

## Liturgy for Hope in Times of Disaster

### Contents

Part 1- Classroom preparation

Part 2- Liturgy preparation

Part 3- Liturgy

Part 4- How does Caritas Australia respond to emergencies? Before, During and After the Headlines

### **Part 1- Classroom Preparation (before liturgy)**

**Aim:** To tune students into the issue and prepare their own contributions to the liturgy.

#### **What you need:**

Newspaper articles with pictures about the disaster

Video clips from news programmes

Maps of the region where the disaster took place

Atlases

Cards or Postits for students to write on, large strips of paper to use as headings.

Wool or coloured string, blue tack, sticky tape, push pins

CD , CD player and lyrics of Joe Cocker's song *Just Pass it on* from **Hymn for Soul** album, 2007 (Page 6)

Coloured paper (the colour for hope of the affected culture + green for Catholic symbol of hope)

#### **Classroom activities:**

1. 'Tune' students in to issue by listening to an account of someone who experienced the disaster or a video clip. (Check Youtube)
2. Students journal about their reactions had they been in such a situation- What would they have heard, seen, felt? Discuss with class.
3. Natural disasters are unstoppable natural occurrences. There are many types of natural disasters. Go to the website below to learn about the different types of natural disasters. and complete the activities which follow. [www.factmonster.com/ipka/A0775896.html](http://www.factmonster.com/ipka/A0775896.html) . Other helpful websites are: <http://earthquake.usgs.gov/> and <http://www.globaleducation.edna.edu.au/>

4. Discuss recent disaster - Casualty figures, areas and cities, towns affected.

Students locate and shade the affected area on a map. Shade Australia on map and using map or atlas scale determine how far affected areas are from where students live. To give them a sense of the real impact of the death toll of the disaster, students find a town in their own region that has a similar population. Imagine the consequences of the destruction of that number of people and a town of that size.

5. Look at video or newspaper clips. Divide class into four groups. Allocate one of the following dot points to each group:

- Individuals
- Families
- School communities
- Local communities
- The country

Groups discuss impact of the earthquake on the people they have been allocated and note down one idea per post-it. Groups make a label for the area they have discussed and put it on display board with their postits underneath. As a class discuss responses noting any common factors and connecting them with string or wool. Give students time to look at other groups' responses.

6. Discuss Catholic teaching about dignity of human person and response to natural disasters. Discuss meaning of solidarity within Catholic context: to support those in distress through speaking for them, taking action on their behalf and caring for them through prayer. Discuss the role of prayer in times of despair as a means of fostering hope in our own lives and the lives of others and as a way of connecting self and those we pray for to God. Ask students to think about the issues on the post-it display and choose something or someone they think needs prayers for hope.

**7. Prayer Activity**

Find out the colour/symbol for hope in culture of the affected culture.  
Explain that green has the same symbolic meaning in Catholic liturgies.

Give students squares of coloured paper and get them to write their prayer on the paper. If students want ideas about where to begin they could draw a symbol of hope or write an acrostic based on the word HOPE. Students prayers to be gathered during the liturgy and later to be collated into a school display.

8. **Reflection:** Introduce song: *Just Pass It On* from Hymn for my Soul (2007)

This song, written by Daniel Moore and sung by Joe Cocker is about solidarity with those in distress and in need of help. The chorus is in Swahili, an African language. 'Toombo iso' or 'tumbuiza' has several meanings including: to soothe or calm. The song is about supporting other people and how they do not 'owe us' for that support but that they should 'pass it on' and support others. Play *Just Pass It On* and encourage students to join in the chorus.

9. **Activity sheet on song** – Page 6

10. **Conclusion:** Ask students to make sure that they have their prayer on coloured paper with them at liturgy. Students will be asked to 'pass it on' during the liturgy as a sign that they are in solidarity through prayer with the disaster victims. If appropriate, students could be asked to fold a coin inside their prayer as an additional gesture of solidarity to support the Caritas Australia appeal.

**Part 2- Liturgy Preparation**

**What you need for the prayer focus:** table, appropriately coloured cloth or blue plastic tarp such as those used for emergency shelter, cross, bible, candles (several votive candles or a pillar candle for a classroom or several pillar candles for an assembly. Do **not** use the parish or school's Paschal candle as it is not liturgically correct to use it within this context), stones or rocks, broken bamboo sticks or similar, water containers, rice (Bulk bags have more impact for an assembly and they can be purchased cheaply from Asian grocery stores. If it is treated hygienically the rice will be acceptable as a donation at shelters for the homeless or soup kitchens).

