

REFLECTIONS AND PRAYERS

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PROJECT COMPASSION SUNDAY REFLECTION WEEKEND OF 18-19 FEBRUARY 2023



LAXMI, NEPAL



PRISCILLA, ZIMBABWE

Yes is a wonderful word but it can be misused. People who live in fear often feel compelled to say yes because they are too frightened to say anything else. Even people who take on too much might find themselves getting tangled up because they feel they have to say yes to everything. Saying *no* might actually be a more genuine form of yes. Perhaps you need to say no to the expectations of others in order to truly say yes to life and to God. Scripture is full of people whose yes to God was confusing to others.

Today's readings ask us to think about the word yes. In the reading from the Book of Leviticus, we are asked to say yes to our neighbour. The reading from the letter to the Corinthians says that the wisdom of this world is foolishness to God. Our faith means saying yes to a very different approach to life. Finally, in Matthew's Gospel, Jesus tells us to forget about revenge, to stop our dog-eat-dog mentality, and to say yes to forgiveness and generosity. Indeed, we have to say yes to our enemies.

These are great readings to take with us into Lent, which starts this week with Ash Wednesday. Lent is the time of year during which we journey with Jesus towards the great yes he said with his whole being when he died on the cross. Jesus was prepared to say yes to his father, yes to life even if it meant death.

Lent is a time when we support the work of Caritas Australia in a special way through Project Compassion. Caritas Australia helps to empower some of our most marginal sisters and brothers; it embraces some demanding situations because it says yes to our neighbours.

The theme for Project Compassion is *For All Future Generations*. This year, that theme asks us to think about 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*. Hopefully, ours can be the same.

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION



We pray for the ability to understand that God's wisdom is greater than ours. May our support for Project Compassion enable us to join Mary in saying yes to God's plan of justice for the whole human family.