



FOR ALL FUTURE
GENERATIONS

PROJECT COMPASSION

SECONDARY
STUDENT WORKBOOK



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are advised that videos, images and external links contained in this resource may contain images, voices or names of people who have since passed away.

Do you observe Lent regularly? Why/Why not?

What do you know about Lent?

What significance does it have for you?

Throughout Lent, we commit to strengthening our faith through the three pillars: prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

Pope Francis says:

Let us not grow tired of doing good in active charity towards our neighbours. Lent is a favourable time to seek out – and not to avoid – those in need; to reach out – and not to ignore – those who need a sympathetic ear and a good word; to visit – and not to abandon – those who are lonely. Let us put into practice our call to do good to all, and take time to love the poor and needy, those abandoned and rejected, those discriminated against and marginalized.

(Lenten Message 2022)

During Lent, we take time to reflect and be strengthened by the Holy Spirit so that we are not indifferent to each other or global poverty. Through Project Compassion, we can stand in solidarity with our neighbours around the world. We can celebrate Caritas Australia's partnerships with other agencies around the world, which support those most vulnerable to extreme poverty and injustice. Your donations help to strengthen their lives, their families and their communities.

Over the next six weeks of Lent, through Project Compassion, we will explore stories of hope in Nepal, Australia, Zimbabwe and Vietnam. Let's focus on how we can enrich our connectedness as a global community.

PRAYER

Traditionally, Christians pray for themselves and others during this time of Lent. Project Compassion encourages you to pray for the people and communities you encounter through the Project Compassion stories.

FASTING

Fasting is one of the most ancient practices linked to Lent. It can be an aid to prayer, as the pangs of hunger remind us of our hunger for God. Fasting can be linked to our concern for those who are forced to fast by their poverty, those who suffer from the injustices of our economic and political structures, and those who are in need for any reason. Traditionally, abstaining from meat was one way of remembering people who did not have enough to meet their daily needs. Some people also choose other ways to 'fast' such as from social media.

ALMSGIVING

Almsgiving is a sign of our care for others and an expression of our gratitude for all that God has given us. Caring for others is part of many faiths. Almsgiving by Christians is illustrated in the Bible, in Acts 4:33–37. During Project Compassion, reflect on ways you can care for others out of what you have.

This Lent, how can you respond courageously to the call for social and ecological justice 'for all future generations.'

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.



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.



SOLIDARITY

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



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.



PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR

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



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.

