



Dominic and his family in Papua New Guinea.

**Dominic, 47 is a former teacher and father of six from Papua New Guinea. In 2016, he became involved with the Caritas Australia's Safe House and Family Anonymous programs and turned a difficult life and an unhappy relationship around.**

**Now a community trainer, he works with other men to help them to change their behaviour and build more harmonious family lives.**

Dominic lives in Madang province on the north coast of mainland Papua New Guinea with his wife and four of his children. His other two children live on the campus of their high school. The costs are high, and Dominic struggles to afford their expenses.

He faced enormous challenges getting an education himself. Unable to afford his diploma in primary teaching, he quit his studies to go to Port Moresby to work. Unable to find a job, had to find other ways to raise money to continue his education. He became a primary school teacher, then with further study, a high school teacher.

Domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse and limited employment opportunities mean that many in PNG struggle to meet their basic family needs. Forty percent of its population

live below the poverty line\*.

Gender inequality is also a huge issue, with around 67% of women experiencing gender-based violence\*\*.

"Dominic was a violent man and most times used verbal and physical abuse in the presence of his children," says Sister Thecla, Centre of Hope's Director.

In 2016, Caritas Australia and its PNG partner, Centre of Hope, invited Dominic to join its Safe House program. It provides gender-based violence prevention training, counselling services and safe accommodation for women and children survivors of violence. It also provides support for income-generating projects and life skills for young people.

Dominic and his wife, Christophylda, also took part in the "Family Anonymous" program which helps people to tell their stories confidentially, supporting them to transform their behaviour. It also helps women and families to open savings accounts, to fund income-generating projects. They can then support their children with school fees and other basic needs. Over 20,000 people have benefited from these programs so far.

Dominic and Christophylida say that their relationship has been transformed – and their family life is now harmonious, happy and safe.

**After entering the Caritas program, I have actually changed some of my bad attitudes. It has really opened my mind and heart to see where my weaknesses are and trying to improve.**   
**Dominic.**

“It has made our relationship closer, with greater respect for one another,” Christophylida says. “Good family, sharing and caring attitudes and respect for each family member and in the community.”

Dominic undertook training as a Safe House community volunteer because he wanted to help other people like him. He soon became a valuable member of the support network.

“Having people talking from their experience of violent backgrounds into becoming a changed person is worth more than person talking from theoretical knowledge,” Sister Thecla says. “This can challenge other men to believe in changes or to admit their own situation and work towards change.”

Dominic’s male advocacy and training work brings in a good income, helping him to afford his children’s schools fees – as well as increasing tolerance and unity amongst different ethnic groups.

“I would like to thank people of Australia for your tremendous support. Without your assistance the Safe House program would not reach out to the poor and marginalized of our communities to help minimize social issues affecting families and communities.” Sister Thecla says.

“But Safe House is a long-term project and its services are slowly spreading, we hope you will continue your support in the future.”

When you support Project Compassion, you are working towards the common good in Papua New Guinea, by enabling the Safe House project to bring greater harmony to families.

\*World Bank 2019 \*\* UNICEF and Human Rights Watch 2016



Now a community trainer, Dominic works with other men to help them to change their behaviour and build more harmonious family lives.

# Dominic, Papua New Guinea

## 1. Read and discuss/write your responses:

- a) Identify the key challenges Dominic's community faces.
- b) Explain how Caritas Australia and their partners in the Papua New Guinea are supporting families to overcome some of these challenges.
- c) What skills did Dominic learn through the Safe House program?
- d) How has Dominic's participation in the Caritas Australia supported program impacted the community?
- e) What are two facts you learnt about poverty and injustice in Papua New Guinea?

## 2. Spread the Message

Create a series of posters with messages that support gender equality and protection of women's rights.

Make links to how gender based violence affects poverty rates.

Include what you have learnt from Dominic's story, and use information from the Global Goals website.

<https://www.globalgoals.org/5-gender-equality>

*List your messages below and then use Canva to create your posters.*

*Curriculum: Health and PE: Year 7 & 8 ACPPS073, Year 9 & 10 ACPPS096.*

## 3. Complete the Problem and Solution tree

Select one issue that Dominic and his

community face: e.g. poverty, lack of access to education.

*Curriculum: Health and PE Year 10: ACPPS098, Geography: Year 10: ACHGK076, ACHGK078.*

## Dominic, Papa New Guinea

Engage with the Country Study [Thinglink](#) and do some of your own research to find the information below. Suggestions for reliable sources are included on the Thinglink and below.

<p>Predict life expectancy in Papua New Guinea and Australia. Find out the correct answer. Does this surprise you? Why/Why not?</p> <p>What has changed? <a href="https://ourworldindata.org/life-expectancy">https://ourworldindata.org/life-expectancy</a></p>	Prediction:	<a href="https://www.britannica.com/place/Papua-New-Guinea">https://www.britannica.com/place/Papua-New-Guinea</a>  <a href="https://dfat.gov.au/geo/papua-new-guinea/Pages/papua-new-guinea.aspx">https://dfat.gov.au/geo/papua-new-guinea/Pages/papua-new-guinea.aspx</a>	
	Actual:	What are the official languages?	
		What is the main religion?	
<p>What is the population of Papua New Guinea? What is the population of Australia? <a href="https://ourworldindata.org/world-population-growth">https://ourworldindata.org/world-population-growth</a></p>	<p>PNG:</p> <p>Australia</p>	What system of government does the Papua New Guinea have?	
<p>What is the poverty rate in Papua New Guinea? <a href="https://data.worldbank.org/http://hdr.undp.org/en/data">https://data.worldbank.org/http://hdr.undp.org/en/data</a></p>		<p>In what region of the world is Papua New Guinea located?</p> <p>What direction is it from Australia?</p>	
<p>List three major factor/s affecting poverty and wellbeing (E.g. access to clean water, sanitation, education)</p>		Describe the ways Australia is connected to Papua New Guinea ? E.g. what trade occurs between the two nations, what services are exchanged, immigration, etc.	
<p>Summarise Caritas Australia's support to improve wellbeing</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>			

## Dominic, Papua New Guinea

**66 In our families we learn to recognise the dignity of all.**

Pope Francis

Reflection questions:

- How does recognizing the dignity of all people help to build a peaceful world?
- How does this quote relate to Dominic's story?
- How does this quote relate to your own life?

## ACT

How might you raise awareness in response to what you read and thought about in Dominic's story?

What are you compelled to do? It might be a personal, group or community action. Write your thoughts and plan below.

# Dominic, Papua New Guinea

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION THEMES

**Year 7 & 8: Initiation and belonging:** Explain how the Safe House Program run by Centre of Hope assists individuals like Dominic to feel a sense of belonging.

**Year 9 & 10: Catholic Social Teachings/ Human Dignity.** Watch '[CST in 3 minutes](#)' Explain how two Catholic Social Teachings are applied by Centre of Hope in creating programs that assist individuals like Dominic.

How do you demonstrate these principle in your own life?

## PRAY:

**Complete this prayer with your own words:**

God of life, you have made each of us in your own image.

## TAKE AWAY AND SHARE

**One thing that surprised/challenged or stood out for me in this story, that I will share with others:**