

PARISH BOOKLET 2022

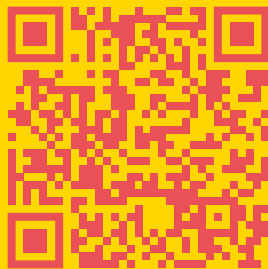
PROJECT
COMPASSION
**FOR ALL
FUTURE
GENERATIONS**



INSIDE:

- STORIES
- REFLECTIONS AND PRAYERS
- FUNDRAISING GUIDELINES

BOOK YOUR LIVE ENGAGEMENT



**"HUMANITY STILL
HAS THE ABILITY TO
WORK TOGETHER
IN BUILDING OUR
COMMON HOME."**

**POPE FRANCIS,
LAUDATO SI**

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**ANATERICA,
MOZAMBIQUE**



**BIRU,
INDIA**



**JANICE,
AUSTRALIA**



**ROSALIE,
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO**



**SHANIELLA,
SOLOMON ISLANDS**



FIND US ONLINE

Visit the Caritas Australia website for more information about Project Compassion 2022, including useful resources.

LENT.CARITAS.ORG.AU

GOVERNMENT NOTICE

All fundraisers, participants and volunteers agree to abide by and comply with all relevant legislation, regulations and best practice guidelines (as appropriate) in each State and/or Territory of Australia.

Individuals and other legal entities who fundraise for Caritas Australia (Fundraisers) are responsible for (but not limited to):

- Complying with relevant fundraising laws and regulations in each jurisdiction where they fundraise (and complying with the fundraising laws in every Australian State and Territory if donations are accepted on the internet).

- Ensuring that all monies raised via fundraising activities will be donated to the stated purpose of the appeal.

- Ensuring that all donations are forwarded to Caritas Australia by **31 May 2022**.

For full fundraising responsibilities, please refer to our website: www.caritas.org.au.



Australian Government



FUNDRAISE ONLINE!

Have a PC event planned? Want to have some fun and share the news? Set up your parish fundraising page today at:

LENT.CARITAS.ORG.AU

WELCOME

KIRSTY ROBERTSON CARITAS AUSTRALIA CEO



As we envision the future and look forward to all the wonder that 2022 is yet to bring, we should also take this opportunity to reflect on the past. My involvement with Caritas Australia dates back to when I was in primary school, carrying around my Project Compassion box. It was then I discovered the power of giving and the impact that my contribution, however big or small, would have in the lives of others. When you lend a hand to someone in need, they will go on to help others and make better opportunities for future generations. Compassion is contagious and creates a ripple effect of kindness and prosperity.

Last year, the world was challenged with the ongoing effects of COVID-19, as well as political upheaval, issues of climate justice, poverty and famine. The media became an inescapable reminder of the state of the world, and as a result, many of us left 2021 feeling drained and fatigued.

However, the fact that we are still standing here today, is living proof that our optimism and faith in the future can go a long way. 'For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen' (2 Corinthians 4:17-18).

The theme of Project Compassion 2022 is 'For All Future Generations' and reminds us that the good that we do today will extend and impact the lives of generations to come. It invites us to make the world a better place by working together now and finding long-term solutions to global issues.

This year's theme comes from the biblical story of Noah's Ark. More specifically, when the flood waters subsided, a rainbow appeared in the sky and the dove returned with an olive branch indicating a new beginning. God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations' (Genesis 9:12).

Project Compassion 2022 shares the stories of resilient and inspiring individuals whose lives and futures have been impacted by the ongoing support of our partners and by your generosity. This includes the story of young Anatercia from Mozambique who, despite facing poverty and food insecurity, can now access school supplies and attend her classes.

Biru from India, who has overcome the barriers of disability and developed the confidence to run his own cycle repairing centre and gain sustainable income. Rosalie from the Democratic Republic of Congo has been able to establish her business selling natural medicine products and second-hand shoes after being demobilised from the army. Janice from the Northern Territory has gained employment as a tour guide through our partner Djilpin Arts. And Shaniella from Solomon Islands who, thanks to the work and support of Caritas Australia Solomon Islands, has received support in her hospitality studies during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Your generosity is the pebble that allows Caritas Australia to create the ripples that will improve the livelihoods of vulnerable communities, supporting them to flourish and create opportunities for future generations to live to their full potential and thrive.

For it is through the strength of our compassion that we follow the steps of Jesus Christ and help others build resilience during trying times.