**Allocate roles as per proforma template:** Page 7

### Part 3- Liturgy: Order of Service

#### Welcome and introduction:

Welcome, today we gather in silence to pray for and remember the people who have lost their lives and those who were injured in the recent \_\_\_\_\_ (type of disaster) in \_\_\_\_\_ (place of disaster). We also pray for those whose lives have been marked by the brokenness of loss of loved ones, their homes, their schools, their livelihoods and community structures that gave their lives meaning and hope.

When disaster strikes our own lives, or the lives of others, it is easy to ask the question: *Where is God?* We light the candle/s to remind ourselves that Jesus is a light for us in the darkness of despair and suffering. (*Light candle/s*)

The cross reminds us of the suffering and death of Jesus. In his life Jesus found comfort from the care and solidarity of other human beings. Today we gather to pray for the grace to recognise the pain of other people and the strength and courage take action on their behalf.

In the water and the rice we are reminded of the need for the people of \_\_\_\_\_ to be able to access the necessities of life. The food and water are also reminders of life returning to normal. In the broken bamboo we recall that lives, communities and homes have been broken and we pray that these will be healed to give people the hope to reclaim their normal family and community lives.

#### Song Suggestions:

- When I Needed a Neighbour (Carter) {As One Voice Volume}
- Song of the Body of Christ (As One Voice Vol. 1)

#### Opening Prayer

God of mercy and compassion, we gather today to ask for your blessing upon those whose lives have been affected by the recent \_\_\_\_\_ (type of disaster) in \_\_\_\_\_ (place of disaster). We ask that you comfort them in their loss of family, friends and community. Give them the gift of hope to see beyond their pain and loss.

Give strength to those who work with them to recover and rebuild their families and communities. Bless them for their compassion and willingness to be with the grieving, the injured, and the homeless.

We ask you to open our hearts to the suffering and needs of those with whom we share this world. Sometimes it is easy just to see them as a statistic or a face on a TV screen. Give us the grace to see them as real people and to respond to them with generosity of spirit and action. Lord hear us.

## Scripture readings

**Psalm:** In the psalm we are reminded that in times of trouble people have turned to God in prayer for help and hope.

**Psalm 40:1-2, 4, 11, 17,**

**Antiphon: How blessed are those who put their trust in Yahweh**

I waited, I waited for Yahweh  
Then he stooped to me  
And heard my cry for help

He pulled me from the seething chasm,  
From the mud of the mire  
He set my feet on rock  
And made my footsteps firm

You Yahweh have not withheld  
your tenderness from me  
your faithful and steadfast love  
will always guard me

Poor and needy as I am,  
The Lord has me in mind  
You, my helper, my Saviour  
My God do not delay

**Gospel: Luke 14: 12-14.**

In this passage from Luke's Gospel, Jesus teaches us about solidarity with the poor and the marginalised. His words support the Church's teaching about preference for the poor and they speak to us about the need to pass on to others the good things in our lives.

A reading from the Gospel of Luke

*Then he said to his host, 'When you give a lunch or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relations or rich neighbours, in case they invite you back and so repay you. No; when you have a party, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind; then you will be blessed, for they have no means to repay you and so you will be repaid when the upright rise again.'*

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Response:** Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

**Reflection on Gospel-**

*Just Pass It On* - Music and (Liturgy of Hope Powerpoint Part 1).

**Time for own prayer:** At this point pass baskets around and invite students to place their coloured slips with their personal prayers and donations to Caritas into baskets .

**Closing prayer:** Our Father Reflection (Liturgy of Hope PowerPoint Part 2)

Lord's Prayer: meditation on solidarity with those who are suffering. The congregation is invited to recite the lines of the Lord's Prayer from the powerpoint while reader/s read the reflection.

