

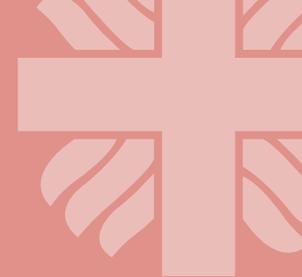
ADVENT 2020



A CLASSROOM RESOURCE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

www.caritas.org.au/advent

BACKGROUND INFORMATION



Introduction

This resource invites participants to journey through the four weeks of Advent, reflecting on the Gospel and sharing in the stories of our sisters and brothers around the world.

There are also resources available on our webpage for use in primary schools, with young adults and in parishes at: www.caritas.org.au/advent

About Caritas Australia

Caritas Australia is the international humanitarian relief and development agency of the Catholic Church in Australia. Through effective relationships with the Church, local partners and communities in the Middle East, Africa, Asia, the Pacific and Australia, Caritas Australia helps to end poverty, promote justice and uphold dignity. Our programs, advocacy and education initiatives promote the dignity of every person, regardless of religious, political or cultural beliefs. We envisage a world in which children, women and men most vulnerable to extreme poverty and injustice are architects of their own sustainable development.

Resource Structure

Each week of Advent has been organised into the following components:

- Advent wreath: lighting of candles and prayer
- Gospel reading
- Gospel reflection
- Caritas Australia story
- Story reflection
- Faith in action
- Closing prayer
- Suggested song

About Advent

Advent marks the beginning of the Church's new year and is a season of waiting and preparation. In fact, this season of Advent focuses on Christ's threefold coming—past, present and future.

- We await and prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ at Christmas.
- We hope and give thanks for Christ's presence within us and in the Word and sacraments.
- We look to the future, waiting for Christ to come again.

In the coming four weeks we prepare with mounting expectation for the coming of Christ in a spirit of waiting, conversion and hope.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Advent Wreath

The word 'Advent' means 'coming'. Lighting the candles on the wreath symbolises the coming of light (Jesus) into the world. The first candle (violet) represents hope, the second (violet) peace, the third (rose) joy, and the fourth (violet) love. The central white candle is lit on Christmas Day and represents Christ. This Advent we will learn, act and pray for a more just and fair world – a world full of hope, peace, joy and love.

Making the Advent Wreath a daily custom

The Advent wreath helps us keep our thoughts focused on the coming of Christ at Christmas, it should be integrated into our daily lives. If you don't have an Advent wreath you can make your own, instructions can be found at: www.caritas.org.au/advent Everyone gathers around the wreath and someone lights the candle(s). Leader prays [the Advent wreath prayer for the week](#).

“The season of Advent, which we begin again today, restores this horizon of hope, a hope which does not disappoint for it is founded on God’s Word. A hope which does not disappoint, simply because the Lord never disappoints! He is faithful! He does not disappoint! Let us think about and feel this beauty.”

Pope Francis

Saint Peter's Square, 1st Sunday of Advent, 1 December 2013

Buy a Global Gift this Christmas

You can bring hope and joy to the most vulnerable when you give a Global Gift this Christmas.

This Christmas share a message of love - simply select one of our beautiful Global Gift cards: **education, food or protection**. No matter what Global Gift you choose, you will be walking with the most vulnerable people in the world, helping them to transform their lives.



Order your card online at: www.globalgifts.org.au or call us on: 1800 024 413

FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT - HOPE



Welcome

Leader: Explain the structure for each session as outlined in the 'Introduction' (p.2). Introduce Caritas Australia as the International aid and development organisation of the Catholic Church in Australia. Explain that through sharing the stories of the people with whom Caritas Australia works, we can acknowledge that we are all part of one global family. You could use our ['What is Caritas?'](#) PowerPoint presentation for more information or watch this [4 min video](#) from Caritas Internationalis.

What is Advent?

Introduce the season of Advent by watching this video: ['Advent in two minutes'](#).



Advent Wreath

[If you don't have an Advent wreath you can make your own. Download the ['How to make an Advent wreath'](#) resource] If you have an Advent wreath, begin by lighting one violet candle: the candle of hope.