With gratitude,

Kirsty Robertson

Kirsty Robertson
CEO, Caritas Australia

YOUR GUIDE TO PROJECT COMPASSION

HERE ARE SUGGESTIONS TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR YOUR PARISH TO LINK LENT, LITURGY AND LIFE THIS LENTEN SEASON. CHECKLISTS ARE PROVIDED TO HELP YOU PLAN AND KEEP TRACK OF YOUR ACTIVITIES.

BEFORE PROJECT COMPASSION BEGINS

BEFORE 2 MARCH 2022, ASH WEDNESDAY

This year's theme reminds us that what we do today can have an impact *For All Future Generations*. This message invites us to step up for those who do not have the essential resources they need for their survival, and those whose needs at this time are far beyond ours. By putting compassion into action, we can make a difference today, *For All Future Generations*.

We hope that the resources we provide help you bring Project Compassion to life in your parish, making it an inspiring and rewarding experience for everyone.

CHECKLIST

- MATERIALS RECEIVED/CARITAS REPRESENTATIVE BOOKED TO SPEAK AT YOUR PARISH MASS?** To book your speaker, or for additional resources, please contact your Diocesan Director (see page 16).
- PC22 USB PASSED ON** to parish secretary or parish representative. USB contents also online at lent.caritas.org.au
- WATCH & SHARE THE PC22 MATERIALS** with your parish liturgy committee/social justice group?

PROJECT COMPASSION BEGINS

26-27 FEBRUARY 2022

Project Compassion Sunday is the Sunday before Ash Wednesday. Get your Project Compassion 2022 activities off to a good start, ensuring your whole parish is engaged with this year's theme: *For All Future Generations*.

CHECKLIST

- DISPLAY posters** prominently in your church, other Mass centres & meeting rooms.
- DISTRIBUTE BOXES AND DONATION ENVELOPES.** If possible, offer these to parishioners individually, either as people leave the church, or after Communion, signifying the link between saying 'Amen' to the Body of Christ and 'being' the Body of Christ in the world today.
- TALK ABOUT PC22:** Deliver one of the weekly Project Compassion Sunday talks provided, visit lent.caritas.org.au
- SHOW FILMS:** Share the Project Compassion films with your parish to connect with the people featured in Project Compassion this year.

DURING LENT

2 MARCH-17 APRIL 2022

A different story is featured each week during Lent. In 2022, Project Compassion focuses on the theme *For All Future Generations*.

The stories highlight how Caritas Australia is working together with vulnerable people, empowering them to develop their strengths and create change in their own communities.

CHECKLIST

- DISTRIBUTE BOXES AND DONATION ENVELOPES** to any parishioners who weren't at Mass on Project Compassion Sunday and to your social justice group and other committees.
- SHARE stories:** Insert the Project Compassion 'Bulletin Notice' in your weekly Parish Bulletins (these can be found on pages 10-15 in this booklet and the PC22 USB).
- INCORPORATE Lent Reflections and Prayers of Intercession:** See the weekly stories in this booklet and the PC22 USB.
- SHOW the PC22 films** to introduce some Project Compassion beneficiaries and hear their inspiring stories. A popular time is just before the beginning or end of Mass each week.
- PRINT the Project Compassion stories** from the PC22 USB in your Parish Bulletin if space permits, or add an extra page if possible. USB content also available online.
- FUNDRAISE ONLINE:** Go to lent.caritas.org.au and activate your Parish Project Compassion fundraising page.

BOOK YOUR VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENT WITH THE PROJECT COMPASSION STORIES



EASTER SUNDAY

17 APRIL 2022

On the last Sunday of Lent, remind Parishioners that it's their last opportunity to support and participate in Project Compassion 2022.

CHECKLIST

- **DISTRIBUTE Easter envelopes** on seats, after Mass or as people leave on Easter Sunday.
- **PRINT a notice in the Parish Bulletin** inviting participation in Project Compassion for those who haven't been able to participate previously.
- **REQUEST all Project Compassion donation boxes and envelopes** be returned to your parish as soon as possible.

AFTER EASTER

AFTER 17 APRIL 2022

THANK YOU: Thank all who have supported Project Compassion in your Parish.

CHECKLIST

- **TURN OVER your Project Compassion poster** to display the "Thank you" poster on the other side.
- **PRINT a reminder in the Parish Bulletin** in April and May, requesting all donations be returned as soon as possible.
- **FORWARD your donations** and Record of Receipts sheet to Caritas Australia before 31 May 2022.
- **PRINT a Thank you in the Parish Bulletin** in June, announcing the total amount raised.



HELP WITH RECEIPTING & PARISH DONATION REMITTANCE

The PC22 USB includes a guide to remittance procedures and contains sample receipts and an Excel version of the Record of Receipts sheet.

