

PROJECT COMPASSION BE MORE



SCHOOL'S GUIDE



Caritas
AUSTRALIA

End poverty
Promote justice
Uphold dignity



lent.caritas.org.au



1800 024 413



#projectcompassion

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Caritas Australia CEO, Kirsty Robertson

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Photo credits (top to bottom): Inmanuel Biswas/Caritas Bangladesh, Neil Nuaia, August Lucky, Laz Harfa, Inmanuel Biswas/Caritas Bangladesh

CREATE YOUR SCHOOL'S FUNDRAISING PAGE!

Have a PC event planned? Want to have some fun and share the news?

Set up your school fundraising page today at:

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 2021. For full fundraising responsibilities, please refer to our website: www.caritas.org.au.

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 **Caritas**
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Caritas Australia CEO, Kirsty Robertson

As a young girl in primary school I learnt that I could make a difference in the world, that I could touch the lives of complete strangers, through my Project Compassion box. There's a powerful Gospel message to be found in a simple box- "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." (Matthew 25:40)

In challenging times, it is often our instinct to pull back and withdraw into ourselves. It can feel especially hard to help others when we are struggling to satisfy our own needs, unsure what tomorrow might hold. The COVID-19 pandemic has stirred this feeling of unease in many of us and we hope for a more stable and positive 2021.

But it is when life is toughest and most demanding that the gospel calls us to 'dig deeper' and to go further. In Matthew five, Jesus says "if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles." Your support allows us to step out into the neediest communities, expressing love and compassion for the most vulnerable.

This year, Caritas Australia takes the theme of 'Be More' for Project Compassion 2021. It challenges us to venture into a new experience of compassion, and is taken from the invitation of St. Oscar Romero, to "Aspire not to have more, but to be more." This message invites us to step up and step out for those who do not have the essential resources they need for their survival. Those whose needs at this time are far beyond ours.

During COVID-19, it is through these partnerships with local communities and extensive church networks on the ground that we have been able to respond swiftly to minimise the spread of the pandemic. We were able to adapt our existing programs with new emergency training, medical and hygiene kits.

This year we are showcasing five heroic individuals for whom your support is making a real difference. There's Jamila, a young Rohingya refugee woman in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar, who is facing terrible odds with hope and resilience. Trauma counselling

is helping her to deal with the difficulties life has thrown her way and supporting her to be a role model for her young daughter.

Margret in the Solomon Islands is empowering students at a vocational school for the deaf to follow in her footsteps, while overcoming the challenges of long-term water shortages. Oliva in Tanzania is breaking down barriers of illiteracy and gender inequality for herself and for her village. Arsad and Halima, from Indonesia and Bangladesh, are striving to improve hygiene and sanitation programs not only for themselves but for the health and wellbeing of their extended communities.

This challenge to 'Be More' to our brothers and sisters in need, is at the heart of the Christian message. Jesus, Pope Francis writes, "asks us not to decide who is close enough to be our neighbour, but rather that we ourselves become neighbours to all." (Fratelli Tutti, No. 80)

The work of Caritas Australia is a light in dark places and your generosity illuminates hope for those in dire circumstances. For over 55 years, our people and partners have listened to and journeyed with those most in need.

Your commitment to marginalised people has been a direct response to the Christian call to 'act justly, love mercifully, and walk humbly with our God.'

Thank you for 'Being More' with Caritas Australia and Project Compassion.

With gratitude,

Kirsty Robertson

Kirsty Robertson
CEO
Caritas Australia



BEFORE 17 FEBRUARY 2021, ASH WEDNESDAY

Each year Project Compassion brings together thousands of Australians in schools, parishes and the community to stand in solidarity with the world's most vulnerable communities, to help end poverty, promote justice and uphold dignity.

This year, the theme of Project Compassion is "Be More." It challenges us to venture into a new experience of compassion, and is taken from the invitation of Saint Oscar Romero, to "Aspire not to have more, but to be more." This message invites us to step up and step out for those who do not have the essential resources they need for their survival.