Suggested prayer

God of Hope,
As we light this first candle on our Advent wreath may we be filled with your everlasting hope. May your Spirit guide us as we continue to work toward a world free from poverty, where everyone can enjoy life and live it to the full. Amen

Gospel - Mark 13:33-37

"Stay awake! You never know when the Lord will come."



Leader: Ask the participants to sit comfortably, feet flat on the floor, hands in laps, shoulders relaxed. Explain that you (or someone in the group) will read the Gospel and they are asked to really listen to the words and think about what the Gospel is saying to them (Gospel reading can be found on the next page).

FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT - HOPE



Mark 13: 33-37

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Be on your guard, stay awake, because you never know when the time will come. It is like a man travelling abroad: he has gone from his home, and left his servants in charge, each with his own work to do; and he has told the doorkeeper to stay awake.

So stay awake, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming, evening, midnight, cockcrow or dawn; if he comes unexpectedly, he must not find you asleep.

And what I am saying to you I say to all: Stay awake!

New Jerusalem Bible (NJB)



Gospel Reflection

Leader: Open up the conversation by inviting participants to share what they feel the Gospel is saying to them. Alternatively you can use the guided reflection questions below.

Guided Reflection Questions:

- Today's Gospel tells us to be prepared, to be alert and awake for the coming of the Lord. What is Jesus asking of the disciples when he tells them to stay awake?
- What can you do in your life to help ensure you are 'awake' and ready for God?
- Our world is one of instant communication and gratification. A world where waiting is becoming less common when we text an order in advance to prevent waiting at the coffee shop, queue virtually for rides at theme parks or movies and where you can even pay someone to wait for us. What advice may Jesus have for our modern world?
- How can we show others that we are people who are 'awake' and ready?
- This Advent, how can we prepare as people of faith and hope?

A STORY OF HOPE

The COVID-19 pandemic has made life even tougher for some of the most vulnerable communities in Bangladesh – and women have been amongst the hardest hit.

In Bangladesh, many people were already facing the challenges of overcrowding, an under-resourced healthcare system and food insecurity before COVID-19. Only around 35 per cent of people in Bangladesh have access to clean drinking water and one in five people live below the poverty line, on less than \$5 a day.*

Ruposi, 35, is among those whose lives were rocked by the pandemic. A mother of three, she faces limited employment options in her small village in central Bangladesh and her husband lost his job as a day labourer in the capital, Dhaka, due to the lockdown.

Caritas Australia, in partnership with Caritas Bangladesh, has assisted Ruposi and other vulnerable Bangladeshi families, through the Sustainable Food Security and Livelihood Program II. This program has helped over 5,800 low-income households to diversify their agricultural production and improve their food security, through the development of skills in growing vegetables and raising livestock. The program has also provided training to over 3,700 people on ways to boost the sale of their produce at local markets.

Caritas also ran awareness-raising sessions about COVID-19 prevention measures, such as hand washing, use of masks and social distancing. Emergency cash assistance has also been provided to support vulnerable program participants who could not work during the lockdown. This helped families to buy food and hygiene materials.

Ruposi says this Caritas support has been lifesaving. “This was very helpful for maintaining my family during the worst period. I was able to buy food for 25 days for my children and purchase some protection from COVID-19 [face masks] for my family.”

Together, with your support, we can be a source of hope for others in these challenging times.

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

**Source: UNICEF and Asian Development Bank*



Ruposi with one of her children. Credit: Caritas Bangladesh

FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT - HOPE



Reflection

- How can we help people to 'be awake' to inequality and the global impact of COVID-19 and to our responsibility to support our sisters and brothers around the world?
- Discuss the following quote: Solidarity "is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all" *Saint John Paul II - Sollicitudo rei socialis*



Faith in Action

- Create an Advent Calendar of ideas to help others on a daily/weekly basis.
- Educate others by sharing the Ruposi's story with family and friends.
- Make a conscious effort to preserve food and not be wasteful. Any money saved could be used towards a Global Gift, supporting communities like Ruposi's to have enough food to eat.



Closing Prayer

God of Hope,
You call us to be hope-filled people and to open up a horizon of hope to all. Help us to open our hearts to others this Advent season and to recognise the gift of hope you have given us. Give us the wisdom and courage to bring the warmth of hope to those who need it most.