Paper Tax receipts and Record of Receipts sheets are also included in your materials.

Your Diocesan Director can also provide remittance information, additional printed Record of Receipts sheets and tax receipts for parishioners. Their details can be found on the back of this booklet.

Encourage parishioners to donate via credit card, to minimise parish receipting time. They can place their credit card details on the weekly donation envelopes or single Easter donation envelope.



NEED SOMEONE TO HELP PROMOTE PROJECT COMPASSION?

Many parish priests find it is a great help having a parishioner working with them as their 'Caritas Parish Representative'.

This person could create Project Compassion displays, distribute materials, photocopy and staple, organise the use of films and prayer reflections, and arrange other appropriate ways to maintain Project Compassion's message during Lent.

To help you find a Caritas Parish Representative, the PC22 website includes an advertisement bulletin notice and a parish flyer, as well as a guide for new Parish Representatives.

Your Diocesan Director is also happy to assist. You can find their contact details on this back of this booklet.



WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE PC22 RESOURCES?

Please fill in the evaluation form on the PC22 USB or website – this will help us plan future Project Compassion campaigns and act responsibly for our common home, avoiding waste and resources that aren't used.

RECEIPTS

Please forward your donations to Caritas Australia before 31 May 2022 with your Record of Receipts sheet.

You can also transfer donations by electronic funds transfer. Call us on 1800 024 413 for details.



REFLECTIONS AND PRAYERS



**PROJECT COMPASSION SUNDAY REFLECTION
WEEKEND OF 26-27 FEBRUARY 2022**



Many of us wear glasses, perhaps just for reading. Can you think back to the first pair of glasses you ever received? You might have been still at school or maybe older. If you don't have glasses, can you think back to the first time you used a magnifying glass? Or perhaps looked through a microscope and saw that even such an ordinary thing as a leaf has all sorts of veins and colours? Seeing clearly is a great gift. We often taken our eyesight for granted.

Today's readings remind us of the importance of trying to see things clearly, which means not being taken in by false appearances. Jesus asks us if a blind person can lead another blind person. They will both fall into a pit. He might not mean blind in the literal sense. Anybody familiar with the work of Vision Australia will know that people with a sight deficit can surely help each other. But those who are blinded by their ego or self-importance or status

or wealth are in a lot of bother. Those who are harsh in the way they judge others are even worse off. Nobody can forget the image Jesus uses of removing the plank from your own eye before commenting on the splinter in somebody else's. Jesus did not like hypocrites. He would have agreed with the words we heard from Ecclesiasticus that we are judged by the quality of our fruit. The things we say are a sign of our character. It is good to think about this in an age where it is easy to say thoughtless and nasty and destructive things. The right words at the right time make a big difference.

Lent starts this week with Ash Wednesday. Lent is a time for trying

to see more clearly as we prepare for Easter. Through prayer, we try to focus on God. Through fasting, we focus on our own emptiness or deeper hungers. Through giving alms, we focus on those who need support to flourish. For fifty years or so, a great way to do this has been through Caritas Australia's Project Compassion. This year the theme *For All Future Generations*, comes from the moment God established an everlasting covenant in the Book of Genesis. Let us honour the divine commitment to every living creature by working with Project Compassion for a more just world. St Paul reminds us today 'to keep on working at the Lord's work.' Perhaps that can be our resolution for Lent.

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION



We pray for wisdom and humility, and the ability to see God's creation with the eyes of faith. May our support of Project Compassion enable us to produce fruit that will last.

ASH WEDNESDAY REFLECTION



Now is a wonderful word. It can also be challenging. Last year, during the lockdown when many people were working from home, there were jokes about the 'four horsemen of procrastination.' These were snacks, napping, social media and minor chores. Supposedly, they were time fillers that stopped us doing what we needed to do.

Lent begins with a great sense of now. It is a season of opportunity; it even has a flavour of urgency. Today, Ash Wednesday, we hear St Paul say that 'now is the favourable time'. The reading from the prophet Joel says 'Now, now, it is the Lord who speaks, come back to me with all your heart.' Jesus tells us, when we pray, to go to our private room so that our experience of God is

one of intimacy and true connection, not just of routine. There is no sense in which Jesus is suggesting this can wait until tomorrow.

Lent calls us to respond to God and to others now. During Lent, Project Compassion will present us with inspiring stories from Caritas Australia about real people entering into partnership with us in real ways. The theme for Project Compassion this year comes from one of the great now moments in the whole of scripture. After the flood has receded in the Book of Genesis, God puts a rainbow in the sky as a sign that the earth will never again suffer in such a way. God makes a covenant with the human family and the whole of creation *For All Future Generations*. It is an expression of hope, something we might relate to after the unsettling experiences of the last two years. For some people, this will be the

first Easter we can come together since 2019. The ashes we wear today are an invitation to rebuild from wherever we happen to be on life's journey. The hope we share starts now.