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

CHECKLIST

- CREATE your school fundraising page**
Go to lent.caritas.org.au to set up online fundraising for an event or use this as a way of collecting donations as a school/class.
- SHARE the PC21 materials** with your colleagues, by sending the links or uploading to your school system.
- REVIEW resources** and familiarise yourself with all the teaching, reflection and fundraising resources available online at lent.caritas.org.au.
- SELECT students and teachers** who will help drive Project Compassion. They might be class representatives, school leaders or your social justice group.

PLAN PROJECT COMPASSION ACTIVITIES

Get your Project Compassion 2021 activities off to a good start, ensuring your whole school is familiar with this year's theme based around St. Oscar Romero's quote "Aspire not to have more, but to BE MORE."

CHECKLIST

- REGISTER YOUR CLASS FOR A VIRTUAL IMMERSION:**
lent.caritas.org.au/virtualimmersions
These are live Q&A sessions with Caritas staff and partners. Sessions available for Y4-6, Y7-9 and Y10-12.
- DISTRIBUTE individual or class boxes**
If possible, offer these to students and teachers individually, either as people leave the Ash Wednesday Mass or after Communion, signifying the link between saying 'Amen' to the Body of Christ and 'being' the Body of Christ in the world today.
- WATCH films:** Watch the Project Compassion films before showing students to ensure they are suitable for your audience.
Note: The films are subtitled for students with hearing impairments. Primary and Secondary school versions of the main film are available.
- DISPLAY posters** prominently in your school reception, other meeting rooms and classrooms.
- MEET WITH** your student/teacher organisers to plan a 'whole school' approach to raising awareness and fundraising during Project Compassion this year.

SIX WEEKS OF LENT

We offer a different story to feature each week during Lent. Focused on the theme encouraging everyone to "Be More", you can focus on a new story for weeks 1-5 which highlight the issues being faced in that community.

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

- SHARE stories:** Insert the Project Compassion Bulletin Notice in your weekly school newsletters.
- USE Reflections** for staff meetings/prayer.
- SHOW the PC21 films.** A popular time is during assemblies, Religious Education classes or home room.
- SHARE** your school or class fundraising activities on social media.



Some suggestions to make it easier for your school to link Lent, liturgy and life this Lenten season. Checklists are provided to help you plan and keep track of your activities.

HOLY WEEK

During the last week of Lent, celebrate your school's learning and fundraising achievements.

You can also use the 'Way of the Cross' presentation (which comes with leader's notes) as a prayer and reflection activity for the whole school.

A Project Compassion Reflection slideshow is also available online and is a rewarding experience for everyone.

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

Throughout Project Compassion, you can create your own fundraising activities or draw on the ideas in the Caritas Australia Project Compassion Fundraising Booklet, which are linked to each of the feature stories. The booklet is available to download online at:

lent.caritas.org.au

AFTER EASTER

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.
- REMINDER in School Newsletter Bulletin:** Place a reminder in your school's newsletter for donations to be handed in.
- THANK YOU in School Newsletter:** Publish a final "Thank you" notice announcing the total amount raised.
- FORWARD your donations** and Record of Receipts sheet to Caritas Australia before 31 May 2021.



Please forward your donations to Caritas Australia before 31 May 2021 with your Record of Receipts sheet.

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



IN THE CLASSROOM

Encourage teachers to explore the stories and religious and global social justice themes each week of Lent. The Teacher Handbook for Lower, Middle and Upper Primary and Secondary schools contain stories, learning tasks and worksheets.

This year there is an interactive image for Middle and Upper primary students; the 'Project Compassion Passport Hub' and an interactive image for Secondary School students; 'The Country Study Hub'. These interactive images are designed to support students to complete independent research about the feature countries.

There are also accompanying student passports/workbooks.

**For all the resources in this handbook
please visit:**

lent.caritas.org.au

YOUR GUIDE TO CLASSROOM RESOURCES

PROJECT COMPASSION BE MORE

All our resources are online at lent.caritas.org.au

Access stories, films, teaching materials, worksheets and activity ideas for your school or classroom and help bring this year's Project Compassion theme to life.

