

The three types of Catholic Social Teaching are; firstly, Preferential protection for the poor and vulnerable – this means that we should always be thoughtful about the poor and look after people who cannot afford to look after themselves. They are also humans like us and should never feel neglected by our actions. As Matt 19: 16-22 quotes “Jesus tells a rich young man that eternal life will be his if he sells his possessions and gives money to the poor”. This simply tells us that the more we sacrifice by providing food, shelter and necessities to the poor, the more we will be blessed. ①

Secondly, Participation – Every person has the right to be involved and contribute in the society, for the well-being of all. This means that everyone has the right to work, be educated and participate in politics. One should never be left out but all should work together to sustain. For example, we work to fulfil our family’s basic need so no one has to suffer and be educated to have a better future and gain success in life. It has been written in the bible that, “Jesus urges these who are well off to invite the poor, cripples, the lame and the blind to their banquets” Luke 14: 12-13. We are all the children of Jesus; no one is rich or poor, smart or dumb, crippled or normal or even blind. If the eyes of God, we all are equal and therefore one should never be left out, every person’s opinion should be valued. ①

The third Catholic Social Teaching is Universal Destinations of goods. It means that whatever the earth has produced is intended for everyone. Everything has been provided by God for the benefit of all and it is our responsibility to ensure that all have enough to live in dignity. It would be selfish act for a rich person to buy everything and let the poor get nothing. For example, while picking fruits from a tree one should always take an amount that they are capable of eating and leave the rest for others. Another example could be that while buying a piece of land we should not be greedy to own a huge piece of land, which may cause others to have no shelter. It has been said by Luke 5: 29-32 that “Jesus eats with tax collectors and sinners causing the scribes and Pharisees to complain”. ①

The Gospel values of faith, hope and love underpin everything Caritas does. Caritas has helped a number of developing countries, particularly the Solomon Islands. As listed here, Preferential protection for the poor and vulnerable – the Caritas team began a project in the diocese of Auki for providing clean water to approximately 1,500 residents. There’s only one pipe that serves several communities; 30% do not have access to clean water whereas the other 70% of Solomon Islanders do not have access to adequate sanitation facilities which could lead to having risks of deadly diseases such as diarrhoea and malaria. There was originally a system constructed in 1970 and it required a lot of repairing to be done. In this case, we see that the people residing in that community may not have enough financial support to get the water distribution system repaired and therefore Caritas Australia got the system refurbished and also supported the WASH (Water and Sanitation and Hygiene) education programme in the diocese of Auki in the Solomon Islands. This step was taken to help the poor by providing clean water and educate the residents about unclean water and inadequate sanitation. ②