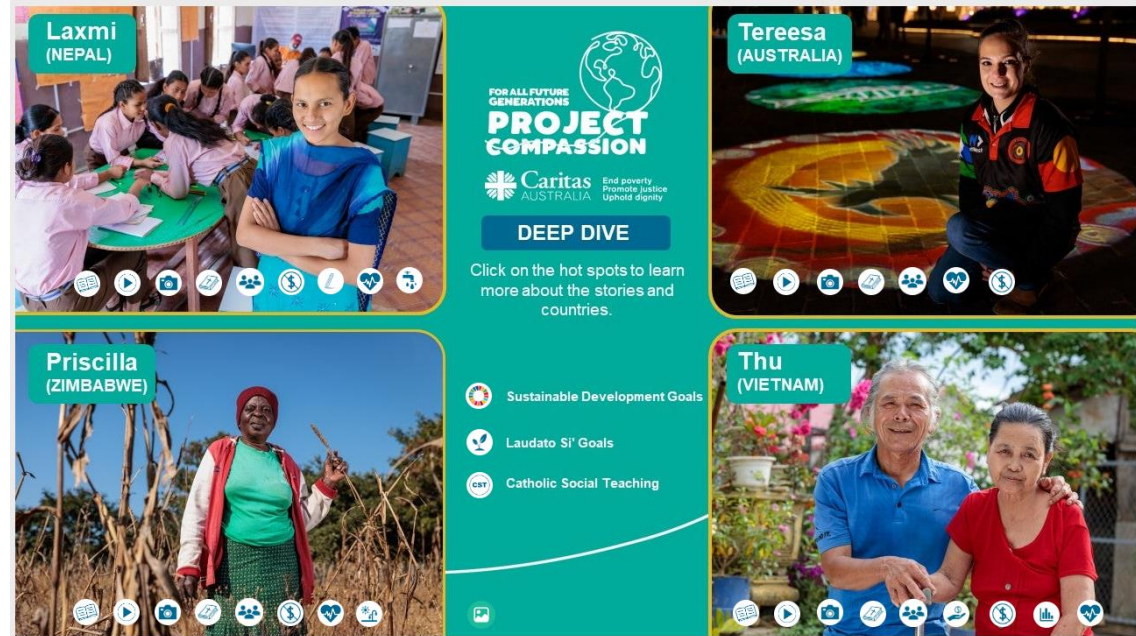


SECONDARY DEEP DIVE GUIDE

The [Secondary Deep Dive](#) is an interactive image created as a central location for everything you need to complete this workbook. This includes the stories and videos for each of the four weeks.

Whenever you see any of the below icons in this workbook, visit the [Secondary Deep Dive](#) and find the matching icon. Click on it to access the information you need to complete the activity.

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



[Click here to view the Secondary Deep Dive](#)



Laxmi (16) organising group games with child's club members at her old school in western Nepal. Photo: Richard Wainwright/Caritas Australia

[Watch Laxmi's Story](#)

16-year-old Laxmi lives with her mother and siblings in Jajarkot, one of the least developed districts in the remote Karnali province, with almost half of the population living below the poverty line. Girls and young women in remote Nepal face numerous challenges in their everyday life.

Despite the economic hardship that her family faced, Laxmi's parents were determined that their daughter receive an education.

But tragedy struck when Laxmi was 10 years old. Her father, who worked hard to pay for his children's education, fell ill and sadly, passed away. Laxmi was devastated and stopped attending her classes.

Prior to her father's passing, Laxmi joined the child's club at her school that was run with the support of Caritas Australia's partner organisation, Caritas Nepal, through the Nepal Livelihoods and Resilience Program. These clubs support students to participate in extracurricular activities to develop their speaking, writing and leadership skills.

The children also organise awareness-raising activities such as public rallies, street dramas and creating posters that highlight issues such as child rights. Since 2018, Caritas Nepal has supported more than 5,000 children through the child's clubs. With the encouragement of her fellow students in the child's club, Laxmi decided to return to school.

"If I don't get to study, then I'll experience hardship. I'll have to struggle like mother. If I don't get to study, then I'll have no knowledge. I know we can only get good employment after we study," Laxmi said.



After Laxmi returned to school, she became more actively involved in her child's club and developed greater confidence as she participated in public speaking and debating activities. Laxmi was keen to take on a leadership role and she was elected as the chairperson of her club.

“Before I was involved in child club, I was very shy and didn't talk much,” Laxmi said. “I used to walk with my head down, didn't talk to anyone, even when they called me first. Now, I talk to everyone, laugh with them.”

Laxmi's grades have excelled since joining the child's club and she is the top of her class in many subjects. But her proudest achievement is something that will have a lasting impact for future generations.

Clean water has long been an issue at Laxmi's school. Laxmi and her child's club members discussed the need to build multiple water taps at the school so that all students can access clean drinking water. They lobbied the school administration, the ward office and the municipality office until they eventually agreed to construct a series of water taps on the school grounds. This experience made Laxmi realise that her voice matters, and that her actions can make a difference.

“Now, I know where to speak, what to speak. However big the gathering might be, I'm not afraid to speak,” she said.

Laxmi has graduated from high school and is now studying a Diploma in Civil Engineering at a technical school that is a four-hour walk away. Her dream is to work as an engineer and create a better life for her mother.


Laxmi continues to be involved in the child's club, serving as an advisor. She attends the meetings regularly, mentoring the next generation of young leaders at her old school. Every time she walks by her old school, she sees students using the drinking taps and feels immense pride at her accomplishments.

Laxmi may have graduated from her secondary school but the impact she has made will continue for generations to come.





TASK 1: Discussion

- A. What were some of the challenges faced by Laxmi as a 16-year-old girl growing up in Nepal?
- B. Explain how Caritas Australia and their partners in Nepal have supported Laxmi and other children in her community?
- C. In what ways is Laxmi working towards making a difference in the lives of children in future generations?
- D.  Which Catholic Social Teachings do you see reflected in Laxmi's story? (Refer to CST Guide on page 3)
- E. What have you learnt about the importance of education from this story?