Follow the steps below to familiarise yourself with the website.

Select **SCHOOLS** from the top menu



Select the **Resources** button



Explore the resources for students and teachers

CLASSROOM RESOURCES

For Students



E-2 Lower Primary Photo Storybooks
Y3-4 Student Passport
Y3-4 Passport Hub
Y5-6 Passport
Y5-6 Passport Hub
Y7-10 Student Workbook
Y7-10 Country Study Hub

For Teachers



Lower Primary (E-2) Teacher's Handbook
Middle Primary (Y3-4) Teacher's Handbook
Upper Primary (Y5-6) Teacher's Handbook
Secondary Teacher's Handbook

Other resources available to download:

PRAYER AND REFLECTION



ASH WEDNESDAY LITURGY

Primary (E-6)
Secondary (7-12)



REFLECTION

Reflection Slideshow
Scripture Reflections for Teachers



WAY OF THE CROSS REFLECTION

Primary (E-6)
Secondary (7-12)

ALL PURPOSE RESOURCES



CATECHIST RESOURCES

Primary (F-6) (Coming soon)



FACES OF PROJECT COMPASSION

Primary (F-6)
Secondary (7-12)



GENERAL RESOURCES

Bulletin Notices
Schools Guide (Coming Soon)
PC Box
Fundraising Booklet (Coming Soon)

MULTIMEDIA



WEEK 1 JAMILA BANGLADESH



WEEK 2 MARGARET SOLOMON ISLAND



WEEK 3 OLIVA FROM TANZANIA



WEEK 4 ARSAD INDONESIA



WEEK 5 HALIMA BANGLADESH



AN AUSTRALIAN ICON



PRIMARY SCHOOL VIDEO

POSTERS



PROJECT COMPASSION



WHAT YOUR DOLLARS CAN DO



THANK YOU



MAP



PRAYER

YOUR GUIDE TO STUDENT RESOURCES

The Project Compassion Passport Hubs (for Y3-4 and Y5-6) and Country Study Hub (for secondary school students) are hosted by an online tagged image platform called “Thinglink”.

STEP 1: Read through the Teacher Handbook and familiarise yourself with the learning tasks provided for teachers and students. The Passport and Country study hubs are related to the Country study learning task. They are designed to support students in independent research, to learn more about each feature country. Students can use the links provided in the hubs, as well as their own research to answer the questions in their workbooks.

STEP 2: Go to <https://lent.caritas.org.au/page/schools> and select ‘For Students’.

STEP 3: Scroll down to your year level. Students can download their own workbooks and access the hubs to support their research. The Student Workbooks can be printed or used as a fillable PDF online and emailed back to the teacher.

IDEAS

Decide how you want to use the hubs in your learning community. As a class or school, you could:

- follow one story for each week of Lent and use the Passport Hubs/ Country Study as the basis of weekly group assignments,
- use them together as a class,
- assign them as individual learning tasks,
- split classes or year levels into five groups and have each group focus on one story.

Y3-4 and Y5-6 – Passport Hubs



Y7-12 – Country Study



DIRECT LINKS

Middle Primary (Y3-4) – [Project Compassion Passport Hub](#)
Upper Primary (Y5-6) – [Project Compassion Passport Hub](#)
Secondary – [Country Study Hub](#)

We are excited to offer 90 live Virtual Immersion opportunities matched to the Project Compassion stories. We hope at least one session will suit your timetable wherever you live.

What is a Virtual Immersion?

Virtual Immersions are Caritas hosted Q&A sessions where schools can engage directly with Caritas Australia's program operatives in Australia and overseas. The sessions offer a unique opportunity for students to connect with the people positively affected through Caritas-supported programs and to learn more about the impact of their generous donations.

Virtual Immersions are available for Years 4-6, Years 7-9 and Years 10-12.

How will it work?

Each week during Project Compassion, a different story and program will be featured.

Students watch the Project Compassion film for that week and a series of extra films of conversations between Animators, Caritas International Program Coordinators, in-country partners and individuals featured in Project Compassion. These videos along with the teaching and learning activities available for Project Compassion will prepare students for their virtual immersion, tuning them into the story and key justice issues.