We ask this in your name.

Amen.

“I invite everyone to renewed hope, for hope “speaks to us of something deeply rooted in every human heart, independently of our circumstances and historical conditioning. Hope speaks to us of a thirst, an aspiration, a longing for a life of fulfillment, a desire to achieve great things, things that fill our heart and lift our spirit to lofty realities like truth, goodness and beauty, justice and love...”

Pope Francis, Fratelli Tutti #55



Suggested song/video clip

Matt Maher - Hope for Everyone: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X-ThP8qEio4>

SECOND WEEK OF ADVENT - PEACE



Welcome

Welcome the participants and ask them to reflect upon the first week of Advent.

Advent Wreath

[If you don't have an Advent wreath you can make your own. Download the '[How to make an Advent wreath](#)' resource] If you have an Advent wreath, begin by lighting two violet candles: the candles of hope and peace.



Suggested prayer

God of Peace,
As we light this second candle on our Advent wreath may we be filled with your everlasting Peace. May your spirit guide us as people of peace and light this Advent. Grant us forgiveness for the times our thoughts, actions and words were filled with conflict and negativity. As we prepare for the coming of your Son, as peacemakers, allow us to see Your face in all we meet.
Amen



Gospel - Mark 1:1-8

“Make straight the paths of the Lord.”

Leader: Ask the participants to sit comfortably, feet flat on the floor, hands in laps, shoulders relaxed. Explain that you (or someone in the group) will read the Gospel and they are asked to really listen to the words and think about what the Gospel is saying to them (Gospel reading can be found on the next page).

SECOND WEEK OF ADVENT - PEACE



Mark 1:1-8

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.

The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah:

Look, I am going to send my messenger before you; he will prepare your way.

A voice cries in the wilderness: Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight, and so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. All Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on locusts and wild honey. In the course of his preaching he said, 'Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'

New Jerusalem Bible (NJB)



Gospel Reflection

Leader: Open up the conversation by inviting participants to share what they feel the Gospel is saying to them. Alternatively you can use the guided reflection questions below.

Guided Reflection Questions:

- How can we continue to prepare a way for the Lord?
- John was baptising people in the river Jordan as they confessed their sins. Pope Francis says; 'Let there be light in the soul, in the heart; let there be forgiveness to others; let there be no hostilities, which are dark.... Christmas is a great opportunity to cleanse the soul.' (Pope Francis, Lighting the Gubbio Christmas Tree 2014) How can you apply this message in your life?
- Are there any areas of your life, your actions, thoughts or words where you may need forgiveness?
- What do you believe may be the significance of the first line of Mark's Gospel: 'The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God.'
- In the Bible the wilderness was a place where God often spoke to the heart of people, in a harsh and lonely place. Why may people have been open to hearing God speak to them in this context?

A STORY OF PEACE

Tom Powell, the Founder of Red Dust Healing, had already been working with a team of 'Deadly Dads' on the NSW South Coast before the January 2020 bushfires hit, training them up to facilitate their own workshops.

He saw the devastating effect on local communities, already suffering due to the drought, followed swiftly by COVID-19 and its resulting economic instability.

A proud Warramunga Man from within the Wiradjuri Nation, Tom developed Red Dust Healing, a cultural healing program, written from an Indigenous perspective, during his time as an Aboriginal Programs Officer for the NSW Department of Juvenile Justice.



Tom holds red dust near his home town of Narromine, Australia.
Credit: Richard Wainwright

Supported by Caritas Australia, Red Dust Healing runs holistic training workshops aimed at Indigenous Men, women and families as well as service providers working closely with these communities. By using visual learning modules which target real issues affecting their lives, such as suicide, addictions, mental health, grief and rejection, he helps participants to achieve individual insights and pursue personal journeys of growth and wellbeing.

Tom is now heading back to the NSW South Coast to focus on ongoing healing.

“I believe if the problem lies in the community so too does the answer. If you train up local people, who better than to be delivering this than those that come from there or are living there.”

Tom says local residents are helping each other through this, by reconnecting with each other, their families and communities, working to rebuild their lives and resilience for the future.

“When the dust settles on our lives, all we get to keep and take with us is our dignity and integrity and the love and respect we shared with people,” he says.