**All: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name** (pause)

**Reader:** God who shows us the boundless love of a mother or father, we ask you to walk with those who lives have been broken by the \_\_\_\_\_ (name of disaster) in \_\_\_\_\_ (place of disaster). In the darkness and suffering that they experience, give them reasons to hope. *Lord hear us.*

**All: Lord hear our prayer** (pause)

**All: Your kingdom come** (pause)

**Reader:** God we do not understand suffering and devastation in our world but we see your kingdom in the small miracles of people caring for others. We ask that you bless relief workers and others who make your kingdom present through their care for the individuals and communities affected by the disaster. *Lord hear us*

**All: Lord hear our prayer** (pause)

**All: Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Reader:** God you made us to share the resources of the earth and be stewards of your creation. Give us the generosity of spirit to be your hands on earth, to share these gifts justly and to help others to rebuild their lives and communities. *Lord hear us*

**All: Lord hear our prayer** (pause)

**All: Give us this day our daily bread** (pause)

**Reader:** God, your gifts to us go beyond the bare sustenance we need for our daily lives. As we reflect on the comforts that food, clean air and water, shelter and safety bring into our lives, may we give thanks for all that we have received and realise that they are not gifts for us alone. Teach us to pass these gifts on to others in ways that respect their dignity and capacity to make wise decisions for themselves and their communities. *Lord hear us*

**All: Lord hear our prayer** (pause)

**All: Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us**

**Reader:** God, too often we see others as undeserving. Forgive us for the times we have let a 'them' and 'us' mentality rule our minds and our hearts. Give us the grace to see people as you see them- as individuals with feelings, hopes and dreams who are deserving of our help and respect. *Lord hear us*

**All: Lord hear our prayer** (pause)

**All: Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.**

**Reader:** God, we are often blind and deaf to the suffering of others, especially those far away from our own experiences of life. It is tempting for us to turn the TV channel or the page of the newspaper so as not to be confronted with another's grief and loss. We ask you to deliver us from our own selfishness and apathy. Open our hearts to your call to walk with the broken, the poor, the oppressed and the marginalised. *Lord hear us.*

**All: Lord hear our prayer** (pause)

**All: Amen**

**Reader:** Amen means saying yes to you. In saying this we believe that you empower us to be a force for change and justice in the world.

**Sign of peace**

**Closing song- Suggestions:** You Raise Me Up (J. Groban); Act Justly (T.Watts & M. O'Brien As One Voice Vol.1); See a New World Rise (Kevin Bates. BLESSED)

**Follow up display-** Students' prayers for hope are displayed in a prominent place in the school or classroom. A large sketch of a globe of the earth could be used with some of the students' prayers streaming from Australia to \_\_\_\_\_ (place of disaster).

# Just Pass It On

You don't owe me, ha! I'll be hoping, ha! I'll be praying, ha!

Toombo iso, ha! toombo iso, ha! toombo iso, ha!

1. You don't owe me,  
you don't owe me a solitary thing.  
If I lend a hand it's 'cause I choose to.  
You don't owe me.

**Refrain** (Just pass it on.) Pass it on, pass it on.

(Pass it on.) Help make the world go round. (Pass it on.)

Pass it on to whoever you need, they won't owe you.

Toombo iso, ha! toombo iso, ha!

2. I'll be hoping, I'll be hoping for the big one out of the blue,  
when it comes I want it to come to you.  
I'll be hoping.

**Refrain** (Just pass it on.) Pass it on, pass it on.

(Pass it on.) Hope makes the world go round.

(Pass it on.) Pass it on to whoever you need,  
they won't owe you. Toombo iso, ha! toombo iso, ha!

3. I'll be praying,  
I'll be praying that the best will come your way.  
and when it comes that's going to make my day.  
I'll be praying.

**Refrain**

**Coda** I'll be hoping, ha! I'll be praying, ha! Toombo iso, ha! toombo iso...

## Think about the song

What is the 'it' that Joe Cocker says should be passed on?

Why does he say 'you don't owe me'?

Do people 'owe' us if we help them?

What did Christ teach us about this? Find a Gospel story that contains some of this teaching. (Hint- the Gospel of Mark is a good place to start.)

Why do you think the songwriter used the Swahili words for 'soothe' or 'calm' in the chorus?

How does the song encourage listeners to look at others as people rather than as victims? How does it give those who need help a sense of also being empowered?

Caritas works with partners within countries experiencing disasters to try to source relief supplies from within the country itself. How does this approach respect the dignity of others? How does it 'pass on' benefits to the local economy at the same time?

As a school student living in contemporary Australian society what action can you take as an individual or as a member of the school community to soothe the suffering of people who have experienced disasters such as an earthquake ?

