

Reflections

Our actions in review

Issue #627 Winter 2021

Your generosity is
enriching lives and inspiring hope.



From our CEO



Dear Friends,

It is devastating to see the challenges being faced by some of the countries where we work like India, Cambodia and Timor-Leste with the pandemic, and Myanmar with the military coup. As one Jesuit Mission family we stand in solidarity with our sisters and brothers who are suffering.

Vulnerable communities are at greater risk than ever before, however, with the tireless efforts of our Jesuit partners, there is hope for those living in crisis. I am incredibly grateful for your support - it is because of you that our partners have the resources to combat these challenges and work where the need is greatest.

I was deeply moved by the strong participation in our online Prayer Vigil for Myanmar and India on 2 June. Knowing that several thousand people, from all over the world, gathered together virtually in prayer for those in Myanmar and India was consoling. It's a long road ahead for all nations suffering during this time and we keep them in our thoughts and prayers.

Your prayerful expression of solidarity has meant so much to our Jesuit partners and the communities they walk alongside. They are not alone. We are right beside them. And, we will stay there.

Thanks to your kindness and generosity, together, we can revive hope for those living on the margins and bring lasting change to communities in crisis.

We are truly inspired by your presence, compassion and prayers.

With thanks,

Helen Forde
Chief Executive Officer

Companions in Mission

Dear Friends,

This year from 20 May until 31 July 2022, is the Ignatian year, which commemorates two significant moments: the 500th anniversary of the wounding of St Ignatius at the battle of Pamplona (20 May 2021) and the 400th anniversary of the canonisation of St Ignatius (12 March 2022). St Ignatius' legacy of service to others, and his accompaniment of the marginalised, continues to inspire the work of Jesuit Mission today. The Ignatian Year is an opportunity for us all to reflect on our own lives, as Fr Arturo Sosa SJ, Superior General, says:

"It is good to remind ourselves that the wound Ignatius suffered in Pamplona was not so much a

happy ending, but rather a happy beginning ... We need to put Christ in the centre every time, again and again. This process is a pilgrimage along winding roads, up and down, sometimes having to retrace our steps, sometimes feeling lost. But meeting people along the road who indicate the way and reach out their hands to us."

With thanks,



Isaac Demase SJ and Fr Paul Horan SJ
Jesuit Mission Companions in Mission



'The roar of a nation' hope stirs the next generation of Myanmar

This is one of the most challenging historical moments for our Jesuit partners and those people they serve in Myanmar, after the military seized power over the democratically elected government in a shocking coup on 1 February. Hundreds of people have since been killed by security forces, the majority of whom were peacefully protesting for a return to democracy and the release of political leaders.

However, with your help, hope has been reignited in the next generation of students from the Jesuit Mission supported Myanmar Leadership Institute (MLI), which celebrated its second graduation ceremony on 19 March amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and the military coup.

Twenty-two students from the second cohort received a Diploma and Certificate in Leadership Development in collaboration with the Ateneo de Manila University and six students received the Professional Certificate in Peace Leader Studies from Jesuit Worldwide Learning.

"Leadership is not about position, it is a way of life, understanding the value of human dignity. It is completely service oriented. I would like to thank the teachers of MLI for the knowledge you passed on to us and for helping us grow in every way possible," said a graduating MLI student.

Since its inception in 2018, MLI has been forming a generation of leaders that prioritise social

justice, to lead with competence and compassion. Its courses range from a one-year Diploma in Leadership program to a ten-week Certificate in Business Communication program.

Many of the students of MLI come from ethnic minority groups and are now more determined than ever to overcome decades of conflict that has stunted the educational, social and infrastructural development of the nation.

"We now live amid the roar of a nation. Books will be written about this Burmese Spring Revolution... But it is into such a world as ours at this turning point of Myanmar's history, that great ideas come as gently as doves, the gentle stirring of life and hope. That is the reason for your study. That is the reason for studying leadership, for trying to understand its constituent elements: such as empathy, resilience, collaboration, trust, respect, courage, creativity, forethought and the techniques of planning, management and networking. Hope is rooted in the past, but believes in the future," said the Mission Superior during a speech at the graduation ceremony.

