the following dot points to each group:

- Individuals
- Families
- School communities
- Local communities
- The country

Groups discuss impact of the disaster on the people they have been allocated and note down one idea per post-it. Groups make a label for the area they have discussed and put it on display board with their post-its underneath. As a class, note any common factors and connect them with string or wool. Give students time to look at other groups' responses.

6. Reflection: Introduce song, *Just Pass It On*, from Hymn for my Soul (2007).

This song, written by Daniel Moore and sung by Joe Cocker is about solidarity with those in distress. The chorus is in Swahili, an African language. 'Toombo iso' or 'tumbuiza' has several meanings including: to soothe or calm. The song is about supporting other people and how they do not 'owe us' for that support but that they should 'pass it on' and support others.

Give out the song words (Page 9). Play *Just Pass It On* and encourage students to join in the chorus.

7. Discuss the questions about the song (Page 9).

8. Explain the meaning of solidarity within Catholic context:

to stand alongside those in distress through speaking for them, taking action on their behalf and joining with them in prayer. Discuss the role of prayer as a means of fostering hope in our own lives and the lives of others and as a way of uniting ourselves in solidarity with those for whom we pray. Ask students to think about the issues on the post-it display and choose something/someone they think needs prayers for hope.

9. Prayer writing:

Find out the colour/symbol for hope in the affected culture.

Explain that green has the same symbolic meaning in Catholic liturgies.

Give students squares of coloured paper and get them to write their prayer on the paper. If students want ideas about where to begin, they could draw a symbol of hope or write an acrostic poem based on the word HOPE. Students' prayers to be gathered during the liturgy and later to be collated into a school display.

10. Conclusion: Ask students to make sure that they have their prayer on coloured paper with them at liturgy.

Students will be asked to 'pass it on' during the liturgy as a sign that they are in solidarity with those who have experienced the disaster. If appropriate, students could be asked to fold a coin inside their prayer as an additional gesture of solidarity to support the Caritas Australia appeal.

Check that everyone knows the time and venue for the liturgy. Allocate roles using the template: Page 10.

Part 2 – Prayer Focus

What you need for the prayer focus: table, appropriately coloured cloth or blue plastic tarp such as those used for emergency shelter, cross, bible, candles (several votive candles or a pillar candle for a classroom or several pillar candles for an assembly. Do **not** use the parish or school's Paschal candle as it is not liturgically correct to use it within this context), stones or rocks, broken bamboo sticks or similar, water containers, rice (bulk bags have more impact for an assembly and they can be purchased cheaply from Asian grocery stores. If it is treated hygienically the rice will be acceptable as a donation at shelters for the homeless or soup kitchens).

Part 3 – Liturgy

Welcome and introduction:

Welcome, today we gather to remember and pray for the people who have lost their lives and those who were injured in the recent _____ (type of disaster) in _____ (place of disaster).

When disaster strikes, it is easy to ask: *Where is God?* We light the candle/s to remind ourselves that Jesus is a light for us in the darkness of despair and suffering. (*Light candle/s*)

The cross reminds us of the suffering and death of Jesus. In his life, Jesus found comfort from the care and solidarity of other human beings. Today we pray for the grace to recognise the pain of other people and the strength and courage to take action on their behalf.

The water and the rice remind us that the people of _____ need to be able to access the necessities of life. The food and water are also reminders of life returning to normal. The broken bamboo reminds us that lives, communities and homes have been broken. We pray that people will find hope to reclaim their normal family and community lives.

Emergency PowerPoint

Check Caritas Australia's website. When an emergency is declared, we aim to produce a short PowerPoint for schools with images and information on the disaster. You could show this PowerPoint at this point in the liturgy.

Song suggestions:

- When I Needed a Neighbour (Carter) {As One Voice Vol. 1}
- Song of the Body of Christ (As One Voice Vol. 1)

Opening prayer

God of mercy and compassion, we ask for your blessing on those whose lives have been affected by the recent _____ (type of disaster) in _____ (place of disaster). Comfort them in their loss of family, friends and community. Give them the gift of hope to see beyond their pain and loss.