Research and report to the class on some of the Caritas projects that are specifically aimed at helping people to become self-sufficient and then requiring them to pass on some of these benefits to others in their village communities. Why are so many of these projects aimed at women?

| Prayer liturgy for a natural disaster   |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| Liturgy process   | Organiser/Facilitator/Reader |
| Select opening, closing prayers, readings and music.  |                              |
| Prepare booklet and Powerpoint if relevant  |                              |
| Set up prayer focus   |                              |
| Gather, welcome, quieten group  |                              |
| Introduce theme of liturgy as candle/s are lit.   |                              |
| Opening prayer  |                              |
| Scripture readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Psalm or other OT reading</li> <li>• Gospel</li> </ul> |                              |
| Gospel Reflection   |                              |
| Time for own silent prayer  |                              |
| Closing prayer Lord's prayer (call to action)   |                              |
| Sign of peace   |                              |
| Closure and cleanup   |                              |
| Follow up   |                              |

## Part 4: How does Caritas Australia respond to natural disasters? Before, During and After the Headlines

### Introduction

Wherever disaster occurs, Caritas is ready to respond. Caritas Australia is a member of *Caritas Internationalis*: a confederation which is one of world's largest disaster response and development networks in the world with a presence in over 200 countries. The confederation enables Caritas Australia to provide assistance to people affected by disaster quickly and effectively.

### BEFORE a disaster

Caritas Australia recognises that people living in poverty are the most affected when a natural disaster strikes. It is therefore important to work with communities particularly at risk to prepare for future disasters. Simple but effective training in disaster preparedness has proven to save lives.

1. How does poverty leave people vulnerable when natural disaster occurs?
2. How many people have lost their lives due to natural disasters in the previous year? Were most of the lives lost in developing or developed countries/regions? Why do you think this is so?
3. Read the following article on our website: India- Tsunami: Building back better  
<http://www.caritas.org.au/Content/NavigationMenu/WhatWeDo/Respondtodisaster/TsunamiTwoYearsOn/India/default.htm> Name 3 different aspects/techniques for preparing communities for a natural disaster.

### DURING the disaster

Providing relief such as shelter, food, water as well as trauma counselling is important in helping people, families and communities meet their immediate needs.

### Partnership

In honouring the principle of subsidiarity, Caritas Australia is committed to listening, accompanying and working with the local Church and partner agency in partnership. This means our relationships must be based on mutual respect, trust and goodwill. People who are affected by a disaster have a right and a duty to participate in making decisions that affect them and to not be mere recipients of aid. Partnership emphasises the importance of recognising and respecting local culture, custom and belief, understanding each others' background, context, constituency and relationships.

During a disaster, Caritas Australia is also guided by the principles of Catholic Social Teaching and the Red Cross Code of Conduct.

#### 1. Catholic Social Teaching

- Go to [www.caritas.org.au](http://www.caritas.org.au) and review the guiding principles. These can be found under the 'About Us' tab at the top.
- Reflect on a recent natural disaster and identify how each of these principles play a role in responding to a natural disaster.

#### 2. Red Cross Code of Conduct

- Go to <http://www.ifrc.org/publicat/conduct/index.asp> and scroll down to the 10 principles commitments of the code.
- What does the 'humanitarian imperative' mean?
- Do any of the principles surprise you?
- Can you identify any Catholic Social Teaching principles in the Code of Conduct?



3. Go to the Caritas Australia website and read about how Caritas Australia is responding to emergencies around the world. Go to [www.caritas.org.au](http://www.caritas.org.au) and click on 'Be Informed' and then 'News Room'.

4. Write a report on the response to one disaster. In your report include:

- Effects of the disaster(include facts)
- Caritas Australia's response. Include details on the specific things Caritas has provided in the area. Your report could include the following initiatives: shelter, medical provisions, income generating programmes, education, and trauma counselling.

5. How many disasters did Caritas Australia respond to last year?

6. What current emergency appeals can people donate to now?

### **AFTER a disaster**

When the headlines disappear from our TV screens and newspapers, the needs remain. It is crucial to move from emergency relief to sustainable development programs as soon as possible, to ensure that people affected by disaster can resume productive and dignified lives. But this takes time. Caritas Australia is committed to ensuring we assist communities in not only the short-term, but also the long-term.

1. Read "Rice aplenty in Aceh" as an example of how Caritas Australia has assisted the people of Aceh, well beyond the devastating Tsunami in 2004. Go to:

<http://www.caritas.org.au/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Spring3&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=6091>

- Why did Caritas support the livelihood program in Aceh?
- What technical assistance did Caritas provide?
- What is said to be the key to good rehabilitation?
- Dr Anda said "This is much more focused on long term development outcomes rather than short term asset replacement." What do you think Dr Anda means by this?