



Catherine Stace

Diocesan Director for Caritas

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Dear Fathers and Parish Pastoral Coordinator,

I wish to inform you that I have been appointed as the *new* **Diocesan Director** for **Caritas** in **Maitland-Newcastle**. I would like to introduce myself to you and to give you an outline of a few **2011 Project Compassion** details that might be of interest to you.

My name is **Catherine Stace** and just before Christmas 2010, I accepted an invitation from Bishop Michael Malone, to be the Maitland-Newcastle Diocesan Director for Caritas.

I am passionate about living life to the full and dedicate my time, energy and passion to many concurrent endeavours. I am married to Mark and a mum to two beautiful boys; Izaak (8) and Lucas (4). We currently live at Murrays Beach, south of Swansea. I am a parishioner in the Parish of East Lake Macquarie.

After completing high school at Gateshead and Hamilton, I undertook studies in Modern Languages and Education, gaining a Bachelor of Arts Degree, Diploma in Education and a Graduate Diploma in Educational Studies. After teaching fulltime with the NSW Department of Education for seven years, I worked in my 'dream job' as a primary school Religious Education Coordinator before starting a family. Whilst at home caring for my boys, I undertook further study by completing a Graduate Diploma in Religious Education, Diploma in Professional Writing (Editing and Proof-reading) and a Certificate IV in Pastoral Counselling. For the past 8 years I have been the proof-reader of *VocNet*, the quarterly Journal published by Catholic Vocations Ministry Australia. I have also been invited to assist with the proof-reading of our diocesan publication, *Aurora*. During the past two years I have returned to occasional casual teaching and am currently in my third year of the TWEC Diocesan Christian Formation Course.

I have been blessed to be surrounded by wonderful role models who have inspired me in my life choices and Church ministries. I began my journey in Parish Ministry at Charlestown while still in high school, through my involvement as Youth Coordinator, RCIA, Parish Council, Liturgy team, Sacramental team etc. I was selected by the parishioners to attend the Diocesan Synod and I then went on to be a foundational member of the Youth Commission and subsequently joined the Liturgy Commission. I come to the role of Diocesan Director feeling excited about the opportunity I have before me and open to where the Spirit may lead me in this ministry!

The theme for Project Compassion 2011 is ***Partnering together to make a difference***. I aspire to 'partner with you and your parish' to do the best we can to increase awareness, educate and raise valuable funds for the work of Caritas. All Project Compassion resource materials are available electronically this year. The kits contain posters, stories, bulletin notices, prayers, homily ideas and power point presentations, together with a DVD containing a 5 minute or 15 minute presentation for you to play at Masses on Project Compassion Sunday, 5/6 March. If you have any questions or concerns or need additional resources at any time, PLEASE contact me. Our diocesan **Project Compassion Launch** will be on **Tuesday 8th March** at **St Francis Xavier's College, Hamilton**. You are most welcome to attend and I will send you an invitation containing further details early February.

My role as Diocesan Director is to support, educate and liaise with parishes, schools and community groups, promoting Caritas Australia and its ministry in aid and development, especially through the major annual Lenten appeal of Project Compassion.

In order to maximise effective channels of communication, increase awareness of the profile and work of Caritas and expand donation possibilities, I would like to create a Parish contact database and would like to ask you to nominate a Project Compassion/Caritas Parish Representative with whom I could liaise in conjunction with you and your Parish Secretary. I have attached a sample invitation for your Parish Bulletin and Notice board or you may know of someone already who has an interest in and passion for this ministry. I would appreciate if you could 'plant the seed', and 'ask around' as soon as you can and let me know the contact details of 'the chosen one or two' (the more the merrier!) as soon as possible to maximise the impact and efforts of Project Compassion 2011 in your parish.

Our diocese has a strong history of generosity toward Project Compassion and the work of Caritas Australia. I look forward to meeting each one of you personally and 'partnering with you' to highlight and strengthen the great work and valuable contribution that Caritas Australia makes both here and abroad.

Yours sincerely,

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