

Reflections

Our actions in review

Issue #621 Winter 2018

Your solidarity is
bringing hope to disaster-affected
communities.





Reflecting on our mission

Warmest greetings. I am excited to share with you our latest newsletter, which has been renamed *Reflections*. As an Ignatian ministry in action, taking a moment to pause for reflection has always been an important part of discerning how we can best serve our marginalised sisters and brothers.

In this edition we focus on the works of emergency relief for communities devastated by disasters. Often they have already been living in poverty and experiencing injustice before the disaster, and these events push them into further despair. The emergency responses of the Jesuits and their companions are only possible through the love and generosity of people like you. On behalf of our partners, I extend my gratitude to you for being with our brothers and sisters during their time of need.

I also offer my warmest thanks to everyone who responded to our Supporter Survey. Jesuit Mission is truly blessed to be surrounded by such engaged and passionate companions in mission.

With thanks,

Helen Forde
Chief Executive Officer
Jesuit Mission



A symbol of hope in Kachin State

With support from people like you, the Jesuits have served and accompanied the people of Myanmar (previously known as Burma) for nearly 20 years.

Even though there has been significant development for Myanmar since democratic elections were permitted in 2015, war continues to be waged against ethnic peoples.

The military is still not accountable to civilian government, and this has resulted in the continuation of conflict in the resource-rich Kachin State. The Kachin war is among the longest running conflicts in the world.

After a 16-year ceasefire, violent conflict resumed in Kachin State in 2011. This has led to the forced displacement of thousands more civilians, mostly women and children, who left their villages under the cover of dark and slipped through the jungle.

Today, over 120,000 civilians are internally displaced persons (IDPs) and are forced to live in about 200 camps.

Jesuit Mission's partner, Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), cooperates with local organisations to respond to the influx of new IDPs by delivering emergency aid such as shelter and food. They also give attention to children's education, which displaced parents have identified as one of their greatest concerns.

We also support the work of Myanmar Jesuit Mission, who works closely with the local church to promote peaceful resolution of conflict, and prioritises education of young adults – the future of Myanmar.

"... the presence of the Myanmar Jesuit Mission is a symbol of hope to all of us trainees and the suffering neighbourhood IDP children and residents," says James, a training program participant living in one of the hundreds of IDP camps in Kachin State.

Our work in Kachin State



700 people supported with shelter



386 families provided with emergency food



6 latrines and 1 well constructed



30 students provided with scholarships

Enabled by the generosity of our Australian community, Jesuit Mission has supported local partners to respond to the influx of internally displaced families in Kachin State through:

Shelter

In the Banmaw Diocese, Jesuit Mission's partner helped 145 IDP families secure land and materials for new temporary shelters, while the families themselves provided labour to construct the shelters. The families had previously been living in one of the first IDP camps in the area since 2011. However they had recently been asked to leave the camp as the landowner was struggling to earn enough for his family and had to sell his land.

Education

Education is one of the areas of major concern for IDP families. With repeated displacement, and no end to the conflict in sight, many parents are worried about ensuring

their children can enrol in formal education. Jesuit Mission supports initiatives that will ensure young people in IDP camps will not fall too far behind in their schooling.

This year we supported extra tuition classes for over 200 children in one IDP camp and the neighbouring area. In addition, we worked with JRS to support their local partner in rebuilding a school in an IDP camp in the Waimaw township. The school had previously collapsed due to strong winds and heavy snow.

Water and sanitation

In a Myitkyina IDP camp, we constructed a water well to provide clean water for an additional 500 internally displaced people who arrived due to the resurgence in fighting. We also constructed new temporary toilets in the camp.

Food

Emergency food (including rice, oil and salt) and cash were provided to people living in six camps across Banmaw Diocese.

Myanmar is a priority country for Jesuit Mission, and will continue to be for many years to come.

In addition to responding to the situation in Kachin State, Jesuit Mission is also working with local Jesuits and the wider Catholic network to support the Karenni and Karen people in Myanmar and living in the refugee camps on the Thai-Burma border, as well as the growing numbers of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh.

It is only through your generous support that we are able to reach these vulnerable and marginalised communities. We offer our heartfelt thanks for your support, and ask for your ongoing prayers for healing, unity and peace in Myanmar.



1. People from the IDP camps working together to construct their new temporary shelters. 2. Food distribution to displaced households in the Banmaw Diocese. 3. Additional temporary toilets were constructed for the influx of people in the IDP camps.

Photos from Cambodia

For over 30 years, the Jesuits have accompanied and served Cambodians who are war-disabled, displaced, disadvantaged and living in poverty.

Recently Helen Forde, CEO, and Angela Ford, International Programs Manager, visited our local partners in Cambodia. Here they share photos of some of the community programs they witnessed in action, and program participants they had the opportunity to meet.