Red Dust Healing programs have so far been delivered to over 16,000 people in over 400 communities, in Australia and overseas.

Together, we can be peacemakers -for ourselves, our families and our communities.

SECOND WEEK OF ADVENT - PEACE



Reflection

- In his 2016 Christmas Message Pope Francis appealed for 'Peace — not merely the word, but a real and concrete peace'. What do you think he meant by 'a real and concrete peace'?
- Why is healing and inner peace so important for not only individuals but their family, and their community, and indeed our nation too?
- To achieve peace in our community we can start with ourselves. What tools or support are available to us?
- How is Tom Powell being a peacemaker?



Faith in Action

- Be an agent of peace and help others in your school or local community enjoy the spirit of Christmas this year, for example invite someone you wouldn't normally spend time with to morning tea, lunch or to an event.
- Commit to participating in mindfulness exercises to build inner peace, such as; meditation, yoga, mindful walking, breathing exercises and mandala colouring.
- Think of two ways you can promote inner peace and peace within your family, community or nation.



Closing Prayer

Jesus, Prince of Peace,
You alone can give us a heart of peace,
peace the world cannot give. May we seek
to promote that peace in our local, national
and global communities. May we take
responsibility for our actions and be ever
mindful of their impact on others. Help us to
recognise the gift of life in all, desiring for
them what we desire for ourselves.
We ask this in your name.
Amen

“...no one can cultivate a sober
and satisfying life without being
at peace with him or herself.
Nature is filled with words of
love, but how can we listen to
them amid constant noise,
interminable and nerve-
wracking distractions...”

Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* #225



Suggested song/video clip

Christine Anu – Colours of your life <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2wgUqdG1W3E>

Sarah McLachlan, 'Prayer of St. Francis' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=agPnMxp5Occ>

THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT - JOY



Welcome

Leader:

Welcome the participants and ask them to reflect upon the second week of Advent.

Advent Wreath

If you have an Advent wreath, begin by lighting the first two violet candles and the rose candle: the candle of hope, the candle of peace and the candle of joy.



Suggested prayer

Almighty God,
As we light this third candle on our Advent wreath may we be filled with your everlasting joy. May your spirit guide us this Advent, as we strive to find the joy in the highs and lows of our days. God, you are the source of joy in the world, let us be a reflection of your joy to all we see and meet.
We ask this prayer in Jesus' name.
Amen

Gospel - John 1:6-8, 19-28



Leader: Ask the participants to sit comfortably, feet flat on the floor, hands in laps, shoulders relaxed. Explain that you (or someone in the group) will read the Gospel and they are asked to really listen to the words and think about what the Gospel is saying to them.

(Gospel reading can be found on the next page)

THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT - JOY



Gospel - John 1:6-8, 19-28

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

A man came, sent by God. His name was John. He came as a witness, as a witness to speak for the light, so that everyone might believe through him.

He was not the light, only a witness to speak for the light.

This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' he not only declared, but he declared quite openly, 'I am not the Christ.' 'Well then,' they asked, 'are you Elijah?' 'I am not,' he said. 'Are you the Prophet?' He answered, 'No.' So they said to him, 'Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?' So John said, 'I am, as Isaiah prophesied: a voice that cries in the wilderness: Make a straight way for the Lord.'

Now these men had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put this further question to him, 'Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the prophet?' John replied, 'I baptise with water; but there stands among you – unknown to you – the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal-strap.' This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptising.

New Jerusalem Bible (NJB)



Gospel Reflection

Leader: Open up the conversation by inviting participants to share what they feel the Gospel is saying to them. Alternatively, use the guided reflection questions below.

Guided Reflection Questions:

- In this Gospel reading Jesus is described as the light. Why? What image does this create for you?
- What was the role of the Prophets like John the Baptist? How are we called to be modern day prophets?
- What is God wanting of us as witnesses to the light? How can we show others that we are witnesses?
- What do you think it means to 'make a straight way' for the Lord? Are your behaviours, thoughts and actions 'making a straight way for the Lord'? Do we need to make any changes?
- What joy can you see in this story? How can you share the joy of Advent with those around you?