Today's Psalm includes the line 'Give me again the joy of your help.' We know that God will reach into our lives this Lent. We are called to reach into the lives of others so that they might know the joy of true partnership.



PRAYER OF INTERCESSION



We for all who know what it is to live in the ashes: the poor, the marginalised, the outcast, the lonely, the sick. May the ashes we wear in humility be for us all a sign of our hope in the rising of the Lord of all life.

**"SO GREAT IS
THE STRENGTH
WE POSSESS IN
OUR UNITY."**

ST. MARY MACKILLOP

PRAYER



Loving God,

We thank you for the gift of our lives and
for the life of every person, both near to us and far away.

We thank you for the wonder of all your creation.

Through fasting, almsgiving and prayer
may this Lent draw us deeper
into the warmth and light of God's love.

May we see the world more clearly,
Especially those who are often overlooked.

May we come closer to your heart,
Which you showed through the cross of Jesus.
May we be full of hope for all future generations.

We ask this in Jesus' name

Amen.



IN THE NEXT SECTION OF THIS BOOKLET, YOU WILL FIND REFLECTIONS AND PRAYERS FOR EACH SUNDAY OF LENT.

1ST SUNDAY OF LENT WEEKEND OF 5-6 MARCH

**ANATERCIA'S STORY,
MOZAMBIQUE**

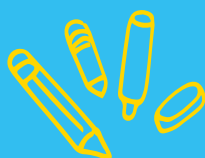


Anatercia is a 12-year-old girl living in a small village in southern Mozambique. After her father passed away and her mother became incapacitated due to chronic health issues, life became a daily struggle.

She moved in with her elderly grandparents, and began to take on more and more adult responsibilities. She did most of the household chores and had to travel for hours every day to collect clean water. Water scarcity also meant that harvests were poor and there was never enough to eat.

With your support, Caritas Australia's partner, Caritas Regional Chokwe, was able to help Anatercia's family to irrigate their farm to improve their food security, while also improving water access for households in the village. Her grandmother participated in sustainable farming training, while Anatercia received essential school supplies and access to psychosocial supports through a local health committee.

Now, Anatercia can easily access clean drinking water, community members are able to grow healthy crops all year round, and there is enough nutritious food to eat. Anatercia feels better supported by her community, has more time to study and do her homework, and hopes to fulfil her dream of becoming a nurse.



REFLECTION

Lent is the season for getting back to basics. It is the time for having a clean-out, getting rid of attitudes and patterns of behavior that prevent us from being as free as God made us to be. We can all be hoarders of one kind or another. We can store up angers and resentments and fears that we no longer need. It is time to give them away.

In today's Gospel, we learn that the Spirit led Jesus to a lonely place. Up to this point in Luke's Gospel, we have seen Jesus as a member of his family and community. We have met Mary and Joseph and Elizabeth and Simeon and Anna and John the Baptist. Now Jesus must stand on his own and decide what really matters in life. Is he going to rely on material things? Is he going to want power at any price? Is he going to put himself rather than God at the heart of his decision making? These are the temptations of the devil.

This week through Project Compassion we have encountered the story of Anatercia, a truly remarkable 12-year-old living in southern Mozambique. Sickness, death and environmental challenges forced her to decide at a young age what really matters. She has been working for

her family and community. This is where the work of Caritas Australia is so striking. With your help, Caritas is assisting Anatercia, and thousands of young people like her, to stand on their own two feet, to have food and water, and to pursue education. Her story shines a light on this year's theme for Project Compassion from the book of Genesis: *For All Future Generations*.

Today, St Paul reminds us that 'all belong to the same Lord, who is rich enough, however many ask for his help, for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.' The Lord calls on us as well! The Lord asks us to remove some of our own clutter and do what we can to embrace the whole human family. Our deepest longing is for God to be the centre of our lives and nothing else.



DON'T FORGET
TO ACTIVATE YOUR PARISH
FUNDRAISING PAGE AT:
LENT.CARITAS.ORG.AU

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION



We pray for all those whose access to food and water is insecure. May the whole human family respond generously in creating lasting justice in the distribution of life's necessities. May we respond to opportunities such as those presented by Project Compassion this Lent to build for all future generations.