Each session will be 30 mins long and require schools to have prepared questions to ask our program staff involved in that PC story of the week.

How to register.

Go to lent.caritas.org.au/virtualimmersions to register your class in the session that suits you.

(Please note that registrations will open around 24th January 2021)

After Project Compassion, at the beginning of Term 2, Caritas will host one more session where schools can share how their awareness raising and fundraising activities went through Term 1. This is a great opportunity to share your success, learn from other schools and continue to connect through social justice.

- 1 Register for live Q&A session



- 2 Watch Project Compassion Film



- 3 Complete Learning Activities



- 4 Watch Interviews before Q&A



- 5 Prepare questions for live Q&A



- 6 Join live Q&A via zoom



- 7 Share your ideas with other schools



God of all people's and
nations,
As you accompany us on our
Lenten journey,
May our fasting strengthen our
commitment to live in
solidarity,
Our almsgiving be an act of
justice,
And our prayers anchor us in
love and compassion.

Through living simply and
loving generously,
May we care for our global
family and our common home
as we "Aspire not to have
more, but to be more".

We ask this in Jesus' name.
Amen.



Caritas Australia believes that fundraising should be FUN! It's also an opportunity to raise awareness about important issues, and a chance for the community to take part in a social justice action. Everyone who contributes is empowered and able to stand in solidarity, with the communities we serve and those who benefit from our actions.



How you can be part of Project Compassion 2021? Follow these four steps from charity to justice

STEP 1: ACT CHARITABLY

Give money: this helps meet immediate needs, and is vital. But charity alone cannot end the cycle of poverty. Taking the next steps can do more to have a positive impact in the most vulnerable communities.

Suggested action: Collect funds using your Project Compassion donation box. Funds collected go to long-term integral human development programs and emergency relief programs.

STEP 2: RAISE AWARENESS

Help others understand the issues that people experiencing extreme poverty are faced with. Inform your community about how donations can help communities gain access to clean water, food security, basic healthcare and safety.

Suggested actions: Show one of the Project Compassion films, display printed materials around your community, school or parish and include notices in your local bulletin or newsletter. Share information on social media. Learn more at lent.caritas.org.au

STEP 3: ACT IN SOLIDARITY

Actions like walking a long way – in solidarity with those who walk a long way to collect water, or those fleeing conflict zones to safety, promote empathy and understanding. When you walk in the shoes of the world's most vulnerable, you start to understand, with compassion, the injustices these communities face.

Suggested action: "Walk a kilometre in their shoes" by trying some of the solidarity actions such as the Water Challenge.

STEP 4: ACT FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

Take social justice actions to create lasting change, and address underlying issues.

These actions could focus on participation, care for creation, peace, sustainability, inclusion and justice. As well as taking action, take some time to reflect on what you're doing.

Suggested action: Take action for social justice by supporting climate justice. Many of our partners are experiencing the harsh impacts of climate change.

Online fundraising is a great way to promote your events and reduce the amount of cash handling at school. You can create your fundraising page for a specific event or as a way of collecting donations for your school or class Project Compassion total.

To register, go to
lent.caritas.org.au/fundraising-ideas

Fundraising Ideas



Pancake Tuesday

Fish Friday

Caritas Kitchen

Caritas K's
Kilometres for
Compassion

Water Challenge

Give it Up for Lent!

Bake Sale

Car Wash

Virtual Movie Night



Choose an issue to focus on and commit to take action.

For example – Issue: Climate Change. Personal action: Walk to school. Family action: Convert to green power. Local action: Organise a community garden with neighbours. National action: Join a local climate change action group. Global action: Raise awareness about the impacts of climate change.

What issue are you focusing on?:

I commit to these actions for change:



Personal



Family



Local



National



Global

Planning group members:

1. Think

What is the focus of your campaign?
Why is this issue important?

2. Learn

What facts and figures do you need?
Make it real with an example of a Caritas Australia community development program.