TASK 2: Water Audit

Laxmi and her peers in the child's club lobbied for the construction of water taps so that all students could access clean drinking water.

Complete a [water audit](#) at your school to identify any water wastage and produce a report on ways you can manage any issues you have found.

TASK 3: Plan your own lesson

Being a member of the child's club gave Laxmi the opportunity to work on her confidence and leadership skills. The club also supports students in developing their speaking and writing.

Imagine you are running your own child's club at your school that supports students in a lower grade to develop their confidence and leadership skills. This group runs for an hour.

Create a series of activities that you could run within the hour, to help the students develop the skills required to become a leader and act for justice.



A CATHOLIC WORLDVIEW (JUDGE)

"I plead with you! Never give up on hope, never doubt, never tire, and never become discouraged. Be not afraid."

Saint John Paul II

In what ways does Laxmi live out the above quote in her own life?



Mark 10:13–16

Read the above scripture passage.

How does the bible passage relate to Laxmi's story?



FAITH IN ACTION (ACT)

PRAYER

Write a prayer inspired by Laxmi's story.

Here is an example:

*Loving God,
We pray for children in our world
who experience poverty and hardship.
Please replace their fears with
strength and courage.
Inspire us to stand in solidarity with them.
In Jesus' name, Amen.*

FASTING

Fasting doesn't always mean stopping something you like eating or enjoy doing, sometimes it can be changing our mindset or ways of thinking about things.

This week, try the following:

- *Fast from gossip* – think about the intention of your words!
- *Fast from complaint* – stop to think about some of the things you are blessed with in life.
- *Fast from comfort* – try to get out of your comfort zone and do something you wouldn't normally do this Lent. Talk to someone sitting on their own or try putting your hand up and sharing your ideas in class!

ALMSGIVING

How might you raise awareness in response to what you read and thought about in Laxmi's story? What are you compelled to do?

It might be a personal, group or community action. Write your thoughts and plan below.








For inspiration!

- \$25 can provide cleaning for the school
- \$50 can provide hygiene management, such as the purchase of sanitary products, for the girls at Laxmi's school



Find the matching icons on the Secondary Deep Dive and use your own research to find out the information below.

Secondary Deep Dive link

 What is the population of Nepal? What is the population of Australia?	Nepal: Australia:	 What percentage of the population has access to safe drinking water?	
 Predict life expectancy in Nepal and Australia. Find out the correct answer. Does this surprise you? Why/Why not?	Nepal: Prediction: Actual:	Australia: Prediction: Actual	 The Laudato Si' Goals Identify one or more Laudato Si' goals, and explain how they are being addressed through the work of Caritas Australia and its partners.
 What percentage of the population of Nepal live in poverty?			
 What is the literacy rate of females in Nepal aged 15 and above?			 The Sustainable Development Goals Select two SDG goals that are relevant to Laxmi's story. Explain your selection.
What are some factors that influence the ability for women to receive an education in Nepal? https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/defending-girls-right-education-nepal			

TEREESA'S STORY

AUSTRALIA



Tereesa outside Baabayn Aboriginal Corporation in Western Sydney.
Photo: Richard Wainwright/Caritas Australia

[Watch Tereesa's Story](#)

Tereesa, 27, a proud Gamilaroi woman, grew up in Western Sydney, born and raised on Darug land. A mother of four young children, she found it hard to find a stable home and provide for them on her own.

Tereesa's high school education was cut short when she became pregnant at 16. As a single mother, she was unable to afford rental properties for her family of four children. Her family frequently moved from one temporary accommodation to another, without a stable environment.

"I was homeless. I didn't have a place to call home...my kids never had a connection to the community." Tereesa said.

Determined to create a better future for her children, Tereesa discovered the Young Mums and Bubs Group at Baabayn Aboriginal Corporation, supported by Caritas Australia. Baabayn (which means 'Ancestral Woman' in Gumbaynggirr language) was founded by five elders and aims to support its community to heal from the past and nurture their sense of confidence and pride in the future.

"Baabayn is a place where people can come and gather. It's a belonging place. It's a place of culture, finding out about who your mobs are," said Auntie Jenny, one of the founders of Baabayn.

The Young Mums and Bubs Group supports young mothers to learn skills such as arts and craft, collective income-generation projects, parenting and financial literacy skills, as well as psychological support and connecting mums with government support services.