A STORY OF JOY



Phuong* is nine years old and lives with his family in a small house in a poor area of Vietnam. He was born with hydrocephalus, a medical condition which causes seizures and makes speaking and walking difficult.

Phuong's parents are farmers. They grow vegetables and raise pigs. His father also works as bricklayer when jobs are available.

When Phuong is unwell his father sometimes has to miss work to stay home with him or to take him to the hospital.

"This means that we hardly earn money but also have to pay for hospital and other expenses," Phuong's mother, Van, explains.

Phuong's parents felt that they were in a hopeless situation and were afraid their son wouldn't grow into adulthood. Then in 2012, Phuong's parents became involved in the Empowering People with Disabilities program, through Caritas Australia's partner organisation, Sustainable Rural Development (SRD). His family was able to access a rehabilitation therapist who made home visits. Phuong also attended a community-based class to learn to read and write, while his mother and father joined a support group for parents of children with disabilities.

Phuong's health has improved significantly and he no longer has to go to hospital as often. Phuong's parents feel less isolated and are supported by a community of families who can share their experiences and help each another.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 has meant that Phuong hasn't been able to attend the community class. However, during the lockdown, Caritas' partners, SRD, continued to provide support to the family by keeping in regular contact with Phuong's teachers, as well as local health workers. Staff worked to ensure that people living with disabilities and their carers had access to health and other essential services.

Despite the challenges, Phuong's mother says her son is making progress every day.

"I am trying every day, I am happy, I can help my brothers, I will follow the therapist's advice to eat well and study well," Phuong says. "I am happy because my mum went to training and that is good for her and I also have more friends now at the class where I learnt how to read and write."

Around 1800 children with disabilities and their caregivers have been helped by this program so far.

**pseudonym*



Photo credit: Phan Tan Lam

THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT - JOY



Reflection

- Where do you see joy in Phuong's story?
- What are the joys in your life? How have they stemmed from being able to participate in your family and community?
- Describe some new possibilities of joy that are open to you in this season of Advent.
- List qualities you see in Phuong, that you too will need, to become more joyful?

“To see things in this way brings the joyful realization that no one people, culture or individual can achieve everything on its own: to attain fulfilment in life we need others.”

Pope Francis, Fratelli Tutti #150



Faith in Action

- Every single person is special and is made in the image of God. What small act of kindness can you offer to make someone feel as special as God immediately believed we were when God created us?
- Share the joyful story of Phuong with others.
- Share the joy and gift of education by volunteering at a local primary school or community group.
- Share the joy of Christmas by visiting a nursing home or respite centre and singing Christmas carols or sharing stories.
- Live more simply this Christmas, use the money saved to buy a Global Gift, supporting communities in Australia to find peace within themselves, their families and their communities.



Closing Prayer

God of Joy,
You sent your son Jesus to bring joy to the world. Show us how to be joy-filled people and recognise Jesus in those we meet. Bless us with your love and compassion. We ask this in your name. Amen



Suggested song/video clip

Empty Hands Music: [Grateful: A Love Song to the World](#)
Folk Hymnal: [Oh for Joy](#)

FOURTH WEEK OF ADVENT - LOVE



Welcome

Leader:

Welcome the participants and ask them to reflect upon the third week of Advent.

Advent Wreath

If you have an Advent wreath, begin by lighting the first two violet candles, the rose candle and the final violet candle: the candle of hope, the candle of peace, the candle of joy and the candle of love.



Suggested prayer

God of Love,
As we light this fourth candle on our Advent wreath, fill us with Your everlasting love. We ask for guidance Lord as we open our lives to others, share their laughter and tears, and grow day by day in love. Teach us to love sincerely and help us to share your love with others.
We ask this prayer in Jesus' name.
Amen



Gospel- Luke 1:26-38

“You are to conceive and bear a son.”

Leader: Ask the participants to sit comfortably, feet flat on the floor, hands in laps, shoulders relaxed. Explain that you (or someone in the group) will read the Gospel and they are asked to really listen to the words and think about what the Gospel is saying to them (Gospel reading can be found on the next page).

FOURTH WEEK OF ADVENT - LOVE



Luke 1:26-38

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?' 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you' the angel answered 'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.' 'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary 'let what you have said be done to me.' And the angel left her.

