

# Compassionate and Loving

Learning objectives:

- Describe what is meant by the Catholic virtues **compassionate** and **loving**
- Explain how we might practise these virtues
- Identify how others in our Archdiocese are being **compassionate** and **loving**

**Compassionate:** We are compassionate when we feel sympathy and concern for other people who are in difficulty, whether they are near to us or far away.

**Loving:** We are loving when we show our sympathy and concern for other people by our actions and by our words.

## **Key stage 1: How are we compassionate people?**

How do we show compassion and concern for the rest of our class?

*Example answers: We can notice when someone is upset instead of ignoring them. We can try to understand what the problem is by listening to them. We can be a good friend just by being there.*

Write a prayer asking God to help us to be compassionate towards our friends and family, every day of our lives.

## A Prayer for Compassion

Lord God,

You are full of compassion and love for us, your children. Help us to be compassionate to our classmates at school and our family at home, so that we can reflect God's love in our lives.

Amen





### **Key stage 1: Circle time or activity**

Who knows what being **loving** means?

Talk about how we all know what it is to be loved. But how do we show love to each other?

Being loving to people around us doesn't always seem like an easy choice. Why is it sometimes hard for us to be loving in our words and actions?

Sometimes we might feel tired or upset. God still wants us to love those around us. This might mean forgiving someone if they have hurt us. Or we might not know people around us very well. We still need to be loving to them.

*One of the projects that Father Hudson's Care supports is Hope Community Project in Heath Town, Wolverhampton. This project was started up to help the people living on the big city estate, some of whom were very lonely and sad.*

*Regularly, workers and volunteers from Hope go round the estate, knocking on people's doors to say "Hello" and tell them the project is there for them.*

*In this way, Hope is a loving place of welcome and help for people who might not find love anywhere else.*

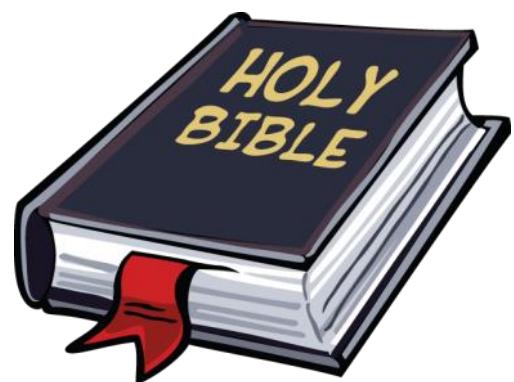
How could you use your gifts to be loving to others?

*Example: Forgive someone who hurt you; be nice to someone who is feeling sad; give time or money to charity.*

**What does the Bible say about being loving?** Read some of St Paul's First Letter to the people of Corinth, set out for you here. Can you make a list of the important things that St Paul was teaching the Corinthians about being loving?

### **The characteristics of love (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)**

**Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.**



#### **Key stage 2: activity 1**

“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts” (Psalm 139:23)

Why is **compassion** important?

*The meaning of compassion, coming from Latin, is 'co-suffering' and it involves feeling sympathy, concern or pity for another person. Being compassionate is a very powerful thing as it gives us the insight to understand, feel and share others' suffering and pain.*

*Being compassionate can give us courage to help others, it can motivate us to change the world for the better, and it can help us to see the world the way others do.*

Individually, write a prayer asking God for a deeper sense of compassion for those around you, and for the courage to show compassion when it is perhaps difficult or embarrassing to do so.

## Key stage 2: activity 2

We all have people around us in our daily lives who love us. Our families at home give us love and encouragement, they also give us the things we need like food and warm beds. Father Hudson's Care runs a place called St Catherine's Bungalows, where it looks after people who are unable to live with their own families because they have profound, complex disabilities affecting every area of their lives. It might mean that they need help to wash and dress themselves, help to feed themselves, help with getting about and using a wheelchair, and even help to talk and communicate with other people. At St Catherine's Bungalows these people are given all this help every single day. The Bungalows are happy places where those people who live there are helped by their carers to live life to the full – go swimming, go horse-riding, go shopping, even go on holiday – all with lots and lots of help, and lots of laughter and fun along the way.



*People in St Catherine's Bungalows are supported to live life by Father Hudson's Care staff.*

How does the work at St Catherine's show **loving** taking place?

*Those who live at St Catherine's Bungalows receive help and care from their carers every single day. The carers are not related to the residents, but they are motivated by love to help in every possible way to make the lives of the residents as fulfilled and happy as possible.*

Individually or in pairs, consider: do I know anyone who needs some extra help? If so, how can I practically offer my help so that I can be loving towards them? Have I ever been to a care home, perhaps for older people, or for younger people like St Catherine's? If you go to one with your school in future, think about how you can be loving during your visit – for example, smiling at a resident, being polite, talking to someone to brighten up their day.

## Key stage 2: activity 3

### The Sixth Station of the Cross: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

Do you enjoy looking at the Stations of the Cross inside our churches? Have you ever noticed how each Catholic church has them? They are always different from church to church, but always show the same 14 'stations,' or stages, on Jesus' journey to his crucifixion and death.

In the sixth station, Veronica wipes the face of Jesus. Veronica was an ordinary woman, watching with many others as Jesus passed through the city of Jerusalem on that first Good Friday, carrying his cross and making his painful way to the hill where he was to die.

How did Veronica feel as she watched Jesus pass by? What prompted her to rush out from her place in the crowd and wipe Jesus' face? Do you think she had planned to do this, or was it an impulsive action?

*Example: In Veronica's actions we see both **compassion and love** demonstrated perfectly. She must have felt sorry for Jesus who was weak and suffering so much already, with blood and sweat pouring down his face. She must have felt she needed to do something – anything – to help, no matter how small.*

We don't need to leave the virtues of being compassionate and loving to the people we read of in the Bible and those living in Jesus' time. Every day, we can show in small ways – just like Veronica did – that we can be compassionate and loving. Sometimes a tiny act of compassion and love can be a huge help to someone, more than we may ever know.

#### Biblical inspiration:

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Luke 6: 32–37         | 'Love your enemies, do good and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great...'  |
| Psalm 103: 9–14       | 'As a father has compassion for his children, so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him.' |
| Lamentations 3: 22–23 | 'The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end.'                  |
| Luke 10: 27–37        | Parable of the Good Samaritan   |

### **A Prayer of Compassion (St Teresa of Calcutta)**

Lord, open our eyes  
that we may see you in our brothers and sisters.  
Lord, open our ears  
that we may hear the cries of the hungry,  
the cold, the frightened, the oppressed.  
Lord, open our hearts  
that we may love each other as you love us.  
Renew in us your spirit.  
Lord, free us and make us one.

Amen.



Father Hudson's Care is your local Catholic charity, supporting people in need across the Archdiocese of Birmingham. Father Hudson's staff and volunteers give their time and skills to help older people, disabled people, homeless people, refugees, people who are lonely, and children and young people who are experiencing difficulties. Father Hudson's Care is grateful to everyone who supports them, because it means they can reach out and help more people in need.

Students from Hagley Catholic High School  
donate gifts to St Catherine's Day Service



## Compassionate and Loving

A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.  
John 13:34-35

Father  
**Hudson's**  
Care