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### THE STARFISH

One day a man was walking along the beach when he noticed a figure in the distance.

As he got closer he realized the figure was

that of a boy  
picking something up

and gently throwing it into the ocean.

Approaching the boy, he asked, "What are you doing?"

The youth replied, "Throwing starfish back in the ocean. The sun is up and the tide is

going out. If I don't throw them in, they will die."

"Son," the man said, "Don't you realize there are miles and miles of beach and hundreds of starfish?"

You can't possibly make a difference!"

After listening politely, the boy bent down, picked up another starfish, and threw it into the surf.

Then smiling at the man, he said,

"I made a difference for that one!"

It will be a good thing for us to be going around too, making a difference to starfish...

even if it is only to one of them at a time!

They are all around us - beached starfish.

And with the sun coming up and the tide running out they might need a little help to get them back to where they belong to.... to become again what they are meant to be.

Beached starfish in schools and colleges ,  
beached starfish in hospitals, old-age homes  
and institutions, beached starfish sometimes  
in our neighborhoods, beached starfish  
sometimes in our own homes....

It may not take much of our time and effort but  
it can make a real difference... and the ocean  
and tides can make them come fully alive  
again.

Thanks to our compassion and caring.

It could happen to one of us as well. At some crisis point of our lives we might just find ourselves beached for whatever reason. And with the sun coming up and the tide running out on uncertain shores we might be at a risk of losing ourselves.

Someone might then come along and help us get back to where we belong and we will have yet another chance of living again!

We are all sometimes compassionate young men and women. And we are all sometimes starfish on frightening shores.

Our compassion and caring will make us whole again.

Welcome to a better world that each one of us can make happen...

even if it is for only one starfish at a time!

Contributed by Fr. T. Quadros, s.j.