FUNDRAISING IDEA

Ask your Parish Representative or volunteer to distribute the Project Compassion donation boxes and envelopes to parishioners after communion or as they leave Mass today, and encourage them to put their compassion into action *For All Future Generations*.

BULLETIN

You can help to improve the lives of children like Anatercia by making a donation through Project Compassion boxes and envelopes, visiting lent.caritas.org.au or phoning 1800 024 413.

2ND SUNDAY OF LENT WEEKEND OF 12-13 MARCH

BIRU'S STORY, INDIA

REFLECTION

Apparently, there is an old Syrian saying 'inside the people you know, there is a person you don't know.' One of God's gifts is the grace to keep discovering beautiful things about the people close to us. If you talk to people who have been married for a long time, they will often mention the way their partner surprises them, even after twenty years of sharing the same kitchen sink. Likewise, our children and our friends. If we put them in a box with a label, we can become blind to some unexpected wonders God wants us to see.

Perhaps it was like this for Peter, James and John on the occasion of the transfiguration which we hear about in the Gospel today. By this stage, they have been on the road with Jesus for quite some time. They have seen the storm calmed, the demoniac brought to peace, the woman healed of her hemorrhage, the daughter of Jairus raised to life. They have heard outrageous things. You'd think they'd be getting the picture by now.

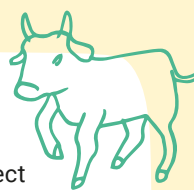
The experience on the mountain allows them to understand that they have hardly begun to understand the depth of the mystery of Jesus. A voice from the cloud says 'this is my Son, the Chosen One. Listen to him.'

This week, as part of Project Compassion, we hear the story of Biru, a young man from the Ho ethnic minority in India. He lives with a disability. But there is so much more to him that needs to be seen. Our support of Caritas Australia has empowered him to become an entrepreneur, to meet his future with pride, confidence and hope. Project Compassion challenges us to see beyond the immediate situation of people such as Biru and discover the person we don't yet know, to celebrate the possibilities of life *For All Future Generations*.

Both before and after their great experience on the mountain top, Luke's Gospel reminds us that the disciples still face a challenging road. Life will teach them more and more about Jesus. Let us all be open the lessons of a real relationship with the God of justice and love.



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Biru is a member of the Ho community, an ethnic minority group in India. After contracting polio as a child, he lost mobility in one of his legs, which affected his independence, education and employment prospects.

Biru taught himself how to repair bicycles by watching other people, but he never dreamed of using those skills to start his own business. With your generous support, Biru was able to access an entrepreneurship and livelihoods training program, run by Caritas Australia's partner, Caritas India. He gained the support and skills he needed to establish his own bicycle repair business. Participating in the program also helped Biru to apply for government disability and housing schemes.

Now, Biru is financially independent and can forge a path out of poverty for his four young daughters. He is a respected and essential member of his community, working as a bicycle and motorcycle mechanic to keep his neighbours, friends and families safe on the road. His resilience and determination to overcome the odds has inspired others in his community who are living with a disability to become independent and self-reliant.

"Now members of my community have started listening to my opinion. I am getting appreciation and recognition," Biru says.



PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

We pray for all those who live with disability, especially those who are stigmatised in any way. May we do all we can to support their flourishing as truly equal participants in the human family.



FUNDRAISING IDEA

Each Sunday, play the short film introducing that week's featured story* to highlight the positive impact your community is making. Integrate weekly stories, reflections and prayers* into Mass to further emphasise how your community's donations are transforming the lives of vulnerable people around the world.

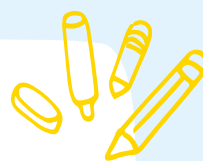
BULLETIN

You can help people like Biru continue to thrive by making a donation through Project Compassion boxes and envelopes, visiting lent.caritas.org.au or phoning 1800 024 413.

*Films and content available on the PC22 USB and website.

3RD SUNDAY OF LENT WEEKEND OF 19-20 MARCH

JANICE'S STORY,
AUSTRALIA



A Wagilak woman, Janice is a traditional dancer who tells her family's stories through movements handed down over generations.

"With many elders gone, we must transfer knowledge, to keep a connection to culture and nurture future leaders," Janice says. "Me and my family, we keep the culture going, we need to keep our culture strong."

Like many remote communities, Janice's faces a range of challenges – low employment and education, financial hardship, poorer health and lower life expectancy.

With your help, Caritas Australia supports Djilpin Arts Aboriginal Corporation, which operates a centre for traditional and contemporary Aboriginal arts and culture, providing employment and generating income for local communities.

Elders run workshops and share their knowledge with the younger generation, and with visitors. Local guides run bush cultural tours and architect-designed tourist accommodation is available for visitors.

