

Meet Shirley, Philippines



Shirley with members of her Manide community outside their Tribal Hall.

Watch the [Primary School film](#).

Imagine if you were forced to ride on the roof of the bus to school each morning because of how you looked – how would that make you feel?

Some people are not treated with respect because they are indigenous. They are discriminated against, excluded and not able to access important services like education or healthcare. Shirley is an indigenous woman who lives in the Philippines and experienced discrimination. But after she joined Caritas Australia supported program, she turned her life around!

Shirley and her family are from the Manide tribe in the Philippines. She is 36 years old and lives in a rural area of the Philippines called Camarines Norte. Shirley lives with her four children and her husband.

Shirley's husband is sick with tuberculosis, so Shirley needs to earn money to provide for her family. In the Philippines, approximately 12 million people live on less than \$1.90 a day. This is called extreme poverty. Poverty is most severe in rural areas, with almost 80% of the country's most vulnerable people living there.

Life is even harder for the nearly 17 million indigenous people who live in the Philippines. They often face discrimination and are excluded. Many children and families cannot access medical care, and many preventable diseases like tuberculosis, dengue fever and measles are common in their communities. Indigenous people in the Philippines are often bullied at school, which forces many children to leave school early.

Shirley decided to join a program run by Caritas Australia's partner in the Philippines, an organisation called SPACFI (this stands for Socio Pastoral Action Centre Foundation Inc). In this program, Shirley learned various skills that have helped to improve life for her family and community. Shirley trained to become an indigenous health worker and is now a leader in her community.

She can now earn an income as a health worker, and that has helped Shirley and her husband pay for their children's school fees, uniforms and supplies.

In the Caritas Australia program, Shirley also learnt about the rights she has as an indigenous person. Shirley now knows that she doesn't have to face discrimination, and that she deserves to be treated with respect, and has the right to earn an income, access medical care and send her children to school. Many other indigenous people like Shirley also learnt about their rights. The program has helped nearly 1200 people from the Manide tribe.

There are good things that happened here in our tribe. Our kids are now healthier. I want to take care of my kids, I want them to study and finish school. I am proud of what I have done for my tribe.

Shirley

When you support Caritas Australia's Project Compassion you are sharing what you have with your one human family - that includes indigenous people around the world. You are working for the common good of everyone!

*Source: [UNICEF](#)

Read and discuss:

1. Why do you think it is important to treat every person with respect?
2. What are the challenges that Shirley and her community face?
3. Explain how Caritas Australia and their partner in the Philippines is supporting the Indigenous community to overcome some of these challenges.
4. How is Shirley now earning an income?
5. How has Shirley's involvement in the Caritas Australia program helped the rest of her community?
6. What is one thing that has surprised you about this story? Why does it surprise you?
7. Does this story remind you of any other issues you have learned about?
8. Which Catholic Social Teaching principle is illustrated in this story? How?

Curriculum: English ACELY1676, ACELY1692, HASS Year 6: ACHASSK140, ACHASSK141

SHIRLEY, PHILIPPINES

Learning Tasks

1. Bonus film: A day in the life

Watch the film about a day in Shirley's life. What surprises you? What is similar about Shirley's day, home and community, to your own life? How is it different? What questions do you have?

2. Make slippers

Shirley earns an income by collecting the abaca from a nearby forest. Abaca is the dried bark of banana trees—the raw material used to make the slippers. Why is this an appropriate material? They are made and sold through a group and Shirley uses this income to provide for her family.

Use the templates to make slippers using a sustainable or recyclable material. It could be something that will otherwise be thrown out. The art department may have some ideas for offcut materials. Discuss the choice of material and why it is appropriate for footwear.

Curriculum: HASS, Year 5: ACHASSK120, Design and Technologies Year 5 & 6: ACTDEK019.