Baabayn also runs a Homework Club (which Tereesa's children participate in), a Yarn Circle, a Jarjums (children) Club and a Youth Group.



With the help of Baabayn, Tereesa was able to access services such as psychological and housing support and driving lessons. Her family now have their own accommodation and a stable environment they can call home.

Growing up, Tereesa never had the opportunity to learn about First Nations Australian culture. But through Baabayn, she was able to hear stories from Indigenous Elders and reconnect with her culture.

Already an aspiring artist, Tereesa was able to flourish at Baabayn as she learnt Indigenous artwork and symbols. Her art was displayed and sold at local markets, and she is now working to start her own art business.

"I'm relaxed, very relaxed when I'm painting. It helps me calm. I've been through a storm per se and painting, I just feel at peace. When I paint, every painting has a story. And my story is very long."

Tereesa's artwork was recognised at the 2022 Vivid Light festival in Sydney. Vivid Light illuminates the city with art projected onto the city landscape. Four of Tereesa's artworks – *Crow Totem*, *Connections of Both Land & Water Tribes*, *Yinaar Miyaay (Women's Business)* and *Goanna Totem* – were projected onto the Wulugul Walk at Barangaroo.

"I've never been to Vivid and to have my artwork displayed is over the moon amazing. I never thought in a million years that this was something that would happen to me," Tereesa said.

Today, Tereesa is studying a certificate in Community Services so that she can strengthen her skills and give back to her community.

"I've been a full-time mum since I was 16, but I had no qualifications and that's something I really wanted," Tereesa said.

After volunteering at Baabayn, Tereesa was offered paid employment with the Youth Group. A few months later, she was also offered the role of assistant to the Mums and Bubs group.

Tereesa's children now produce their own artwork and are eager to learn more about First Nations Australian culture, history, and symbols.

"I want my children to continue learning about their culture," Tereesa said. "I want them to have an involvement with the community. The community has your back. It's good to have that to lean on and I want my kids to realise that as well."

With your support, the work of Baabayn can continue so that young mothers like Tereesa can keep their culture strong for future generations.




TEREESA'S STORY

LEARNING TASKS



TASK 1: Discussion

- A. What were some of the challenges faced by Tereesa as a mother of four?
- B. How has Tereesa been able to reconnect with her culture?
- C. How has your support of Caritas Australia helped enable Tereesa to change her life?
- D.  Which Catholic Social Teachings do you see reflected in Tereesa's story? (Refer to CST Guide on page 3)
- E. What have you learnt about the importance of First Nations Australians maintaining connection to their culture and community?

TASK 2: Who are your support groups?

Through finding connection to her culture and community, Tereesa was able to find the support she needed to create a better future for her and her children. Think about who makes up your community and support groups (e.g. Immediate and extended family, friends, school, sporting teams etc).

Display these in a concentric circle, with you positioned in the middle circle, and your support groups in the outer circles.

For each of the concentric circle groups, explain the role they play in providing support for you in various ways in your life.

Are there other support groups out there that you might be able to access? Do some research and find others in your local area!

TASK 3: Sharing your story through art

For Tereesa, art provides not only a connection to First Nations Australian culture, but a way for her to share the story of her life.

There are various art forms that we can use to tell our own story. Select one from the list below and create a piece of art that tells the story of your life. Display these around the classroom and host an art exhibition for another class.

- poem
- piece of music
- song
- painting/drawing
- comic or cartoon
- sculpture



A CATHOLIC WORLDVIEW (JUDGE)

*"I can do things you cannot,
you can do things I cannot;
together we can do great things."*

Saint Teresa of Calcutta

What connections can you make between Tereesa's story and the quote above?



Luke 11:5–13

Read the above scripture passage.

Explain what this parable reveals about the importance of persistence and working towards what you want?



FAITH IN ACTION (ACT)

PRAYER

Write a prayer inspired by Tereesa's story.

FASTING

Fast from watching TV and movies, and from playing video games, etc.

Then use this time to connect with your neighbour, carer, parents and/or grandparents, listening to their stories and traditions.

What did you learn?

ALMSGIVING

Baabayn gave Tereesa an opportunity to take the time to listen to the stories of her Elders, as well as share her own story. Lent gives us the opportunity to share our time, gifts and talents with others.