Where can you get this information?
e.g. www.caritas.org.au

3. Tools

Think about using social media, posters, stalls, newsletter items, slides from the Caritas website, music, an event or assembly presentation.

4. Contacts and permissions

1. Make an appointment to see your Principal to talk about what you have learnt and how you would like to engage the rest of the school community.

2. Who else do you need to speak to? E.g Principal, teachers, parish priest, participants, others.

3. Have a chat with your school media person as they might have some good contacts with local newspapers. Get your justice agenda out into your wider community! Share the good news!

5. Set a date

When will your main event take place?

When will you start preparations?

When do you need to start promotion?

Justice begins with me!

What personal action will each member of your group take? How will you lead by example?

Reflect on faith and action:

What Catholic Social Teaching principles guide you to take action for people who experience poverty?

ACTION PLAN

 WHAT WILL BE YOUR:	 WHAT TASKS NEED TO BE DONE?	 WHY IS THIS A GOOD IDEA?	 WHO WILL DO IT?	 WHAT DATE IS IT DUE?
FUNDRAISING ACTION 				
AWARENESS RAISING ACTION 				
SOLIDARITY ACTION 				
JUSTICE ACTION 				

**The following reflections link the weekly story to the Sunday readings.
For example, the Week 1 reflection is linked to the readings from the first Sunday of Lent.**

ASH WEDNESDAY REFLECTION - 17th February

Readings: Joel 2:12-18; 2 Corinthians 5:20–6:2; Matthew 6:1-6. 16-18

Repent, and believe in the Gospel! In today's readings, Joel reminds us of the gracious and merciful nature of God. As we begin our Lenten journey, we are called to reflect on our thoughts and actions. Christ invites us to renew ourselves through a transformation of our hearts. In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus unpacks important virtues that we should live by so that we can experience such a transformation of the heart.

These virtues of prayer, fasting and almsgiving are at the heart of our Lenten experience. Through prayer we are drawn closer to God so that we are better able to realise our baptismal promise to live justly as Jesus teaches us. Fasting joins us in solidarity with the poor who often have no choice but to live without basic essentials. Almsgiving is a sign of our commitment to justice as we are called to acts of service. As we are faced with new and unprecedented social and environmental challenges, we are called to re-define the ways in which we pray, fast and give alms this Lent.

This year's theme for Caritas Australia's Lenten appeal, Project Compassion, is drawn from the words of St Oscar Romero, "Aspire not to have more, but to be more". Lent is a time to reflect on ourselves and the ways in which we can "be more" to positively impact the lives of others.

Each week as we hear stories from our global family, let us consider the ways in which we are called to "be more

Let us ask ourselves, how are we walking in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in our global family? How are we acting as stewards of creation in caring for our common home?

WEEK 1 – JAMILA'S STORY

Readings: Genesis 9:8-15; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:12-15

All three readings today remind us of the desire of God leading us to "aspire not to have more, but to be more." The rainbow in the sky, the covenant, the baptism of Jesus and his temptation in the wilderness all remind us of the salvation that God wants for us and for our world. In the Gospel Jesus proclaims: "This is the time of fulfilment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."

As John baptises Jesus, his true identity as the Son of God is revealed. "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased." Immediately following this we are told that Jesus was driven into the wilderness for forty days. We have all experienced being in a wilderness in our lives. Sometimes there is more than one experience of wilderness in our lives where we are lost, confused and searching.

The first Project Compassion story is of Jamila, a Rohingya woman, living in the world's largest refugee camp in Bangladesh. A single mother, she fled armed conflict in Myanmar to save herself, her elderly mother and eight-month-old baby.

Thanks to the generosity of Caritas Australia's supporters and through our partnership with Caritas Bangladesh, Jamila had access to emergency food and shelter. Then, as her stay in the camp stretched on, Jamila joined the Women Friendly Spaces project where she received counselling and emotional support. She learnt about health and hygiene, and participated in a parenting program. She also learnt to sew, which enables her to fulfil her dream of supporting her now four-year old daughter and having what they need for a bright future.

