

*****MEDIA RELEASE*****

Project Compassion – Week One

Caritas Australia has announced the launch of Project Compassion 2023, its annual Lenten fundraising and awareness-raising appeal.

For each of the six weeks of Lent, thousands of Australians come together in solidarity to help end poverty, promote justice and uphold dignity.

Caritas Australia helps over 1 million people in Australia and overseas every year - walking alongside those in crisis.

This year, Project Compassion is built around the theme of 'For All Future Generations'. This theme asks us to reflect on the great yes that Mary said when the angel told her that she was to become the mother of Jesus. She freely accepted a unique place in the history of the human family. The great prayer she shared with her cousin Elizabeth says 'all generations will call me blessed.' Her yes is 'for all future generations.'

Sixteen-year-old Laxmi lives in one of the most remote communities in Nepal, which experiences high levels of poverty.

Laxmi's chance at a better life was through education, supported by her parents. Sadly, her father passed away when she was only 10 years old and she stopped going to school.

Prior to her father's passing, Laxmi joined a child's club at her school, which is run with the support of Caritas Nepal, through the Nepal Livelihoods and Resilience Program. Child's clubs support students to develop their speaking, writing and leadership skills through extracurricular activities.

Thanks to the support of her child's club, Laxmi was encouraged to resume her education. She became an active member and developed the skills and confidence to become a leader, advocating for clean water taps at her school.

Laxmi is now excelling in her studies and working towards her dream of becoming a civil engineer. She has become a mentor to other girls in her village, encouraging them to stand up for their rights and creating lasting change For All Future Generations.

During Lent, we are invited to take up the call to fast, pray and give alms. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the many crises that have struck the world over the past 12 months mean that many communities are in great need of your support.

The Catholic agency for international aid and development

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Supporting Project Compassion is a way for us to proclaim the faith that is in our hearts and help our sisters and brothers in need. Your gift will help uplift the most marginalised and vulnerable members of society.

Schools and parishes can join Caritas Q&As to interact online with our staff, partners and program participants, or download resources to learn about Caritas Australia's work and Mission. There are also resources for how to set up a local fundraiser for Project Compassion. This year, there are accessible audio-narrated and audio-described videos for schools for each of the stories, as well as a wealth of other resources for the classroom and parish communities.

To learn more or donate to Project Compassion, visit Caritas Australia's website: www.caritas.org.au/project-compassion/ or call 1800 024 413.

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