

REFLECTIONS AND PRAYERS

Project Compassion Sunday Weekend of March 1–2

There have been some advertisements on TV lately for a well-known optometrist. They show people getting into all sorts of funny mishaps because they went to the wrong place to get their glasses and can't see where they are going. They fall out of boats, fail to recognise their boss, wear the wrong clothes and so on.

Jesus wasn't joking when he speaks in today's Gospel about the blind leading the blind. Nor when he speaks about taking the plank out of your own eye before we worry about the splinter in someone else's. Clear sightedness means being able to see both yourself and the world for what we honestly are.

This Jubilee year calls us to a sharper vision. The theme, chosen by Pope Francis, is Pilgrims of Hope, a theme which asks us to see where we are going. You may have noticed the Jubilee emblem of people in a boat, facing the same direction, united in the face of whatever the sea throws at them.

During Lent, which starts with Ash Wednesday this week, we undertake our annual pilgrimage of hope towards Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Along the way, we will hear many reminders that we are called to a faith that does justice. Jesus did not shy away from the painful and difficult path the father asked of him to walk towards Calvary and ultimately Easter. He walked hand in hand with God.

We too may be called to a challenging journey. Many of us carry burdens with our families, our relationships, our jobs, our accommodation and so on. We are also called to help carry the cross of the most marginal members of God's family throughout the world. For generations, Project Compassion, organised by Caritas Australia, has helped us to do this.

Let us *Unite Against Poverty* as people of crystal-clear vision. Let us take to heart the words of St Paul, part of whose letter to the Corinthians we



Primary school students in Samoa at a school performance.

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hear today: 'Never give in then, dear brothers and sisters, never admit defeat; keep on working at the Lord's work always, knowing that, in the Lord, you cannot be labouring in vain.'



PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

We pray for the faith to see the whole world with the eyes of love, just as God does. As we prepare for Lent in this Year of Jubilee, may we open our eyes to the reality of the whole world and respond with compassionate hearts. We pray that Project Compassion will inspire us to *Unite Against Poverty*.