"This is a safe place, a place we come with family and get away from problems. We, here in the art centre, work as a family," Janice says. Janice believes that Djilpin Arts' work is essential to create opportunities for young people to stay on-country, to share intergenerational knowledge between elders and the younger generation – to promote healing, and to keep culture alive.

REFLECTION

Sometimes you hear indigenous people refer to Jesus as a 'person of country'. What might this mean? It is hard to imagine the Gospels without the connection of Jesus to the sea, the river, the desert, the fields and the mountain. His teaching often featured seeds and birds and sheep and corn. In today's Gospel, we hear the parable of the fig tree. The impatient person wants to cut it down. A wiser person is prepared to work with nature by putting manure on the tree and looking after it. This is a story of growth. God is creative. God is patient with us. God gives us another chance.

We have so much to learn from the depth and resilience of Australian indigenous culture and spirituality, both of which are intimately linked to Country. This week, Project Compassion features the story of Janice, a Wagilak woman from the Northern Territory. Janice, who lives in a remote community, is part of the Djilpin Arts Aboriginal Corporation, supported by Caritas Australia. Janice is among those overcoming many obstacles to keeping their culture strong. She does this through dance. She honours the generations who have come before her and taught their community how to respect the land and live in harmony with it. Our response to Project Compassion is providing practical support for the

blossoming of indigenous culture *For All Future Generations*.

In today's reading, Moses is in the wilderness, a place of surprising possibilities. Like the Australian landscape, the wilderness in scripture is subtle; it is a place of encounter with God. Moses thinks he is having a regular day in the family business, looking after his father-in-law's sheep. But a voice comes from a bush that is blazing without being burnt up. The voice tells Moses to take off his shoes because 'the place on which you stand is holy ground.' This is the beginning of the freedom story of his people, the start of their journey out of captivity. May our journey to the freedom God wants for us also begin with the realisation that we too are standing on Holy Ground. God call us all to be people of country.



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PRAYER OF INTERCESSION



We pray for the work of Caritas Australia through Project Compassion. We pray also for greater respect for the environment. May we care deeply for the Earth that God has entrusted to our care. May we realise that we are on Holy Ground.

FUNDRAISING IDEA

Reinforce the importance of Project Compassion by drawing parishioners' attention to the 'Your Donation Counts' poster displayed in your parish. Reveal your Parish's fundraising total so far and thank everyone for their generosity. Use the poster to explain how their donations can greatly benefit communities around the world.

BULLETIN

You can help people like Janice to keep traditional culture alive by making a donation through Project Compassion boxes and envelopes, visiting lent.caritas.org.au or phoning 1800 024 413.

4TH SUNDAY OF LENT WEEKEND OF 26-27 MARCH

**ROSALIE'S STORY,
DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC OF CONGO**

REFLECTION

One of the most beautiful expressions in the Bible comes from the prophet Ezekiel. 'Thus says the Lord, I will take their hearts of stone and give them hearts of flesh.' It is a call to be tender and compassionate.

You would need a heart of stone not to be affected by the stories we encounter today. Most of us have heard the story of the two sons in today's Gospel over and over. The brilliance of the way Jesus tells stories is that it still gets under our skin. Here are two young men who think they can live on their own terms. One has a sense of entitlement and demands his share of his father's estate which he then squanders. He is finally prepared to eat humble pie and find his way home. The other son has a different sense of entitlement. He believes that his hard work and reliability should provide him with a greater share of his father's love. At different times in our life, we can relate more to one or other of these people. Jesus implies that they are both blind to the way God's love works and that they both need to grow. They have both been dead and need to come to life.

The story we encounter this week through Caritas Australia's Project Compassion is also deeply moving. Rosalie, aged 37, lives in one of the

DON'T FORGET

**TO ACTIVATE YOUR PARISH
FUNDRAISING PAGE AT:
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most damaged countries in the world, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). From the age of fifteen, she was forced to become a child soldier, exposed to violence and heartbreak. She actually says that she was forced into combat with a baby on her back. Now she has seven children and dreams of a better future for them. Thanks to your support of Project Compassion, she has been able to start a small business, save so her children might go to school and become an inspiration to others. Recovery from the trauma of war affects people around the world.

Our second reading today reminds us that we are 'ambassadors for Christ.' St Paul says 'for anyone who is in Christ, there is a new creation.' Let us all be part of building that new creation, setting the world to rights as best we can. God wants to reconcile the world to himself. Our part in this is to reach out in compassion and love to heal the wounds of the whole human family. The theme of Project Compassion this year asks us to think and act *For All Future Generations*. Our hearts need to be warm and strong.