Think about how you can share some of your time and talents with others this Lent. Write some ideas you have below.

For inspiration!

- \$50 buys a week's supply of canvases for Baabayn's youth group members to cover with amazing art
- \$100 gives vulnerable seniors lifts to and from Baabayn's weekly Elders' Gathering for a whole month

TEREESA'S STORY






COUNTRY STUDY




Find the matching icons on the Secondary Deep Dive and use your own research to find out the information below.



Secondary Deep Dive link

 <p>What is the population of First Nations Australians in Australia?</p> <p>What is the total population of Australia?</p>	<p>First Nation's Australians:</p> <p>Total Australian Population:</p>		 <p>The Laudato Si' Goals</p> <p>Identify one or more Laudato Si' goals that are being addressed through the work of Caritas Australia and its partners. Explain your selection.</p>
 <p>Predict life expectancy of First Nations Australians compared to non-Indigenous Australians. Find out the correct answer. Does this surprise you? Why/Why not?</p> <p>https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/australias-health/indigenous-health-and-wellbeing#Life%20expectancy%20and%20deaths</p>	<p>First Nations Australians</p>	<p>Non-Indigenous Australians</p>	
	<p>Prediction:</p> <p>Actual:</p>	<p>Prediction:</p> <p>Actual:</p>	
 <p>What percentage of First Nations Australians live in poverty?</p>			 <p>The Sustainable Development Goals</p> <p>Select two SDG goals that are relevant to Tereesa's story. Explain your selection.</p>
<p>What are some factors that influence the differences in these figures for First Nations Australians?</p>			

 Caritas Australia
End poverty

PRISCILLA'S STORY

ZIMBABWE



Priscilla holds millet from this year's harvest in her storeroom at her home in Hwange district, north-western Zimbabwe. Photo: Richard Wainwright/Caritas Australia



[Watch Priscilla's Story](#)

Priscilla (59) lives with her husband Charles (68) and two of their grandchildren, Obry (8) and Jayden (7), in the Hwange region, in north-western Zimbabwe. Climate change is presenting unprecedented challenges for people living in the most vulnerable and remote communities in Zimbabwe.

In Hwange, the impacts of climate change can be seen in the unpredictable rainfall patterns, prolonged dry spells, poor agricultural soils and high temperatures in the region. Food insecurity is increasing and farming as a form of income is becoming even harder. Many are at risk of extreme hunger.

"There's also the issue of the children failing to go to school because of the shortage of food. So, you have women and girls in particular, spending most of their time going out to look for food in order to feed their families," Super Dube, Diocesan Coordinator for Caritas Hwange said.

Zimbabwe struggles with widespread poverty and political instability. More than half of Zimbabwe's population, 7.9 million people, live in extreme poverty¹, of which nearly 90% reside in rural areas. During times of intense drought and food shortages, Priscilla had to commute to the town centre and wait in long queues to collect food.

"It was stressful because we didn't know what to give our children because there was nothing to give them," Priscilla said. "The challenges we faced included walking long distances to fetch water from the borehole so that we can water our gardens, bathe, wash our clothes and utensils."

In 2019, Priscilla joined the Zimbabwe Integrated Community Development Program, implemented by partner Caritas Hwange and funded by Caritas Australia.

¹[World Bank](#)

PRISCILLA'S STORY

ZIMBABWE



Through the program, Priscilla and her community learnt conservation farming techniques to grow drought-resistant crops to help mitigate the effects of climate change. Priscilla was able to produce a bumper harvest in her first year of practicing in conservation farming!

“Our biggest challenge as a family was mainly food insecurity due to the farming method we used. We would use an ox-drawn hoe, and this resulted in different germination rates of our crops,” Priscilla said. “However, Caritas Hwange came in with the idea of implementing Gachompo (conservation farming), which tremendously improved our crop germination rates hence the yields. The introduction of Gachompo also meant reduced use of livestock for farming and more time for them to graze.”

With her new-found knowledge, Priscilla helped train and support other farmers in her community to learn techniques to produce better yields too.

“We are very happy to have been introduced to conservation farming. Even for those who have no knowledge of it, we try to assist them. That’s why we work in groups,” Priscilla said.

