

3RD SUNDAY OF LENT WEEKEND OF 11-12 MARCH 2023

**PRISCILLA'S STORY,
ZIMBABWE**



Climate change continues to bring unprecedented challenges for people living in the most vulnerable and remote communities in Zimbabwe.

Priscilla lives with her husband and two grandchildren in the Hwange region. With the support of Caritas Hwange, Priscilla and her community learnt conservation farming to grow drought-resistant crops.

Her increased harvest allowed Priscilla to sell her crops and start poultry farming, selling eggs to grow her income stream and pay for her grandchildren's education. Caritas Hwange also helped rehabilitate the dip tank in her community so that Priscilla's cattle can be healthy and free from tick-borne diseases.

While the situation in Zimbabwe and across eastern Africa remains dire, the work of Caritas Hwange has helped Priscilla acquire the knowledge and skills she needs to diversify her income and support her family during the current food crisis.

"Today we have knowledge and skills that we didn't have before and are able to use to earn a living," Priscilla said.



REFLECTION

Every summer seems to get a little longer and a little hotter. We have all become conscious of issues surrounding water. Either there seems to be too much, as during last year's summer floods or when the sea levels rise in the Pacific. Other times, there seems to be too little water as when the rivers in our country run low or members of God's family around the world experience drought. Caritas Australia, through Project Compassion, has been responding to the dire needs of places such as Ethiopia and Somalia where a cruel drought, compounded by a shortage of grain from Ukraine, has led to dire consequences.

Today's readings may well cause us to reflect on the current state of God's creation. In the book of Exodus, we hear that people are complaining to Moses because they are dying of thirst. In the Gospel, Jesus meets a woman in a Samaritan town. She has come to draw water from the well in the hottest part of the day. In both cases, access to water is precarious. Yet God responds not only to a thirst for water but to a deeper thirst as well. Moses' people are thirsty for direction, leadership and hope. The woman in John's Gospel has a thirst for love and acceptance which, Jesus tells her, will come from within if she is able to accept him and his message of life.

As the story unfolds, we learn of her loneliness and see her reconnecting with her community.

This week, Caritas Australia shares with us an account of its response to a water shortage in Zimbabwe. Thanks to our support for Project Compassion, Caritas Australia is involved in providing access to water in many places. It seems such a basic thing. One we mostly take for granted. But once a community has access to water, it grows in every possible way. People have more time for health care and education. People find energy to build their future. This week's scripture readings have a strong sense of a hope-filled future. May we too, in our time, be sources of hope *For All Future Generations.*




DON'T FORGET
TO CREATE YOUR PARISH
FUNDRAISING PAGE AT:
[WWW.CARITAS.ORG.AU/
PROJECT-COMPASSION](http://WWW.CARITAS.ORG.AU/PROJECT-COMPASSION)

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

We pray that all people will have just access to the necessities of life, especially water. May we, in our support for Project Compassion this Lent, do all we can to become a source of hope for those who thirst.



FUNDRAISING IDEA

Reinforce the importance of Project Compassion by drawing parishioners' attention to the 'What Your Donation Can Do' poster displayed in your parish. Reveal your parish's fundraising total so far and thank everyone for their generosity. Use the poster to explain how their donations can greatly benefit communities around the world.

**"LET US PRAY FOR
PEACE: PEACE IN THE
WORLD AND IN EACH
OF OUR HEARTS."**

POPE FRANCIS