

Jesuit Mission News

#618 Autumn 2017

Stronger through companionship: From our CEO

Greetings in this, our first newsletter in 2017. This will be one of many Jesuit Mission communications this year updating you about our work, and the way your support has enabled us to help poor and marginalised communities build the skills, capacity and resilience to live full and free lives.

I had the privilege of visiting Jesuit works in Myanmar, Thailand and India recently. I witnessed our Jesuit partners serving at the frontiers of society, daring to go where others do not. They work in some of the most challenging situations: slums in Myanmar; prisons and detention centres in Thailand; and remote villages in India. In each mission, the Jesuits accompany and empower God's most vulnerable among us.



In Myanmar, I met Ricci (left, back row), the young man whose story we shared in our Christmas appeal. Educated by the

Jesuits, Ricci went on to complete law studies. He was delighted to receive your messages of love, faith and hope, and is holding some of them in the photo.

I have learnt in abundance on this trip that the Jesuits do not work alone. They work with many companions, religious Sisters among them. Sr Britto is a Holy Cross Sister and long-time collaborator with the Jesuits in India's Hazaribag Province. The photo on the right shows her with me at the construction site of a hostel and school for children and young people affected by HIV/AIDS. Through your financial support Jesuit Mission helped to fund the hostel construction - learn more on page 2.

In this edition, you can read about how your generosity is assisting forced migrants, refugees and displaced people in Malawi and Zimbabwe. Also learn about our five-year strategic framework and find out how to get involved with Jesuit Mission.

I have seen first-hand how grateful our Jesuit partners are for the solidarity and generosity of Jesuit Mission supporters like you. You are our and their community companions, or, as Ignatius would say, our 'friends in the Lord'. Our Rector's message highlights the value and strength of your companionship.

**Thank you
Helen Forde, CEO, Jesuit Mission**



Fr Trung Nguyen SJ
Rector of Jesuit Mission

Partnership with others: Reflection from our Rector

Saint Ignatius is renowned as the founder and first superior of the Society of Jesus, but it was a group of men who formed the Society of Jesus, and we often refer to them as the 'First Companions'.

A Jesuit way of proceeding is to be in partnership with others, engaging in authentic and mutually transformative relationships.

Even from the beginning, St Ignatius recognised that in order to better serve God and humanity, he could not do so alone, but required friends to support him and his works, and companions to labour with him for the Kingdom of God. Together, Ignatius and his companions formed a very special bond, and they called themselves 'friends in the Lord'. This bond of friendship was struck due to their love of Jesus, their passion and zeal to save souls, and a deep desire to serve God and neighbour. They saw themselves as companions because they wanted to be part of this same vision and mission.

A companion is one with whom we journey, and share a common goal and purpose. Since the 1950s, Jesuit Mission has been very blessed with countless companions, sharing with us a common ideal to "proclaim the good news to the poor, and liberty to those oppressed". It is precisely because of this companionship that we have seen thousands of children given a proper education, and many families empowered to cast off the yoke of poverty.

All of you are Jesuit Mission's priceless companions, and for this we are very grateful, and pray that we will continually grow stronger as companions in the service of faith and the promotion of justice.

“God is love – all things can be done with and through love.”

Christmas 2016 message from a Jesuit Mission supporter



Students at Snehadeep Residential School (see below) recently won a dance competition, and proudly received awards from the District Administration of Hazaribag.

To live a dignified life

In 2016, thanks to our generous supporters, Jesuit Mission assisted a partner in India working to help people marginalised by HIV and AIDS.

HIV and AIDS impact over 7 million children in India – some are AIDS orphans, and others are either sick themselves or live in poverty with infected parents.

Tarwa in Hazaribag is home to outcaste communities, India's most marginalised people. The Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross in Tarwa realised that poverty and the stigma of HIV/AIDS were preventing many local children from attending school.

"In May 2014 we decided to open Snehadeep Residential School (SRS) to serve the neediest children of HIV infected parents," said Sr Britto, a former Provincial Superior of Holy Cross, to "give affected children their rights to ... education, good health and vocational training, to live a dignified life."