Priscilla used the funds from her harvest to start poultry farming. She sells eggs to pay for her grandchildren’s school fees, books and stationery. The poultry farming also provides a safety net for Priscilla and her family during times of hardship, like the current drought.

In addition to conservation farming training, Caritas Hwange has helped Priscilla and her community boost their food security through a range of activities. These include participating in a community nutrition garden to grow and sell vegetables and rehabilitating the cattle dip tanks to keep their cows healthy and reduce the prevalence of tick-borne diseases. Cows are precious commodities in Zimbabwe, as they can be sold during times of crisis for funds to purchase food. Caritas Hwange also rehabilitated a community dam near Priscilla’s house, so cattle can have access to water all year.

The work of Caritas Hwange means that Priscilla has the techniques, tools and resources she needs to build resilience and support her family during this current food crisis.

“We are indeed grateful to Caritas Hwange for the knowledge,” Priscilla said. “Today we have knowledge and skills that we didn’t have before and are able to use to earn a living.”

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



PRISCILLA'S STORY


LEARNING TASKS



Find the matching icons on the Secondary Deep Dive and use your own research to find out the information below.



TASK 1: Discussion

- A. What were some of the challenges faced by Priscilla and others in the Hwange region?
- B. Explain how Caritas Australia and their partners in Zimbabwe have helped Priscilla and her community deal with the effects of climate change.
- C. How has your support of Caritas Australia enabled Priscilla to change her life?
- D.  Which Catholic Social Teachings do you see reflected in Priscilla's story? (Refer to CST Guide on page 3)
- E. What have you learnt about the relationship between climate change and poverty?

TASK 2: Observing weather patterns

Climate change has meant that for parts of the world like Zimbabwe, rainfall, periods of drought and temperatures have become hard to predict. This can result in poor agricultural soils, damage or loss of crops and impaired access to fresh water for both communities and their livestock.

Create a weather observation chart and, for a week, chart the weather in your local area. You may be able to complete your observations based on what you can see; for others, you can gather your data from [weather websites](#).

In a table, mark the days of the week along the horizontal axis, and the following along the vertical axis:

- Temperature, Humidity, Clouds, Wind, Precipitation, Air pressure

1. What patterns, if any, have you been able to observe?
2. If the same weather patterns continued as they appear in your chart for another year, what impact do you think they would have on Australian farmers?

TASK 3: Conservation gardening

Through the Integrated Community Development Program, implemented by partner Caritas Hwange and funded by Caritas Australia, Priscilla and her community learnt conservation farming techniques to grow drought-resistant crops to help mitigate the effects of climate change.

1. Summarise the principles of conservation agriculture using the following [link](#).
2. Research the ways we can use conservation techniques in our own home gardens (such as types of soils to use, water conservation methods, etc.) and create a poster that highlights these methods. You can use an online design tool such as [CANVA](#) to help you create it.



A CATHOLIC WORLDVIEW (JUDGE)

"Everything is connected. Concern for the environment thus needs to be joined to a sincere love for our fellow human beings and an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society."

Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* n91

Explain how through addressing issues surrounding climate change in Priscilla's story, we are showing a "sincere love for our fellow human beings"?



Mark 4:1–9

Read the above scripture passage.

1. What do you think are the key messages of the parable?
2. Like the seeds that were able to grow and flourish on good soil, what small thing can you do this week that can make a difference to the larger issues of climate change or poverty? Write this down as a pledge below.



FAITH IN ACTION (ACT)

PRAYER

Write a prayer for our brothers and sisters suffering the impacts of climate change.

FASTING

Priscilla and those in her community often had to walk long distances to fetch water to bathe, wash their clothes and utensils and water their gardens.

Think about the ways you can conserve water this week. It might be reducing the time it takes for you to shower or using left over water from your drink bottle to water the plants.

Write some of your ideas down below.

ALMSGIVING

If possible, instead of purchasing anything from the canteen this week, donate to Project Compassion to help support communities suffering the effects of climate change.

For inspiration!

- \$7 can buy a chicken for a family to rear
- \$22 can pay school fees for a child per term in a rural school in Hwange district
- \$59 can purchase enough seed for a family in an agricultural season

PRISCILLA'S STORY







COUNTRY STUDY




Find the matching icons on the Secondary Deep Dive, as well as your own research to find out the information below.