3. RE LINK: Living the mission of Jesus

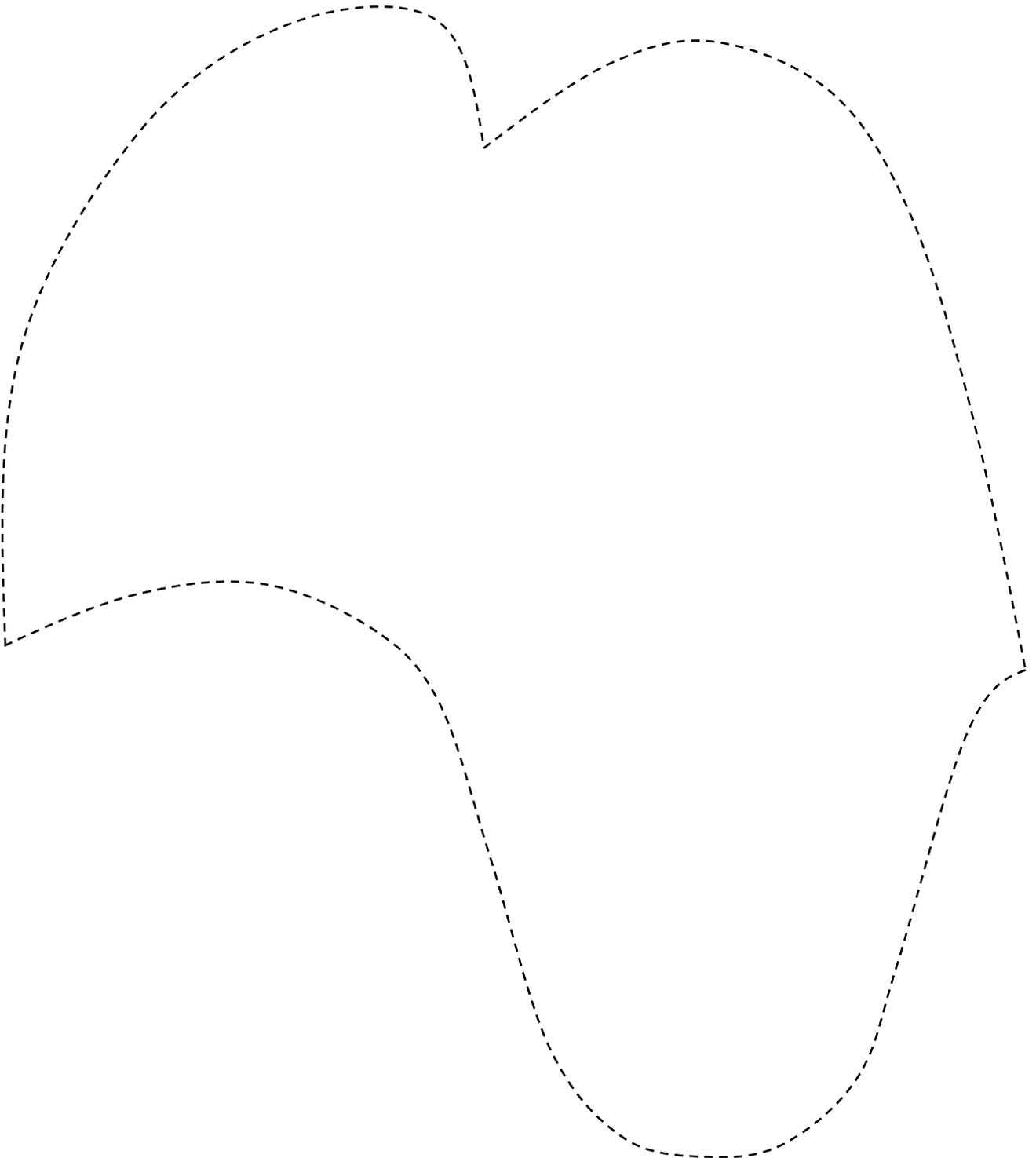
Jesus was a just leader. He cared about justice for people. How does teaching skills like farming, contribute to a more just community?





Make slippers like Shirley in the Philippines

Recycle material to make your slippers. Trace and cut the outline below. Fold the left flap over to the right and use glue to secure. You will need to leave some white space outside the outline on the left side to make it easier to secure.

