

Caritas Australia celebrates 60 years of love and compassion in action.

Caritas Australia is celebrating its 60th year, with The Catholic Overseas Relief Committee that later became Caritas Australia, having been founded in 1964.

That same year, Catholic parishes in Adelaide conducted the first Lenten appeal, raising money for a fishing boat to support the needs of the communities in the Tiwi Islands. That Lenten appeal has grown to become Project Compassion, with its iconic boxes now recognised across every Catholic school and Parish in Australia, and with the campaign having raised \$9.5m in 2023.

Caritas Australia now works in 36 countries across Africa, Asia, the Pacific, as well as with First Australian communities here at home. It is part of one of the largest humanitarian networks in the world, Caritas Internationalis, which is a confederation of 162 member organisations with programs in 200 countries, and over one million staff and volunteers.

Supporters will also hear from Caritas Australia through events, emails, letters, Parish bulletins, and a series of videos, with these activities inviting them to celebrate the change brought about by six decades of their compassion.

All activity will start from the 24th of March, which is Oscar Romero Day as the martyred Archbishop of El Salvador, Oscar Romero, is the Patron Saint of Caritas.

Kirsty Robertson CEO of Caritas Australia said “Caritas means love and compassion in Latin and these two powerful words have guided us for the past 60 years as we have worked hand-in-hand with our partners to help the world’s most vulnerable. Today, love and compassion have never felt more needed, with poverty on the rise, and conflict, divisiveness and suffering rife.”

“For staff, volunteers, and supporters, this is a time to be grateful for our part in the Caritas Australia story, and the purpose it affords us even when the world seems overwhelmingly dark. This purpose sees us united in hope, love and light as we seek to end poverty, promote justice, and uphold dignity - across the world and for decades to come.”

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