Secondary Deep Dive link

 <p>What is the population of Zimbabwe?</p> <p>What is the population of Australia?</p>	<p>Zimbabwe:</p> <p>Australia:</p>		 <p>The Laudato Si' Goals</p> <p>Identify one or more Laudato Si' goals, and explain how they are being addressed through the work of Caritas Australia and its partners.</p>
 <p>Predict life expectancy in Zimbabwe and Australia. Find out the correct answer. Does this surprise you? Why/Why not?</p>	Nepal	Australia	
	Prediction:	Prediction:	
 <p>What percentage of the population of Zimbabwe live in poverty?</p>	Actual:		
	Actual:		
 <p>Zimbabwe has committed to reduce its CO₂ emissions by a certain percentage by 2030 as their part to tackle climate change. What percentage has it committed to?</p>			 <p>The Sustainable Development Goals</p> <p>Select two SDG goals that are relevant to Laxmi's story. Explain your selection.</p>
<p>View this table. What trends in Zimbabwe's CO₂ emissions do you see?</p>			

 **Caritas** End p



Thu and his wife Linh live in the Quang Tri province, Vietnam. After Linh suffered a stroke, Thu became her primary carer. Photo: Phan Tan Lam/Caritas Australia

[Watch Thu's Story](#)

Thu lives in the Quảng Trị province, located on the Northern Central Coast of Vietnam.

Vietnam has made significant economic and social progress since the end of the Vietnam War in 1975. However, poverty and inequality remain widespread across the country. The repercussions of land mines and chemical warfare can be seen in the large numbers of people living with a disability.

Thu was just 12 years old when he stepped on an unexploded land mine and lost his leg. The province was one of the most heavily bombed areas during the Vietnam War. Overall, there are approximately 800,000 tonnes of unexploded ammunition that have been left over from the war.

According to the Vietnamese government, more than 100,000 people have died from unexploded landmines.

Living with a disability in rural Vietnam presented many challenges for Thu, who worked mainly as a rice farmer.

"It is hard to get a job in rural areas where people earn their living mainly from farming. However, local farming here depends on the natural weather... There is often drought in summertime and flood in rainy season. Life is thus extremely difficult," says Thu.

In addition to being the breadwinner for his family, Thu took on the role of caring for his wife, Linh, after she suffered a stroke.

"She is my wife and we have been living together and depending on each other, I am the one to be there with her and for her," says Thu.



Determined to turn their lives around, Thu and Linh joined the Empowerment of People with Disabilities program, run by Caritas Australia's local partner in Vietnam, the Centre for Sustainable Rural Development (SRD). "Many people with a disability in Vietnam feel that other people would only look at their disabilities rather than at their capacities," says Toan Tran, SRD Program Manager.

The Empowerment of People with Disabilities program supports people living with disabilities to establish Village Saving and Loans Associations (VSLA) so that they can access affordable loans. Through the VSLA he was able to obtain a low-interest loan, which he used to open his own barber shop. Thu also joined an incense-making group and, with the extra income, he was able to repair his house and reconstruct his front yard to prevent flooding during the rainy season. He now plans to invest in livestock, such as pigs, ducks or chickens, to further diversify his income streams.

Before he joined the program, Thu mostly stayed at home and had limited contact with other people in his neighbourhood. The VSLA provides a welcoming and inclusive space for people with a disability like Thu and Linh to socialise, learn and support each other. The couple also participated in training in Disaster Risk Reduction, disability rights, photo-voice technology, rehabilitation, livelihood and independent living skills.

"I think having a club is good, where people living with disabilities can join and help one another," Thu says.


Due to the program, they have been able to build an accessible toilet for Linh and receive the support of a physiotherapist, who has assisted her to walk short distances with the aid of a walking stick. With his wife's increased independence, Thu now has more time to focus on other activities, such as walking his grandson to school and working at his barber shop. With your generosity, the Empowerment of People with Disabilities program was able to support more than 6,300 people in Vietnam in the last financial year.

"I am grateful to Caritas Australia for the help they give to people living with disability like me and my wife," Thu says. "Thank you to Caritas Australia and the Australian people."





TASK 1: Discussion

- A. What were some of the challenges faced by Thu living with a disability in Vietnam?
- B. Explain how Caritas Australia and their partners in Vietnam have supported Thu, his wife Linh and others living with a disability in his community.
- C. How has your support of Caritas Australia enabled Thu to change his life?
- D.  Which Catholic Social Teachings do you see reflected in Thu's story?
(Refer to CST Guide on page 3)

TASK 2: How accessible is your school?