Give strength to those who work with them to rebuild their families and communities. Bless them for their compassion and willingness to be with the grieving, the injured and the homeless.

We ask you to open our hearts to the suffering and needs of those with whom we share this world. Sometimes it is easy just to see them as a statistic or a face on a TV screen. Give us the grace to see our sisters and brothers as real people and to respond to them with generosity of spirit and action. Lord, hear us.

Scripture readings

Psalm: In the psalm we are reminded that, in times of trouble, people turn to God for help and hope.

Psalm 40:1-2, 4, 11, 17

Antiphon: How blessed are those who put their trust in the Lord

I waited, I waited for the Lord
Then he stooped to me
And heard my cry for help

He pulled me from the seething chasm,
From the mud of the mire.
He set my feet on rock
And made my footsteps firm.

You, Lord, have not withheld
your tenderness from me
your faithful and steadfast love
will always guard me.

Poor and needy as I am,
The Lord has me in mind
You, my helper, my Saviour,
My God, do not delay.

Gospel: Luke 14: 12-14.

In this passage from Luke's Gospel, Jesus teaches us about solidarity with the poor and the marginalised. His words are one of the foundations of the Church's teaching about preference for the poor. They speak to us about the need to pass on to others the good things in our lives.

A reading from the Gospel of Luke

Then he said to his host, 'When you give a lunch or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relations or rich neighbours, in case they invite you back and so repay you. No; when you have a party, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind; then you will be blessed, for they have no means to repay you and so you will be repaid when the upright rise again.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Response: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Reflection on Gospel

Just Pass It On - Music and 'Liturgy of Hope' PowerPoint (Part 1). Photographs in this PowerPoint could be replaced with photographs of the disaster on which the liturgy is focussing.

Time for own prayer: At this point, pass baskets around and invite students to place their coloured slips with their personal prayers and donations to Caritas Australia into baskets.

Closing prayer: Our Father reflection ('Liturgy of Hope' PowerPoint Part 2)

Lord's Prayer: meditation on solidarity with those who are suffering. The congregation is invited to recite the lines of the Lord's Prayer from the PowerPoint while reader/s read the reflection.

All: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name (pause)

Reader: God, who shows us the boundless love of a mother or father, we ask you to walk with those whose lives have been broken by the _____ (name of disaster) in _____ (place of disaster). In the darkness and suffering that they experience, give them reason to hope. *Lord hear us.*

All: Lord, hear our prayer (pause)

All: Your kingdom come (pause)

Reader: God, we do not understand suffering and devastation in our world but we see your kingdom in the small miracles of people caring for others. We ask that you bless relief workers and others who make your kingdom present through their care for the individuals and communities affected by the disaster. *Lord hear us*

All: Lord, hear our prayer (pause)

All: Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. (pause)

Reader: God, you call us to share the resources of the earth and be stewards of your creation. Give us the generosity of spirit to be your hands on earth, to share these gifts justly and to help others to rebuild their lives and communities. *Lord hear us*

All: Lord hear our prayer (pause)

All: Give us this day our daily bread (pause)

Reader: God, your gifts to us go beyond the bare sustenance we need for our daily lives. As we reflect on the comfort that food, clean air and water, shelter and safety bring to our lives, we give thanks for all that we have received and realise that they are not gifts for us alone. Teach us to pass these gifts on to others in ways that respect their dignity and capacity to make wise decisions for themselves and their communities. *Lord hear us*

All: Lord, hear our prayer (pause)

All: Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us

Reader: God, too often we see others as undeserving. Forgive us for the times we have let a 'them' and 'us' mentality rule our minds and our hearts. Give us the grace to see people as you see them - as individuals with feelings, hopes and dreams who deserve our help and respect. *Lord hear us*

All: Lord, hear our prayer (pause)

All: Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil (pause)

Reader: God, we are often blind and deaf to the suffering of others, especially those far away from our own experience of life. It is tempting for us to turn the TV channel or the page of the newspaper so as not to be confronted with another's grief and loss. We ask you to deliver us from our own selfishness and apathy. Open our hearts to your call to walk with the broken, the poor, the oppressed and the marginalised. *Lord hear us.*

All: Lord, hear our prayer (pause)

All: Amen

Reader: 'Amen' means saying 'yes' to you. In saying this, we believe that you empower us to be a force for change and justice in the world.