1. The wheelchair shop run by our local partner, Jesuit Service Cambodia, provides patented wheelchairs which have a unique design that suits the landscape in Cambodia. **2.** Prak Soun is a valued member of the Survivor Network. He works with our local partner JRS to support people living with a disability and help them plan for their future.



3. The opening of a new Catholic church in the Battambang Prefecture. **4.** Libraries like these are supported by Jesuit Mission, and provide a positive learning environment for children in rural communities. **5.** The agricultural programs support rural farmers with training in sustainable agricultural techniques. **6.** The Light of Mercy Home provides classes for children with disabilities, including in computer skills, dancing and craft skills.



Hope and independence

Ci, from Kampong Thom in Cambodia, has been in a wheelchair ever since she was 7 years old.

Growing up, she attended the local primary school which is only 200m from her home. Although her six siblings attended secondary school, Ci wasn't able to attend because the school was located 3km away.

In 2016, Ci attended Banteay Prie, a vocational training centre for people with disabilities, which is run by our local partner Jesuit Service Cambodia. There, she studied a beauty course, where she learnt how to do make-up, haircuts and hair colouring.

Now, with Jesuit Mission's support and the help of her family, Ci has set up her own salon and is slowly establishing her business. She shared with us how happy she is now – at the course she made new



friends, learnt how to take good care of herself, and gained independence.

“It was my dream to have my own business and to be able to support myself for the future.” – Ci

Raised to new life

Reflection by Fr Trung Nguyen SJ, Rector of Jesuit Mission

Water is essential for our existence, but it can also be destructive and life-threatening, especially in times of severe flooding.

Such was the case in Central Vietnam in October 2016 when torrential rain submerged the provinces of Quang Binh and Ha Tinh. Thousands of families lost everything. Makeshift shelters that people called home were

swept away. People living meagre existences drowned deeper into sorrow and despair.

Responding to the plea for assistance, Jesuit Mission supporters generously donated to our brothers and sisters in need.

Late 2017, I was able to visit a few of these families that benefited from your support. With this support, they have been able to rebuild their home with a stronger

foundation, which subsequently withstood a cyclone one year later. They were immensely grateful for having a new lease of life; their hearts filled with joy, and eyes aflame with hope for the future.

The experience reminded me of the image of baptism – being immersed in water as a symbol of dying with Christ only to be raised to new life. This is what happened to the people who suffered from this severe flooding.

One particular aspect of baptism is that it has to be conferred by another person. The thousands of families in Central Vietnam devastated by the flood would not have been given a new life without the generosity and assistance of others, namely you.

I would like to relay the heartfelt gratitude of the Vietnamese families who are now living new lives of hope. “We could never repay you for your kindness, all we can say is thank you, and may God bless you.”

Thanks be to God.



After the devastation of the floods, Son and Tuyet have been able to rebuild a home with a strong foundation for their family.

Solidarity at the Maytime Fair



To see photos and videos from the event, visit our Facebook page

Thank you to everyone who came along to the Maytime Fair at Xavier College in Kew, Melbourne this year.

Thousands of people turned up for the event this year – a day filled with community spirit and enthusiastic support for Jesuit Mission's programs that help marginalised communities around the world.

We would especially like to thank all who offered their time and energy to make the day a success.

"We are blessed to have the support of the Xavier Principal, staff and community assisting in our endeavours," says Anna O'Halloran,

Chair of this year's Maytime Fair committee. "Also truly blessed to have so many people come to the fair, and to have a fantastic committee who give so willingly of

their time and talent to ensure the day is such a great success. It is a great honour to walk beside these people to raise much needed funds to support the Jesuit Mission."



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Thanks for your feedback

Thank you to everyone who responded to our Supporter Survey request. We have received more than 1,400 responses!

We are filled with gratitude that so many of you have taken the time to complete it and share your feedback and stories.

Here is a snapshot of what you shared with us:

- **Nearly ¼** of people who responded have been involved with Jesuit Mission for over 50 years!
- **Over ¾** of people who responded read the Jesuit Mission newsletter.
- **Most people** prefer to donate via postal mail, at parish appeals, or online, so we will endeavour to make sure these options are as user-friendly as possible.

Once again, we would like to extend our most sincere thanks to everyone who responded to the survey. Your feedback will help ensure we continue to reach God's most vulnerable people around the world.

Which of our programs are you most interested in?



We'd love to hear more from you!

We have loved hearing from you in the Supporter Survey, so we will be introducing a new section in the next issue of the newsletter that publishes supporters' letters and stories.

We invite you to write to us and share your personal experiences with Jesuit Mission, such as how you first got involved and why you continue to support the mission.

Please send all letters to:



support@jesuitmission.org.au



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

Being with the Dalits

Fr Phil Crotty SJ arrived in Hazaribag in India as a young Jesuit missionary on Christmas Day in 1952.