Rosalie is an ex-combatant who lives with her husband and seven children in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Forced to join the army when she was just 15-years-old, Rosalie experienced significant trauma and hardship during her years in the military. After she was demobilised from the army, Rosalie, like other ex-combatants, was left to fend for herself in the community.

With your generous support and through our local partners, Rosalie was able to connect with other members of her community and participate in business skills training to help her to reintegrate into society.

She joined a Saving and Internal Lending Community group (SILC), which helped her with a loan to start her own small business selling second-hand shoes and natural remedies. She has now become the SILC group's president, helping other women to start their own businesses.

"The program allowed me to learn to work hand-in-hand with other members of the community... I learnt that there is more joy in sharing with others," Rosalie says.

Rosalie has become a role model for other ex-combatants who are seeking to readjust to civilian life. Her leadership is inspiring others to overcome the trauma and violence of the past and to work towards a more peaceful and harmonious world for all future generations.



PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

We pray for those driven away from their homes by violence, persecution or poverty. May our hearts be open to do all we can to rebuild the lives of others. May we be instruments of God's peace.



FUNDRAISING IDEA

Host an information night to raise awareness of vulnerable women around the world. Visit caritas.org.au for some discussion points to get the conversation flowing!

Get your volunteers together to donate some food items and invite parishioners to bring a donation for a night of 'food for thought'.

BULLETIN

You can help to support people like Rosalie become leaders in their community by making a donation through Project Compassion boxes and envelopes, visiting lent.caritas.org.au or phoning 1800 024 413.

5TH SUNDAY OF LENT WEEKEND OF 2-3 APRIL

SHANIELLA'S STORY, SOLOMON ISLANDS



Shaniella, 23, grew up in a village in the Solomon Islands with her parents and three brothers.

In 2020, Shaniella moved away to study hospitality and tourism at a vocational school supported by Caritas Australia Solomon Islands (CASI), through the Happy, Healthy, Holistic Community Development program.

The school is in a particularly disaster-prone area and not long after Shaniella started, the school was hit by a landslide, flooding, and a cyclone, all in quick succession. The school's main source of water was destroyed, buildings were damaged and the garden, which the school relied on for food, was devastated.

With your kind support, CASI helped install water tanks, restoring clean water access to nearby schools, health centres and the wider community. Training was held in agricultural skills to help boost the school community's food security, as well as in environmental risk management and emergency responses.

Now, Shaniella can complete her skills training, with enough water and food to eat, and improved sanitation. She is improving her ability to earn an income, learning skills which will expand her job opportunities. Students are also better prepared to respond when disaster strikes.

With your generous support, Shaniella's prospects have improved, as have her school's.

Along with your generous support, this program is supported by the Australian Government, through the Australian Humanitarian Partnership (AHP).

REFLECTION

Many of us wear glasses, perhaps just for reading. Can you think back to the first pair of glasses you ever received? You might have been still at school or maybe older. If you don't have glasses, can you think back to the first time you used a magnifying glass? Or perhaps looked through a microscope and saw that even such an ordinary thing as a leaf has all sorts of veins and colours? Seeing clearly is a great gift. We often taken our eyesight for granted.

Today's readings remind us of the importance of trying to see things clearly, which means not being taken in by false appearances. Jesus asks us if a blind person can lead another blind person. They will both fall into a pit. He might not mean blind in the literal sense. Anybody familiar with the work of Vision Australia will know that people with a sight deficit can surely help each other. But those who are blinded by their ego or self-importance or status or wealth are in a lot of bother. Those who are harsh in the way they judge others are even worse off. Nobody can forget the image Jesus uses of removing the plank from your own eye before commenting on the splinter in somebody else's. Jesus did not like hypocrites. He would have agreed with the words we heard from Ecclesiasticus that we are judged



by the quality of our fruit. The things we say are a sign of our character. It is good to think about this in an age where it is easy to say thoughtless and nasty and destructive things. The right words at the right time make a big difference.

Lent starts this week with Ash Wednesday. Lent is a time for trying to see more clearly as we prepare for Easter. Through prayer, we try to focus on God. Through fasting, we focus on our own emptiness or deeper hungers. Through giving alms, we focus on those who need support to flourish. For fifty years or so, a great way to do this has been through Caritas Australia's Project Compassion. This year the theme 'for all future generations', comes from the moment God established an everlasting covenant in the Book of Genesis. Let us honour the divine commitment to every living creature by working with Project Compassion for a more just world. St Paul reminds us today 'to keep on working at the Lord's work.' Perhaps that can be our resolution for Lent.

