

Reflections

Our actions in review

Issue #622 Summer 2018

Your generosity is
enriching lives and inspiring hope.



Reflecting on our Mission

Warmest greetings. I invite you to join me in a precious moment of reflection. Such reflection is integral to the teachings of St Ignatius. It frees us, and prompts us to join with God in active work in the world.

In this issue, we share stories of what your active decision to live generously has achieved. You have brought joy and promise into the lives of people who are just like us, but who face the daily challenges of poverty and discrimination.

We have updates from Jesuit Mission partners' agricultural projects in Cambodia, re-integration services for released prisoners in Thailand, and educational breakthroughs for children in India made possible by donors like yourself.

I am constantly inspired how your love and support brings about structural change for compassion and justice across the world.

With thanks,

Helen Forde

Helen Forde
Chief Executive Officer
Jesuit Mission

Honouring Joshua

In honour of their grandson, Joshua, who lives with significant disability caused by cerebral palsy, an Australian couple has chosen to respond with love. They have directed this love into fundraising for the "Joshua Children's Home", and as a result have changed lives forever in faraway Liyai, India.



Thirty children from the impoverished Poumai tribe of North-East India have been given a brand new start. Thanks to Jesuit Mission's partner they are the first to live in the newly built Joshua Home. More than just a place to live, The Joshua Home gives them access to an education. The students are carefully selected, and some have lost one or more parent. At the Joshua Home, they receive free uniforms, books and board.

Born in remote villages with no functioning systems of communication, transport, health care or education; opportunities are few.

And there are simply no schools nearby.

The Joshua Home is built close to the Convent of the Ursuline Franciscan Sisters, under whose care the children will live. It is hoped as more funds are found, that up to 80 children will be able to begin their education here. Many will be girls as it is recognised that a woman helps educate her family.

"Many parents in these villages, themselves illiterate, are eager to ensure that their children receive the benefits of education they were not fortunate enough to have." said Project Manager, Fr Hector D' Souza SJ.



1. A photo of Joshua hangs in the classroom as inspiration to students and in tribute to the Fernandes family, who have been involved with the Jesuits for six generations. **2.** Construction of the Joshua Home was not easy. Many hands dug foundations, mixed mortar, and cut boulders to size.

Reaping the Seeds of Change

Thanks to your support, the lives of subsistence farmers in Cambodia are now full of promise.

Do you recall the story of Mrs Vanny who literally jumped for joy and shouted “Sabai”, which means “happy”? Her enthusiasm was due to trying a new method of rice farming.

Instead of direct broadcasting, or planting clumps of seedlings, farmers transplant individual seedlings. This simple method can triple the rice harvest for small landholders like Mrs Vanny. Invented by a Jesuit priest, the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) needs far fewer seeds, half the usual water and no chemicals at all.

In the meantime, Jesuit Mission's local partner, Karuna Battambang Organisation, are planning to introduce the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) to seven more communities. Farmer's Groups, Women's Groups and Youth Groups will be invited to the farm with a view to introducing SRI on their farms in 2019. In due course, as the yields increase, storerooms and new weeding machines will be needed.

Now your generosity is doing even more.

With your support, a Demonstration Farm has been created near a main road in the Prefecture of Battambang. Here passing farmers can see results for themselves.

Bold plans are underway for a marketing outlet and café, which will promote SRI, provide a centre for sales, and reduce transport costs to market. Watch the foundations being built beside the farm here: jesuitmission.org.au/program/croap



Project Consultant, Br Noel Oliver SJ says “Our hope is that farmers ... will have the courage to try it out on a small part of their fields and see the difference. That will be the motivating force. Seeing is believing. The marketing outlet will help the farmers get a better outlet for their organic produce. The whole family benefits”.

1. After just one harvest, Mrs Vanny was able to build a new house and provide bathroom facilities for her family. **2.** In September 2018, we see tilling and transplanting on Mrs Vanny's rice plot. **3.** The same field in October 2018. Mrs Vanny's seedlings have grown thicker and taller than those on neighbouring fields.

Love brings change in Thailand

Your generosity is clearly helping vulnerable people in Thailand. Our CEO and International Programs Manager witnessed children in refugee camps benefitting from classes and community building. They also visited with released prisoners who receive support as they become proficient in agricultural and life skills.



1. Emmaus House has a fully sustainable farm where freed prisoners propagate over 25 crops including coffee, eggplant, bitter melon and papaya.

2. Kep Vilaiwan 'Kep' Phokthavi, (right), Director of Jesuit Foundation-Prison Ministry, and her colleague bring this couple (centre) welcome news of their son, faraway in prison. The Ministry also works to uphold the dignity of prisoners and educate their young children. 3. Children in their classroom at a refugee camp. Jesuit Mission's partner Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) delivers education, enrichment classes and teacher training to over 4,000 refugees. Most of the residents have fled from fighting in Myanmar. Many are born in the camp, where the average stay is 22 years. 4. As well as pastoral services, home visits and practical help, Jesuit Mission's partners have created Family Friendship Groups in the refugee camp. These groups discuss a myriad of challenges, and plan community projects for self-reliance. 5. Emmaus House, supported by an Australian donor, provides a transitional housing program for newly released prisoners.