Sign of peace

Closing song - suggestions: You Raise Me Up (J. Groban); Act Justly (T.Watts and M. O'Brien, *As One Voice* Vol.1); See a New World Rise (Kevin Bates, *BLESSED*)

Follow up display - Students' prayers for hope are displayed in a prominent place in the school or classroom. A large sketch of a globe of the earth could be used with some of the students' prayers streaming from Australia to _____ (place of disaster).

Part 4: Lesson Two: Caritas Australia's response to natural disasters before, during and after the headlines

Curriculum Links

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

Celebration and prayer: Students integrate relevant social and cultural factors into the design of prayers and rituals for contemporary life contexts.

Morality: Students explain the contribution of Catholic Social Teaching to action for justice.

Students apply understandings of Catholic Social Teaching to argue a proposal for a just response to a contemporary issue.

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES:

Natural hazards are a result of natural processes, and human activity can affect their impacts.

Interrelationships between human activity and environments can cause environmental problems.

Sustainability requires a balance between using, conserving and protecting environments and involves decisions about how resources are used and managed.

Communities need to balance economic, social, political and environmental factors through sustainable development, consumption and production.

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Individual, group and community action, that enables people to adopt health promotion strategies,

can address inequities and promote health and wellbeing, including safety.

Life events and transitions can be dealt with through meaning-making, resilience strategies and use of personal and community resources.

Introduction

Wherever disaster occurs, Caritas is ready to respond. Caritas Australia is a member of *Caritas Internationalis*: a confederation which is one of world's largest disaster response and development networks in the world with a presence in over 200 countries and territories. The confederation enables Caritas Australia to provide assistance to people affected by disaster quickly and effectively.

BEFORE a disaster

Caritas Australia recognises that people living in poverty are the most affected when a natural disaster strikes. It is therefore important to help communities particularly at risk to prepare for future disasters. Simple but effective training in disaster preparedness has been proven to save lives.

1. How does poverty leave people vulnerable when a natural disaster occurs?
2. How many people have lost their lives due to natural disasters in the last year? Were most of the lives lost in developing or developed countries/regions? Why do you think this is so?
3. Read the following article on our website: India - Tsunami: Building back better
<http://www.caritas.org.au/Content/NavigationMenu/WhatWeDo/Respondtodisaster/TsunamiTwoYearsOn/India/default.htm> Name three different ways to prepare communities for a natural disaster.
4. Do an activity from the Disaster Risk Reduction activities sheet on our secondary school pages.

DURING a disaster

Providing relief such as shelter, food, water as well as trauma counselling is important in helping people meet their immediate needs.

Partnership

Caritas Australia is committed to listening, accompanying and working with the local Church and partner agency in partnership. This means our relationships must be based on mutual respect, trust and goodwill. People who are affected by a disaster have a right and a duty to participate in making decisions that affect them and to not be mere recipients of aid. Partnership emphasises the importance of recognising and respecting local culture, custom and belief, understanding each others' background, context, constituency and relationships.

During a disaster, Caritas Australia is guided by the principles of Catholic Social Teaching and the Red Cross Code of Conduct.

1. Catholic Social Teaching
 - Go to www.caritas.org.au and review the guiding principles of Catholic Social teaching. These can be found under 'About Us'.
 - Identify how each of these principles played a role in responding to a recent disaster.
2. Red Cross Code of Conduct
 - Go to <http://www.ifrc.org/publicat/conduct/index.asp> and scroll down to the ten principles of the code.
 - What does the 'humanitarian imperative' mean?
 - Do any of the principles surprise you?
 - Can you identify any Catholic Social Teaching principles in the Code of Conduct?