**DON'T
FORGET**



**TO ACTIVATE YOUR PARISH
FUNDRAISING PAGE AT:
LENT.CARITAS.ORG.AU**

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION



We pray for wisdom and humility, and the ability to see God's creation with the eyes of faith. May our support of Project Compassion enable us to produce fruit that will last.

FUNDRAISING IDEA BULLETIN

Ask your parishioners to bring in a meal or light refreshments to share after mass. Discuss what impact basic schooling has on the most vulnerable around the world, people like Shaniella. Ask the question, "where would you be now if you didn't receive schooling?"

You can help students like Shaniella to forge a path out of poverty by making a donation through Project Compassion boxes and envelopes, visiting lent.caritas.org.au or phoning 1800 024 413.

6TH SUNDAY OF LENT WEEKEND OF 9-10 APRIL

HOLY WEEK

REFLECTION

Today we read the passion narrative from the Gospel of St Luke. It is not by any means for the faint hearted. Even if it is familiar to us, we should try to remember how extraordinary it is. After so many centuries of cruelty, crucifixion still ranks as one of the most appalling things people have ever thought to do to their fellow humans. Yet this was how God chose to show the depth of his love. God was prepared to go to any lengths for us. The letter to the Philippians says that Jesus did not cling to his equality with God but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave. Why? The only possible explanation is love. Anyone who has loved another knows that it will inevitably bring a share of suffering. Jesus walks alongside all who suffer. He shares their cross as they share his.

The fact that crucifixion was so common in the Roman world should also make us pause for a moment. Jesus lived and died in a world in which people were routinely degraded. He met plenty of them in his travels, people cast by the wayside, and helped many. For those without power, life was fragile, even cheap. Has much changed? Throughout Lent, Caritas Australia has invited us to share the work of Project Compassion. The stories we

have encountered remind us that the world is still an uneven field. Project Compassion invites us to respond in love to free people in captivity to very challenging circumstances. It invites us in a small way to carry the cross, to live in hope of the Resurrection.

Perhaps this week, as well as joining in the services of Holy Week, we can take some time to sit quietly with the passion narrative from Luke's Gospel on our own. Think about all the characters we meet: Peter, Judas, Pilate, Herod, the women of Jerusalem, Simon of Cyrene, the soldiers, the two criminals, the women from Galilee, the centurion, Joseph of Arimathea. Try to see the events from each of their perspectives. Then quietly see them from your own perspective, from your world in 2022. Pray in humble gratitude.



DON'T FORGET
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PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

We pray for a renewal of our faith in Holy Week. Through works such as Project Compassion, may we walk alongside our brothers and sisters towards the new life of Easter.



FUNDRAISING IDEA

Encourage each parishioner to donate on Easter Sunday using the Easter Envelope distributed by a volunteer at the door as parishioners enter or leave Mass. Remember to turn over your poster after Easter to show the Thank You message, acknowledging the generosity of parishioners this year.

BULLETIN

You can help by making a donation through Project Compassion boxes and envelopes, or visit lent.caritas.org.au or phone 1800 024 413.

**"LET JUSTICE
FLOW LIKE
WATER, AND
INTEGRITY LIKE
AN UNFAILING
STREAM."**

AMOS 5:24



With your generosity, Caritas Australia has been able to help millions of vulnerable people around the world, through its annual Project Compassion appeal.

Thanks to you, people like Thandolwayo in Zimbabwe, Halima in Bangladesh and Shirley in the Philippines have received the support that they need to face the challenges of today and build a better tomorrow, for future generations.

We first met Thandolwayo in 2019. Now 14 years old, she continues to thrive, with enough accessible food and water to sustain her community, allowing her to concentrate on her studies. In Bangladesh, Halima's training in hygiene and sanitation has enabled her to help her community to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the Cox's Bazar refugee camp. While Shirley from Project Compassion 2020, is today on the healthcare frontline, providing care and leadership to the Manide Indigenous community, throughout successive waves of the pandemic.

In this last week of Project Compassion 2022, we'd will share updates on some of the people that you have helped to flourish.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

**PROJECT
COMPASSION**
**FOR ALL
FUTURE
GENERATIONS**



YOUR CONTACT FOR PROJECT COMPASSION

Through your generosity during Project Compassion, you are assisting some of the world's most vulnerable people build better futures for themselves, their families and their communities, *For All Future Generations*. Below are the contact details for Caritas staff who can help with your wonderful work.

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Please note: There may be changes in contact names after this booklet is printed. If you aren't sure whom to approach, please phone 1800 024 413.



End poverty
Promote justice
Uphold dignity

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