SRS offers regular lessons, yoga, karate, games and dance, counselling, and medical and nutrition support. Eight-year-old student Kumar, who has HIV like his parents, reports that the Sisters have supported his family with *"three pigs to rear so we can improve our economic condition."* School has changed his life: *"I improved my health drastically. Before I used to go school irregularly; now I attend happily. I want to become a Police Officer."*

The school has had only temporary premises, but soon will be able to accommodate 100 children with permanent living, educational and study spaces. A school and hostel are being built on donated land with the help of funds from supporters, including the Jesuit Mission community. The hostel is near completion - see the photo on page 1.

Sr Britto says, *"From Jesuit Mission we received help for the building and also for the children's education; without this we couldn't achieve what we are doing now."*

Strategic framework

Men and women for others

At the end of 2016, we finalised a framework that sets out Jesuit Mission's strategic directions for the next five years and outlined our activity and resource focus. Each year this framework will be reviewed to respond to changing circumstances.

What will remain constant, however, is our vision, mission and way of proceeding.

We will be guided by the richness and depth of Ignatian spirituality to realise our vision of faith, justice and reconciliation for a full and free life for all. We will enter into relationships of mutuality and accompaniment with the poor. We will continue to be nourished by the faithful companionship of Jesuits, supporters, volunteers, schools

(Jesuit and Companion), parishes and other Jesuit networks across Australia.

We will partner with Jesuits and other companions overseas to empower women, men and children living on the frontiers to liberate themselves from poverty and injustice through participation in programs that build skills, capacity and resilience to live full and free lives.

“Our shared faith and love of Jesus compels us into authentic relationships and the spirit of Ignatius guides us to be men and women for others.”

Jesuit Mission 2017



In 2017 we are supporting 27 projects, in 10 countries in Asia and Africa: Timor-Leste, Myanmar, Cambodia, Thailand, Vietnam, India, South Africa, Malawi, Zimbabwe and Angola.

In selecting our 2017 funding commitments, we prioritised projects that:

- Promote and protect the rights of people in the greatest need, the most vulnerable to poverty and injustice.
- Show a clear preferential love for the poor.
- Have a significant number of beneficiaries, and enable beneficiaries to help many more people.
- Strengthen communities – through education, vocational and livelihood training, support with agriculture and social inclusion, and access to basic rights (food, water, shelter and healthcare).

Read stories about participants in the programs your gifts support, and more about our strategic framework, at www.jesuitmission.org.au

An article by
David Holdcroft SJ

Helping to create a future

Fr David Holdcroft SJ at Luwani camp, near Mwanza, Southern Malawi, with young Mozambican refugees. Fr David recently completed six years of service as Director of Jesuit Refugee Service, Southern Africa (JRS).

Many bad things happen in this world, the causes and circumstances of which we are powerless to control. We can, however, choose how to respond – to sit with our feelings of hopelessness or anger or to try to transform a situation.

Ignatius says: "Love ought to find its expression in deeds, more than in words". Ignatian spirituality always leads towards action.

JRS Southern Africa works in a region whose 11 countries host about 2.5 million forced migrants; around 50,000 live in camps. To help these displaced people manage their new environment and build a new future, JRS offers counselling, and education at all levels.

Education helps build futures, not just through the building and running of schools but also through vocational training and the provision of micro grants to start businesses. It also helps people live in the present and integrate their past, particularly young people – going to school gives a structure to the day in the midst of often chaotic circumstances.

Last year in Southern Africa JRS programs reached around 35,000 refugee families. This included:

- 6,000 students reached through JRS primary and secondary schools in Dzaleka Camp, Malawi

- Vocational training and business start-ups for over 400 people in Tongogara Camp in Zimbabwe
- Training in vocational skills and business start-up for 480 people at Dzaleka refugee camp, Malawi

The people helped are all kinds – from professional classes or a rural village, a few old people, and many young people, like "Odette", pictured at the right in the photo, currently in Year 8 in the primary school in Malawi. She is profoundly sight-impaired and started school late as there was neither Braille nor other integration facilities in camp at the time. Once these were introduced to the school in 2013, she began learning – and a mere two years later topped her class. That means she was top of some 850 students! As well as talented, she is extraordinarily highly motivated.