Through the Women's Friendly Spaces program, Jamila has found a family to support her through times of wilderness. Project Compassion invites us to 'be more' as we continue to show our love and compassion for our global family.

How can we be more for others when they experience times of wilderness?

WEEK 2 – MARGRET'S STORY

Readings: Genesis 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18; Romans 8:31-34; Mark 9:2-10

The disciples in today's gospel stood in the presence of God. "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him! Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them anymore, but only Jesus." It was here they recognised the divinity of Jesus and hope for humanity. They saw God anew in their teacher and were transformed. We are called to see God anew. To see God's presence in our brothers and sisters on our streets, in our nation and around the world. In seeing, we, like the disciples, are called to "listen to him."

As we listen, this Lent we are called to "aspire not to have more, but to be more". To hear in a new way, to let go of those things that hold us back and to take up other things that allow us to live more simply, to show a deep and lasting respect for our global family and for the earth.

The Project Compassion story of Margret, is also a story of transformation. Margret is a teacher at a vocational school for deaf students in the Solomon Islands. She was born deaf, so she knows the challenges it poses to education and employment.

The school faced water shortages, with not enough to supply staff and students with safe water for drinking, cooking, washing and growing vegetables. Then Tropical Cyclone Harold damaged the school and its vegetable garden, amidst the threat of COVID-19.

With Caritas Australia's support, the school installed water tanks, provided cyclone-proof building materials and helped to implement COVID-19 prevention measures. The community has been transformed with enough water for its students and the capacity to cater for more and with plans to boost food security through increased agricultural production.

As we continue on our Lenten journey may we welcome the opportunity to 'be more' open to God's invitation to "listen to him".

WEEK 3 – OLIVA'S STORY

Readings: Exodus 20:1-17 or 20:1-3, 7-8, 12-17; 1 Corinthians 1:22-25; John 2:13-25

In today's gospel, Jesus drives the traders out of the temple saying, "Stop making my Father's house a market place!" Jesus cleanses the temple because values have gone astray. This cleansing is symbolic of reform and renewal.

We are the Church - it is through our actions and works that we are the hands and feet of Christ in our world today. Caritas Australia's annual Lenten campaign theme for this year is 'Be More', which comes from the words of St Oscar Romero "Aspire not to have more, but to be more." This is a wonderful invitation to rethink what is important to us, what renewal or reform is needed in our own lives and as a community.

Hearing of how, with some support from Caritas, communities are able to be architects of their own development, brings about a change in us. We are invited to be part of the story, of working in partnership for a better world.

One such good news story is of Oliva which is featured in Project Compassion. Oliva is a mother of four who did not have the opportunity to go to school in Tanzania and was embarrassed that she was unable to read, write or count. As an adult, her business was losing money because she couldn't add up.

Then Oliva enrolled in Caritas Australia's literacy and numeracy classes. She also set up a home classroom to teach her neighbours, for free, because they were too shy to attend larger classes.

Oliva has now graduated, attendance at her home classes is growing, her kiosk is thriving and she is helping her children with their homework. She aims to become a pastor and run for leadership in the next local election - to help her community to 'Be More.'

Access to education liberated Oliva, her family and her community. Oliva has transformed her life.

What kind of reform would Jesus call us to do today? What are the things that need renewal or could be changed in our world? How can you "Be More"?

WEEK 4 – ARSAD’S STORY

Readings: 2 Chronicles 36:14-16, 19-23; Ephesians 2:4-10; John 3:14-21

In today’s Gospel reading, we heard Nicodemus’s humbling encounter with Jesus. Nicodemus was asking Jesus how it is possible for one to renew themselves, or to be born again from sin. As Jesus responds, he makes numerous references to “*the light*”.

Jesus invites us to “*be a light in the world, a light to others*”. We are all made in the image and likeness of God and thus all possess God-given gifts that we are called to share. Christ was made man to shine a light onto the darkness in this world. By his life, God revealed the ways in which to bring about the Kingdom of God on earth; demonstrating *how* to be a light to others so that we may attain salvation and enjoy eternal life.

We all have a responsibility to shine a light on the injustices that exist within society, and are challenged to be light that drives change.