Faith and Culture

**Reflection by Fr Trung Nguyen SJ,
Rector of Jesuit Mission**

**Australia is a country
that celebrates
multiculturalism, and is
proud that our cultural
diversity enriches our life.**

Similarly, Jesuit Mission could boast of its cultural diversity. Not just with the 12 countries that we support internationally, but with the number of Indians, Chinese, Koreans and Vietnamese who are our friends and support us in our mission to serve the most vulnerable.

On Friday 26th October 2018, more than 460 Vietnamese Catholics from Melbourne gathered at a fundraising dinner to support a project in Vietnam that Jesuit Mission is funding. Their presence is a sure sign of solidarity with and encouragement for the works of the Jesuits in serving the poor. The songs and dances as part



Vietnamese Catholic community rejoiced with song and dance at a fundraising dinner in late October 2018 to benefit the Hanoi Social Pastoral Centre.

of the entertainment are a celebration of their culture. Their joyful generosity is an expression of their faith and desire to build community.

All that I could say is that I am very humbled and grateful for the generous support of the Vietnamese community, and for the many other communities that support us in so many ways.

In this corporate world, people tend to measure success through monetary values. For me I would like to measure success through the growth in friendships and communities, and especially in the increase of faith, hope, and love, in everyone's heart.

**With blessings and gratitude
Fr Trung Nguyen SJ**

Reclaiming Dignity

Like almost everyone in the refugee camps in Thailand, Nan and her sister Suu struggle to support themselves.

They are not allowed to create a business within the camp. It is illegal to leave the camp to sell their handcrafts or to seek employment. Anyone not lucky enough to be employed by international agencies must rely on handouts of food. Undeterred, these sisters embarked upon a way to raise money.

With your support, the sisters joined a program run by our local partner and implemented by local leaders. They borrowed 1,000 baht (AUD\$43) and

bought a piglet. After managing to feed and house the piglet into adulthood, they sold it for 3,000 baht. Over 30 other people are doing the same.

In a place with scant hope of returning home nor of being resettled, this strike for independence provides some security and pride.

Through education services, pastoral care and accompaniment, your support is also sustaining the spiritual and social wellbeing of many more in the camp.



Nan and Suu are now raising three pigs as a way to earn money.

Generosity and joy at the Indian Bazaar

Thank you to the many parents, students and friends who participated energetically to make the 67th annual event a great success.

We are so grateful to St Ignatius' College, Riverview for graciously hosting this gala event once again. The Bazaar provides a way for those of us in Sydney to stand in solidarity with people overseas who live with the daily injustices of poverty and discrimination.

Visiting Alma nuns, Sisters Anastasia and Gertrudis from Timor-Leste sample the gelato at the Indian Bazaar. In orange aprons are our superlative volunteers (and also co-ordinators of the 2018 Card Day) Ruth Tighe and Jo Manion.



Thank you Sawtell

For walking in solidarity with villagers in Cambodia.

Fr Colin Reinhard is from a very special parish: Mary Help of Christians Catholic Church in Sawtell. Members of this Parish near Coffs Harbour travelled to Cambodia in June 2018, where they donated money they had raised to Projects run by Jesuit Mission Partners.

During this visit they could see how much more was needed.

They were inspired to fundraise for several more projects. They have since supported the "Peace Café" in Phnom Penh. This unique café supports artisans with a disability.

They funded the building of a much-needed rice storage facility for villagers near Pursat as part of the System of Rice Intensification (SRI, see page 3).

They also raised funds to train people in communications and social media, and to build a

multi-purpose building at Peak Snaeng Chas.

But the greatest hit were the 30 soccer balls they gave out in villages and facilities run by the Jesuits.

"It was as if we had given them a million dollars" said Fr Colin.

Sawtell Parish is a great example of how grass-roots fundraising and faith can create change. Why not do the same in your parish?



Drop us a line!

Please fill out the enclosed feedback form with your stories and thoughts. Your reasons for caring about Jesuit Mission inspire us to do more.

Please send all letters to:



support@jesuitmission.org.au



PO Box 193, North Sydney 2059
(or use the Reply Paid Envelope)

Robin Tarlinton and Anne Moore are long time volunteers at the Jesuit Mission office in North Sydney. For offering their skills and time, we can't thank them enough.