Odette was a participant in a project funded by you, the supporters of Jesuit Mission Australia. In giving financial support you are enabling the action that Ignatius talks about: without you we simply could not do the work and would not have met so many wonderful people like Odette.



The people we are working with I found to be people of faith, people who want to have hope in their future! The projects we run are not "ours" – rather we join them in their projects, responding to their invitation to help build their lives and their futures.

I am immensely grateful to all of you for your sustained encouragement, counsel, accompaniment, and donations extended to the region's work over these last six years in which I was director, and also to other JRS regions.

“ May Jesus Christ be with you in your work for human dignity. ”

Jesuit Mission supporter,
December 2016

Community in a meaningful, shared vision

We thank our many generous donors and volunteers for supporting us in 2016. Thanks to all the schools, parishes and community groups and the countless individuals who organised and ran highly successful fundraising events to support the work of our Jesuit Missionaries: the Indian Bazaar, Maytime Fair, Old Xaverians Raffle, Golf and Card days, concerts and Parish Appeals. We were also honoured to have many valuable volunteer helpers in our office.

In early 2017 it is already evident that there is goodwill and support from across the community. **Thank you.**

Make a donation

The insert in this newsletter contains a donation form. This will enable you to support the work of Jesuit Mission as we empower the most vulnerable people to develop skills and resilience to live full and free lives.

Maytime Fair Car Raffle

Maytime Fair is coming up! See column 2. Want to buy raffle tickets for the Fair, and have the chance of winning a new car?

See the insert in this newsletter, or buy online at www.trybooking.com/onax

If you have any queries about making a donation or buying raffle tickets, please email donorservices@jesuitmission.org.au or phone (02) 8918 4109.

“Yours are the hands that do the work for those of us back in Australia. I am honoured to play a part in this through prayers and financial support.”

Jesuit Mission supporter, message to the Jesuit Missionaries in December 2016

Your invitation to connect with us this year



Maytime Fair – 6 May 2017, Melbourne

Join us in Melbourne for a day of fun – food, stalls, rides, and activities for kids. We welcome donations for Fair stalls: old coins, stamps, jewellery and books. Thanks for the wonderful donations of coins and stamps already received. Donations can be posted to or dropped off at 130 Power Street, Hawthorn, Victoria, 3124.

Please support this Jesuit Mission fundraising event, kindly hosted by Xavier College, at Barkers Road, Kew, for the past 65 years.

Volunteers at Maytime Fair 2016

For last year's volunteers, the Fair meant:

**“Community in a meaningful,
shared vision.”**

**“Catching up and reconnecting
with people.”**

“Family, sunshine, community.”



Volunteers at Maytime Fair 2016.

Build a friendship

You can support our fundraisers by helping with events, attending events in your state, sending donations of goods or supporting events financially. You can also volunteer in our office.

To be welcomed as a community companion of Jesuit Mission, contact engagement@jesuitmission.org.au or phone (02) 8918 4109.

Melbourne Golf Day 24 March 2017

It's not too late to attend a fun fundraising event, Jesuit Mission's golf day in Melbourne at Greenacres Golf Club.

Three options for registration:

- Go online at www.trybooking.com/OJLE
- Email at golfday@jesuitmission.org.au
- Phone our office on **02 8918 4109**

Parish appeals

Please look out for a Jesuit Mission Parish Appeal in your State.

NSW: 20/21 May – Parishes of Our Lady of the Way (North Sydney, Kirribilli and Lavender Bay)

QLD: 17/18 June – St Ignatius, Toowong

VIC: 22/23 July – Immaculate Conception, Hawthorn

We will announce other appeals soon.



You can read more about us at jesuitmission.org.au

Recent reads on our website:

A blog honouring Fr Bernie Donnelly SJ, one of the first Australian Jesuits in India, on his passing.

Our **Share Your Heart** Appeal.



The Ron Dyer Centre, Level 1, 42 Ridge Street, North Sydney 2060



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