This week, we hear the Project Compassion story of Mr Arsad, a farmer who lives in the Pandeglang District in Indonesia with his wife and three children. It was only recently, that he was able to build a toilet for his family; a common household hardware that many of us take for granted.

Mr Arsad and his family, along with millions of people globally, lack basic access to safely-managed sanitation facilities, often being exposed to dangerous conditions as well as making them highly susceptible to infectious diseases. Through a Caritas Australia supported program, Mr Arsad was able embody the quote of St Oscar Romero “*Aspire not to have more, but to be more*”, by becoming involved in a community-based health development project where he learnt the skills to participate in a community-led approach to building toilets. Just as Jesus calls us to do, Mr Arsad, shared his gifts by assisting with the building of toilets for other families within his neighbourhood.

How can we, as much, or as little as we have, be the light that drives change? How can we “Be more”, and use our gifts to make a difference in the lives of others?

WEEK 5 – HALIMA’S STORY

Readings: Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 5:7-9; John 12:20-30

This week’s Gospel begins with people wishing to “see Jesus”. Perhaps not to simply observe Jesus, but to ‘see’ Jesus so that they can understand.

As we continue our Lenten journey, let us think of where we see Jesus today. Do we see Jesus in the millions of people displaced around our world? Do we see Jesus in the people who don’t have the basic necessities to live life to the full? Do we see Jesus in those willing to help others?

In the Project Compassion story for this week we learn of, or ‘see,’ Halima, a Rohingya woman living in the world’s largest refugee camp in Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh. Through our support of Caritas Australia, Halima and her two children now have access to clean water and sanitation facilities within the camp, along with access to food and clothes. Halima, with the basic necessities to support her family can now look forward to the future. Through Halima’s story we are able to see and hopefully understand a little more of the human experience.

Later, in the Gospel, Jesus speaks of service: “Whoever serves me must follow me”. When we see Jesus in the struggle of human experience, do we serve and follow him?

We should never underestimate our acts of service and our call to “Aspire not to have more, but to be more.” As one tiny seed can yield a rich harvest, our almsgiving and support of Caritas Australia is one way we can ‘be more’ by standing in solidarity with millions of people around the world.

Like Jesus, we, too, are made for eternal life, and are united with him as we serve. How can we stay committed to respond to what we see and continue to serve the children, women and men most vulnerable to extreme poverty and injustice?

WEEK 6 – HOLY WEEK

Readings: Isaiah 50:4-7; Philippians 2:6-11; Mark 14:1—15:47 or 15:1-39

Isaiah references both speaking and listening. The servant of God is both a person who can speak boldly with a well-trained tongue and a person whose ears and heart are open for listening. If we are to heal the brokenness of our world, we all need the grace both to speak and to listen.

The Passion reminds us that Jesus is the suffering servant. Christ “emptied himself and became the servant of all.” We need this spirit if we are to bring an end to the war, violence, selfishness and injustice which divides us. We are called to be more. We need to be able to respond to the needs of the world and its people. Jesus is such a servant – one who is connected with our life, our struggle and our world.

Within the Passion we see examples of kindness such as the woman with the alabaster jar, who saw beyond the superficial and performed one of the ‘good works’ just as we have during Project Compassion. “Leave her alone. Why are you upsetting her? What she has done for me is one of the good works.”

Veronica performed the simple service of wiping the face of Jesus and Simon assisted Jesus in carrying the cross. These are small acts in themselves but have had significant meaning over time.

Through the liturgies of Holy Week, we participate in the remembrance of Jesus’ final days. We are mindful too of the many women, men and children around the world who are most vulnerable to extreme poverty and injustice.

We have seen examples of this poverty and injustice in the Project Compassion stories which highlight the support for those in Bangladesh, Solomon Islands, Tanzania and Indonesia where we have been able to help uphold their dignity.

It is for these and thousands of others that we are called to “be more” for they are the face of the suffering Christ in our time.

Let us ask ourselves: How can I recognise the face of Christ in all? How can I truly listen and speak boldly for justice?