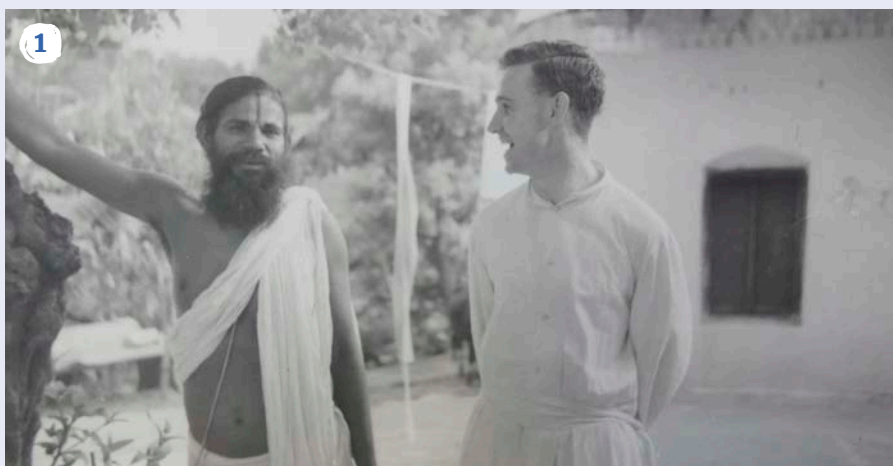
A lifetime Pilgrimage

In Sydney recently, Fr Bob Slattery SJ was asked if he was glad to be visiting home.

His answer was unexpected: "Well, to tell you the truth, I'm a little bit homesick for India".

Fr Bob was just a young man of 23 years when he left all that was familiar in Australia, boarded a ship and sailed into a future he would devote to a lifetime of service. Service to Jesuit Mission, to God, and to being one with the Dalits and tribal people with whom he lives and works. In the process, he has not lost a home, but home has become India.

Father Bob's focus from the outset was education. Only two days after he arrived in India he was teaching at St. Xavier's School. His career would blossom to encompass a Master of Education Degree at Delhi University, becoming the headmaster of several schools and holding a number of academic and strategic roles.



1: Father Bob Slattery SJ with Holy Man in India circa 1957. **2:** Fr Santosh Minj SJ, the Provincial Superior of Hazaribag, India and Fr Bob Slattery SJ in Sydney, September 2018.

From small beginnings, teaching a handful of students in the open air, the Jesuits now educate 27,000 students each year in Hazaribag alone. Being instrumental in achieving this phenomenon of education has been just one of Fr Bob's many challenges as he sought to address social injustice.

Now aged 84, and the Hazaribag Province Development Director, Fr Bob has shaped the lives of thousands. His life has truly embodied a mission of Ignatian spirituality.

Learning for the love of others

Young men and women are training to be leaders, to guide others in faith and education towards better futures.

Second year students, Monica and James (right) are filled with gratitude for the difference you have made in their lives. As two of the 30 recipients of diploma scholarships that Jesuit Mission supports in St Luke's College in Myitkyina, Myanmar, they now aspire to meaningful careers helping others.

Monica has already worked in gender education programs in the crowded Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps where she lives with her family. This work safeguards

young, unskilled women vulnerable to trafficking.

Based in Kachin State, St Luke's College currently has 88 students from across the war-torn State. Program manager, Jesuit Priest Fr Santiago Girish SJ says: *"This particular college prepares students for the frontiers. There are still many places in Kachin state where there is no power and no light. Half the people live deep in the thick forest, the other half live in community settlements."*

In 2011, the 16-year ceasefire in Myanmar failed, and an influx of refugees has meant 120,000 people now crowd into 200 camps.



Monica and James want to provide hope for others in the crowded camps where so many live.

Updates and upcoming events

So much of the work we do is a collaboration with supporters like you.

We thank everyone who has participated in our events this year, and all the volunteers who have so open-heartedly given their time. Their energy and love have come together to make a difference in the lives of those they may never meet, but whose lives are transformed by their kindness.



Maytime Fair

Kew, Saturday 4th May 2019.

Thousands of Victorians are expected to attend the 68th Maytime Fair at Xavier College in Kew. Please join us in this community-wide expression of faith and solidarity with vulnerable families living in poverty. Past Chair of the Maytime Fair Committee, Ms Jo Bell said *"Each year, we are in awe at the quality of produce, entertainment and creativity by all friends of Jesuit Mission in the various stalls and attractions."*



Ruth Tighe, coordinator of Card Day in October 2018, said *"There was a lovely atmosphere in the room, one of happiness, generosity and gratitude. It could not have been a better day."*

Dates for your diary

Melbourne Golf Day will be held on 15th March 2019 at Green Acres Golf Club, 51 Elm Grove, Kew.

Maytime Fair will be held on 4th May 2019, at Xavier College, Kew.

St Ignatius' Day Mass and Morning Tea will be held on 31st July 2019, at the Ron Dyer Centre, 42 Ridge St North Sydney.

For information on any of the above events, go to the events page of our website, jesuitmission.org.au. Bookings can be made through the website closer to the event dates.

To discuss sponsorship opportunities email: events@jesuitmission.org.au or phone Meg Morrison on 8918 4121.

If you would like a speaker to visit your Parish, email: support@jesuitmission.org.au



Front cover picture: Education with a heart is taught at a refugee camp in Thailand.

Pope Francis said "Education involves the whole person, not just the head. I have said it many times, and here I repeat it: there is the language of the head, but there is also the language of the heart, of feelings. We need to educate the heart....Ignatius was a great educator of feelings. And this must be the way of education."

Contact us:



Ron Dyer Centre, Level 1, 42 Ridge St, North Sydney, NSW 2060



PO Box 193 North Sydney 2059



02 8918 4109



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support@jesuitmission.org.au

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Overseas Aid Fund
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