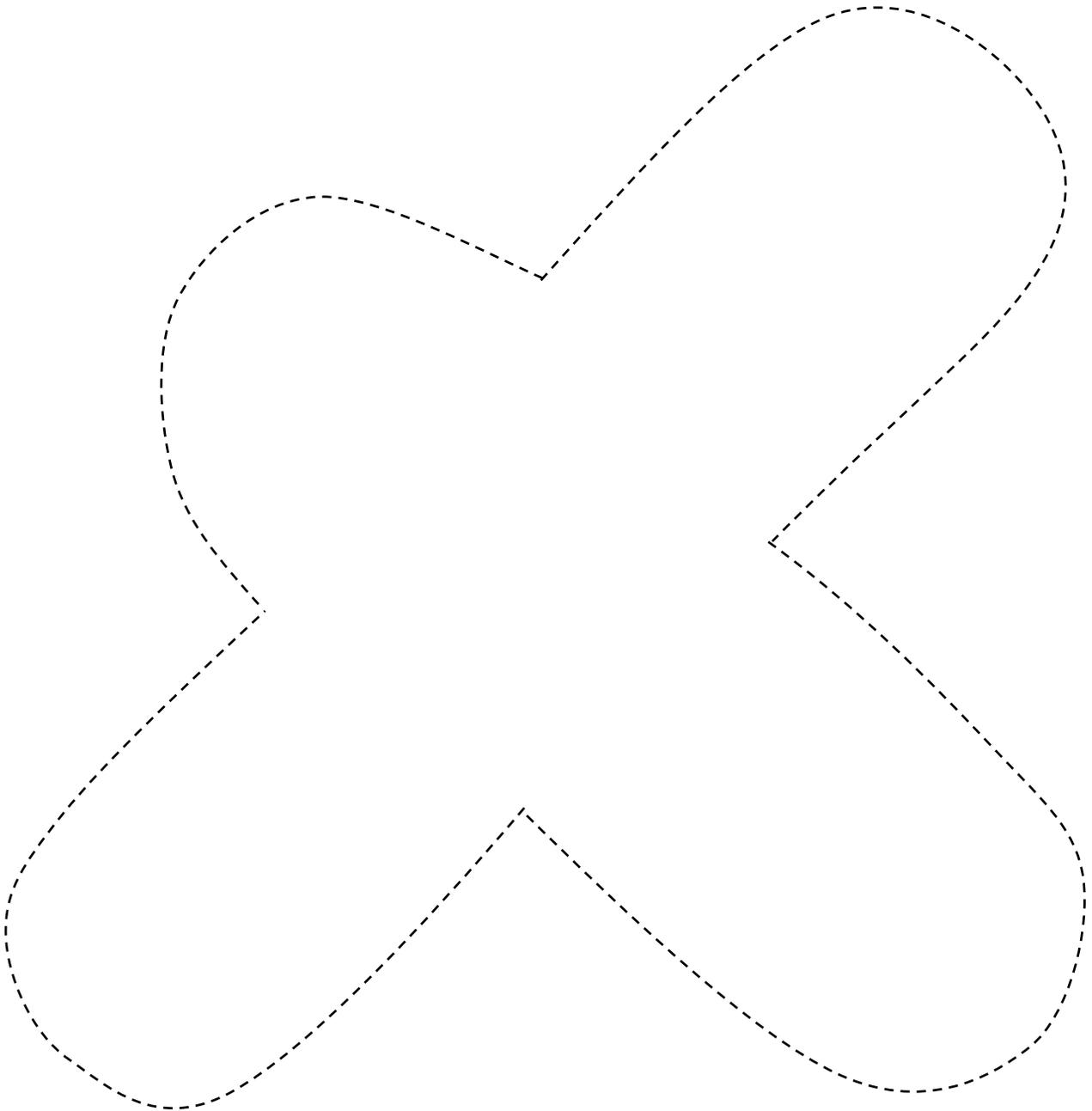


Template created for this purpose. Original source: <https://www.icreativeideas.com/how-to-diy-simple-pattern-home-slippers/>



Make slippers like Shirley in the Philippines

Recycle material to make your slippers. Trace and cut the outline below and then fold the flaps into the middle so they overlap. Use glue to secure. Add your own buttons or decorations.



Template created for this purpose. Original source: <https://www.icreativeideas.com/how-to-diy-simple-pattern-home-slippers/>