Over the decades, he and fellow Australian Jesuit missionaries lived among and walked with the most marginalised people of Indian society, the Dalits. Here he shares with us just a little bit about the name 'Dalit':

"The original word for the 160 million outcaste people in India was 'Untouchable'. Mahatma Gandhi changed that to 'Harijan', which means God's people. But the Untouchables rejected that title, "We don't need upper caste people to tell us what our name is. Our name is 'Oppressed'" – which is what Dalit means; oppressed.

"Of late the 'tribal' people of India have also chosen to come under the umbrella word 'Dalit'. There are more than 100 million tribal people in India. So the tribal people too, especially in the centre of India where we work, have adopted the same name, Dalit."



 **Australian Jesuits present in Hazaribag since 1951**
 **65 Jesuit schools now in Hazaribag**
 **Nearly 27,000 people educated in Jesuit-run schools last year**



Top: St Joseph's High School in Tarwa is for Dalit boys and girls. These students have come from generations of oppression and are fighting for survival and dignity. The girls in the school and the community face another layer of disadvantage because they are Dalits and they are girls.

Bottom: Fr Phil Crotty SJ with Nanihari, who was a student of St Teresa's High School. Nanihari belongs to the Korwa tribe, an extremely marginalised group of people.

Nepal Earthquake – 3 years on

2018 marks the three-year anniversary of the devastating 7.8 magnitude earthquake which sent shockwaves through Nepal.

Through your compassion and generosity, Jesuit Mission Australia has been supporting the work of the Jesuits in helping people affected by the disaster.



Following on from the immediate emergency and early recovery phase, the global Jesuit response has served some of the most remote communities across 13 districts by:

- Constructing 130 classrooms, which have included the installation of anti-seismic devices, so that students can attend classes safely
- Setting up 14 community centres for women which are used as gathering places as well as spaces to attend courses

- A major new road infrastructure project – the first ever road to Tipling, the most remote village in the Dading district
- Livelihood training including computer skills, beauty and hair dressing, basic tailoring, sustainable agricultural practices, and crop and animal farming techniques.

Thank you for your support of our brothers and sisters in Nepal as they continue to rebuild their lives.

Left: Jesuit Rapid Response team reaching out to communities in the aftermath of the disaster

Updates and upcoming events

Our annual series of community events is now in full swing. We thank everyone who has attended events so far, and look forward to seeing many of you at our upcoming events.

We are also pleased to announce that raffle tickets for the 2018 Jesuit Mission Car Raffle are now available to purchase. You can visit the Jesuit Mission website for more information jesuitmission.org.au/raffle

Jesuit Mission is truly blessed with a compassionate and dedicated community of supporters. It is only with your support that our Jesuit and lay companions can continue the work in reaching poor and vulnerable communities across Asia and Africa.



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Indian Bazaar – 15 September

The annual Jesuit Mission Indian Bazaar is on **Saturday 15 September 2018**, 8:30am to 5pm at **St Ignatius' College, Riverview**. It will be a great day of fun for all ages, with food stalls, bric-a-brac, books, wine raffles, music, rides and amusements. We look forward to seeing you there!

We welcome donations for the Bazaar including quality bottles of wines for the popular wine auction, and bric-a-brac (such as antiques, silver, crystal, jewellery (even broken), or similar). Contact Meg Morrison at engagement@jesuitmission.org.au for any enquiries.

Parish Appeals

Please look out for a Parish Appeal near you:

- 14-15 July:** Vietnamese Catholic Community, Inala, QLD
- 21-22 July:** St Joseph's and Immaculate Conception Parish, Hawthorn, VIC
- 18-19 August:** St Ignatius Parish, Norwood, SA
- 25-26 August:** St Aloysius Parish, Sevenhill; Church of the Good Shepherd Parish, Riverton; St Michael's Parish, Clare, SA
- 20-21 October:** Richmond Catholic Parish of St Ignatius & St James, VIC

Check our website for additional dates throughout the year, and please contact us if you would like a speaker to visit your parish support@jesuitmission.org.au

Other upcoming events

Melbourne Thanksgiving Mass – 9 August

Sydney Annual Card Day – 2 October
The Sydney Annual Jesuit Mission Card Day will be held at St Ignatius College, Riverview.

Cost: \$45 per person. For bookings contact Meg Morrison (02) 8918 4121 or events@jesuitmission.org.au

Sydney Golf Day – 1 November

The Jesuit Mission annual Sydney Golf Day will be held at Manly Golf Course. For bookings and sponsorship enquiries, contact Meg Morrison golfday@jesuitmission.org.au or (02) 8918 4121.

Sydney Thanksgiving Mass – 29 November

Contact us:

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

 PO Box 193, North Sydney 2059

 02 8918 4109

 support@jesuitmission.org.au

 jesuitmission.org.au

 **Jesuit
Mission**

Front cover: In an Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp in Kachin State, Myanmar, the Jesuits are providing educational support to children of all ages. Australian Jesuit Mission Overseas Aid Fund | ABN: 47 915 006 050

Faith creating change