New Jerusalem Bible (NJB)



Gospel Reflection

Leader: Open up the conversation by inviting participants to share what they feel the Gospel is saying to them. Alternatively you can use the guided reflection questions below.

Guided Reflection Questions:

- After hearing this gospel, what do you think God asks of us in our lives?
- When Mary was told of God's plan for her, how do you think she felt? When have you been nervous and unsure if you can fulfil what is asked of you?
- When have you done something uplifting for another without expecting anything in return? How was this fulfilling God's plan?
- How is Mary a model of discipleship?
- Mary responds 'yes' to the angel, showing that she is willing to be part of God's will. How do we live our 'yes' to God? When have you shown strength of character and faith?

A STORY OF LOVE

Shumirai lives with her husband, Tafadzwa, her son and her mother-in-law in rural Zimbabwe.

Since their marriage four years ago, their village has faced persistent drought and erratic weather patterns, which have drastically reduced their harvest sizes and driven up local food prices.

This year's harvest of Zimbabwe's staple food crop, maize, is worse than ever - 40 per cent down on the previous five years.

However, with support from Caritas Australia, Shumirai and her family have been able to improve their harvests and increase food security, despite the ongoing drought.



Shumirai collecting groundnuts. Credit: Caritas Gweru

In July 2019, they joined the Zimbabwe Integrated Community Development Program, which is implemented by Caritas Australia's partner, Caritas Gweru. Shumirai learnt about raising livestock and groundnut production. She was also given five goats to raise herself.

"After planting and following all the recommended practices during training, we were chosen as the best groundnut farmers in our village," says Shumirai.

Shumirai and her husband have already harvested 27 buckets of unshelled groundnuts, about 135 kilograms. They use some of the groundnuts to make peanut butter which has helped to improve their son's health and nutrition.

They were also selected as one of three households in their village to receive materials to build a Blair Latrine (toilet). The community set up working groups to mould bricks and came together to share food and work together. Caritas also helped community members to build a new borehole to ensure access to safe, clean water.

These improvements in health and sanitation were all the more welcome, as the COVID-19 pandemic swept around the world. Caritas Australia's financial support enabled Caritas Gweru to distribute soap, to conduct hygiene awareness sessions and assisted the community to build makeshift 'tippy tap' systems.

"I am now a very active and resourceful woman," Shumirai says. "I now know how to harmoniously plan my work to move forward productively. This has revived my hope that as a family, we can surely live better lives like anyone else who works hard to improve their life. My husband and I have realised that we can live better lives and that we are valued in our community," she says.

Along with your generous support, this program is supported by the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP). Sources: FAO <http://www.fao.org/3/ca6624en/ca6624en.pdf> and WFP <https://www.wfp.org/countries/zimbabwe>

FOURTH WEEK OF ADVENT - LOVE



Reflection

- Where does the Bible call for structures to protect the poor and the vulnerable?
- How do you discern where your service is needed most?
- Shumirai and her husband are people of action. How can you be a person of action in your own life?
- How can your actions encourage others to be people of service and advocacy?
- What Catholic Social Teaching principles are evident in this program?
- How can you care and love those around you this Advent?



Faith in Action

- Sunday December 20, 2020 is International Human Solidarity Day, a day where we can celebrate the unity in our diversity. What small act of kindness can you offer to make someone feel as special.
- Recognise a group who are isolated in your community and organise a visit through your school.
- Spend time making Christmas gifts for others this year.



Closing Prayer

Loving God,
You enfold us in your loving embrace. Guide us in the way of your love to bring hope, peace, joy and justice to those we encounter. Give us eyes that see others, hands that reach out in tenderness and hearts that love. May we love one another as you love us.
We ask this in your name.
Amen

“To love God and neighbour is not something abstract, but profoundly concrete: it means seeing in every person the face of the Lord to be served, to serve him concretely. And you are, dear brothers and sisters, the face of Jesus.”

Pope Francis, Address during Visit at the Homeless Shelter “Dono Di Maria,” 2013



Suggested song/video clip

Sarah Hart - The House That Love Is Building <https://youtu.be/ohgnuNJmO58>

+
Thank you



www.caritas.org.au