3. Go to the Caritas Australia website and read about how Caritas Australia is responding to emergencies around the world.
4. Write a report on the response to one disaster. In your report include:
 - Effects of the disaster(include facts)
 - Caritas Australia's response
 - Details of what Caritas has provided in the area, eg. shelter, medical provisions, income generating programmes, education or trauma counselling.
5. How many disasters did Caritas Australia respond to last year?
6. What current emergency appeals can people donate to now?

AFTER a disaster

When the headlines disappear from our TV screens and newspapers, the need remains. It is crucial to move from emergency relief to sustainable development programs as soon as possible, to ensure that people affected by disaster can resume productive and dignified lives. But this takes time. Caritas Australia is committed to ensuring we assist communities in not only the short-term, but also the long-term.

1. Read "Rice aplenty in Aceh" as an example of how Caritas Australia has assisted the people of Aceh, well beyond the devastating tsunami in 2004. Go to:

<http://www.caritas.org.au/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Spring3&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=6091>

- Why did Caritas support the livelihood program in Aceh?
- What technical assistance did Caritas provide?
- What is said to be the key to good rehabilitation?
- Dr Anda said "This is much more focused on long-term development outcomes rather than short-term asset replacement." What do you think Dr Anda means by this?

Caritas Australia would like to thank Moira Staunton for this education resource and liturgy.

Just Pass It On

Written by Daniel Moore and sung by:
Joe Cocker on *Hymn for my Soul* (2007)

You don't owe me, ha! I'll be hoping, ha! I'll be praying, ha!

Toombo iso, ha! Toombo iso, ha! Toombo iso, ha!

1. You don't owe me,

you don't owe me a solitary thing.

If I lend a hand it's 'cause I choose to.

You don't owe me.

Refrain (Just pass it on) Pass it on, pass it on.

(Pass it on) Help make the world go round. (Pass it on)

Pass it on to whoever you need, they won't owe you.

Toombo iso, ha! toombo iso, ha!

2. I'll be hoping, I'll be hoping for the big one out of the blue,

when it comes I want it to come to you. I'll be hoping.

Refrain (Just pass it on) Pass it on, pass it on.

(Pass it on) Hope makes the world go round.

(Pass it on) Pass it on to whoever you need,

they won't owe you. Toombo iso, ha! Toombo iso, ha!

3. I'll be praying,

I'll be praying that the best will come your way.

and when it comes that's going to make my day.

I'll be praying.

Refrain

Coda I'll be hoping, ha! I'll be praying, ha!

Toombo iso, ha! Toombo iso...

Think about the song

What is the 'it' that Joe Cocker says should be passed on?

Why does he say 'you don't owe me'?

Do people 'owe' us if we help them?

What did Christ teach us about this? Find a Gospel story that contains some of this teaching. (Hint – try Mark's Gospel!)

Why do you think the songwriter used the Swahili words for 'soothe' or 'calm' in the chorus?

How does the song encourage listeners to see others as people rather than as victims? How does it give those who need help a sense of also being empowered?

Caritas works with partners within countries experiencing disasters to try to source relief supplies from within the country itself. How does this approach respect the dignity of others? How does it 'pass on' benefits to the local economy at the same time?

As students in Australia, what can you do to soothe the suffering of people who have experienced disasters such as an earthquake?

Research and report to the class on some Caritas projects that are specifically aimed at helping people to become self-sufficient and pass on some of these benefits to others in their village communities. Why are so many of these projects aimed at women?



Caritas
AUSTRALIA

End poverty
Promote justice
Uphold dignity

Liturgy for a disaster

Liturgy process	Organiser / Facilitator / Reader
Select opening, closing prayers, readings and music	
Prepare booklet and PowerPoint, if relevant	
Set up prayer focus	
Gather, welcome, quieten group	
Introduce theme of liturgy as candle/s are lit	
Opening prayer	
Scripture readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psalm or other OT reading • Gospel 	
Gospel Reflection	
Time for own silent prayer	
Closing prayer, Lord's prayer (call to action)	
Sign of peace	
Closure and clean-up	
Follow up	