Write down, or mark on a map of your school grounds, all the ways that your school is accessible for those with a disability. This could include yellow lines in front of steps and on posts, accessible toilets, wide entry ways, ramps, or even technologies that make it easier for students to learn in the classroom.

Ask a teacher if there are any others you have not thought of.

Write a letter to your principal with suggestions on how to make your school more accessible for people living with disabilities.

TASK 3: Inclusion and the Sustainable Development Goals

How is disability Inclusion prioritised in the Sustainable Development Goals?

Read the information on the [United Nations webpage](#) about disability.

1. Select three and summarise how each goal works towards inclusive development.
2. Design a social media post or create a video promoting inclusive development.



A CATHOLIC WORLDVIEW (JUDGE)

"Every human person is precious and has value that does not depend on what they have or on their abilities, but on the simple fact that he or she is a person, the image of God."

Pope Francis

How does this quote relate to Thu's story?

"If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it."



1 Corinthians 12:26

When Thu's wife Linh suffered a stroke, he continued to care for her, despite his own challenges. Standing in solidarity is one way that we can act in love for our global brothers and sisters.

How does the above scripture passage relate to the Catholic Social Teaching of Solidarity?



FAITH IN ACTION (ACT)

PRAYER

Complete the following prayer in your own words:

*Loving God,
You have created each of us in your own
image...*

FASTING

What is one way you can give up your time to help a family member?

ALMSGIVING

Through the support of Caritas Australia and its partners in Vietnam, Thu's community was able to establish a Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) which helped him access affordable loans and put money aside to repair his home.







Think about how much you could contribute if you put money aside each week during Lent to donate to Project Compassion.

For Inspiration!

- \$50 can provide specialised rehabilitation devices for people living with disabilities
- \$100 can provide 35 local community health staff training in disability rehabilitation



Secondary Deep Dive link

 What is the population of Vietnam? What is the population of Australia?	Vietnam: Australia:	 The Laudato Si' Goals Identify one or more Laudato Si' goals, and explain how they are being addressed through the work of Caritas Australia and its partners.
 Predict life expectancy in Vietnam and Australia. Find out the correct answer. Does this surprise you? Why/Why not?	Vietnam	Australia
	Prediction: Actual:	Prediction: Actual:
 What percentage of the population of Vietnam live in poverty?		
 What is the average weekly income in Vietnam in AUD? Compare this to the average Australian weekly income. What surprises you?		
 What is the unemployment rate in Vietnam and Australia? What surprises you when comparing the two.	Vietnam: Australia:	

THANK YOU

PHOTO CREDITS

Laxmi's Story (Nepal) – Richard Wainwright/Caritas Australia

Tereesa's Story (Australia) – Richard Wainwright/Caritas Australia

Priscilla's Story (Zimbabwe) – Richard Wainwright/Caritas Australia

Thu's Story (Vietnam) – Phan Tan Lam/Caritas Australia

SECONDARY STUDENTS

Caritas Australia's [Code of Conduct](#) demonstrates our commitment to treating others with respect and dignity; keeping everyone safe; protecting the rights of everyone, especially children and vulnerable adults; using Caritas Australia's money, resources and information responsibly; and acting with integrity.

Learning about global social and ecological justice issues can be overwhelming. If there is anything in our work or resources that concerns you, please speak with your teacher or trusted adult. Concerns can also be lodged via our website:

<https://www.caritas.org.au/complaints/>

Caritas Australia appreciates the unique and valuable perspectives young people have to offer. We would love to receive your ideas and feedback. If you have a suggestion on how we can improve our school resources, please email: education@caritas.org.au

TEACHERS

For more school resources, please visit: www.caritas.org.au/resources/school-resources/

Stay up to date with events and resources! Subscribe to Caritas Australia's Education e-newsletter.



Caritas Australia gratefully acknowledges the support of the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program.



**FOR ALL FUTURE
GENERATIONS**

PROJECT COMPASSION



Caritas
AUSTRALIA

End poverty
Promote justice
Uphold dignity



caritas.org.au/project-compassion



1800 024 413



#projectcompassion