During the graduation ceremony a moment of silent prayer was offered to honour those who have lost their lives since 1 February. Please keep the people of Myanmar in your thoughts and prayers.



Breaking the chain

of COVID-19 transmission in India

Thanks to your support, our Jesuit partners in India have established a Community Health Surveillance System to break the chain of COVID-19 transmission among migrant workers, slum and rural communities in six states, including Jharkhand state.

The program commenced in June and focuses on awareness building for infection prevention as well as providing access to critical health services, the provision of emergency healthcare kits and vaccinations.

Over the next few months, the program aims to slow the spread of COVID-19 and offer life-saving support for those people most in need by providing:

- 6,000 vulnerable people infected by COVID-19 with homecare and support services, sanitisers and face masks.
- 6,000 healthcare kits with medicines to ease symptoms of COVID.
- 6,000 emergency food packages for COVID positive people and those in quarantine.
- 12,000 pamphlets and brochures to educate vulnerable communities on COVID-safe behaviour.

COVID has not only brought life to a standstill in India, it has also overwhelmed its healthcare

system. In addition, a lack of testing capacity gives a misinformed picture of the humanitarian emergency unfolding there.

The second wave of the pandemic has been catastrophic. Critical oxygen shortages and over 30 million COVID infections sadly means that there is little hope for the most vulnerable people.

However, thanks to your generosity, our partners can support distressed communities in a more coordinated and effective manner, slowing the spread of the virus through containment and transforming the lives of many vulnerable families in the long run.



A man carries an emergency bag of rice.



Learning never stops

for cheerful students at NOSSEF

Learning never stops in the thriving rural community of Railaco in Timor-Leste, where COVID has been a mere speed bump for determined students at the Jesuit-run secondary school NOSSEF (Escola Secundaria Católica Nossa Senhora de Fátima).

To prevent the spread of COVID-19, this year NOSSEF divided its students into two groups, where Group A studies at home for a week and Group B attends classes at school for a week.

When a wave of COVID cases emerged in April, the school was closed temporarily, however, it is now open with all staff and students required to wear a mask, sanitise regularly and maintain a safe distance.

“Personally I’m always encouraged by the students. They always greet me with great smiles and are always cheerful and energetic,” said Fr Hyoe Murayama SJ, the new Director of NOSSEF.

Most of the students’ parents are subsistence farmers from remote villages and it is not easy for them to support their children’s education.

Due to COVID, many families are confronted by much tougher financial situations, however, with your help, the students never give up.

“Many students rely on hitch-hiking to come to school, leaving their hometown and staying in their relatives’ house. Despite these challenges and

difficulties, students come to school every day with hope and joy,” said Fr Hyoe.



Lunch time at NOSSEF.

NOSSEF provides schooling for 380 students from Year 10 to Year 12. Over the last few years the school has remarkably achieved a 100% pass rate in the National exams for Year 12, with many students going on to tertiary study.

Returning to school after months of online learning has reignited hope in the students at NOSSEF, who feel especially grateful for your support, which enables them to continue with their studies.

“The Jesuit education helps us to be men and women for others and forms us to serve the Church and our country,” said Leonigio, a student at NOSSEF. NOSSEF is generously supported by St Canice’s Parish, Kings Cross and Pilgrims 100, a collective-giving group based in Adelaide.



All kinds of stuff

– 70 years of the Jesuit Mission Bazaar and Maytime Fair

It took “all kinds of stuff” – including 360 dozen lamingtons – to build the fledgling Jesuit mission after the first Australian missionaries set off for Hazaribag in 1951, 70 years ago. For back home in Australia, a small band of supporters was gathering all the resources they could to raise money for the mission. One of them, Mary Brabenec, was just three years old when her mother Jeanette Connellan held the first ever fundraising function, in Melbourne.

“We had a house party, and in fact it became an annual event which raised money to set up the first Maytime Fair.”

The fair is now a beloved institution which Mary and her entire family have been involved with for the past 70 years. She recalls a sign made one year by a Xavier College art teacher for the trash and treasure stall.

“He wrote an enormous, very highly coloured sign saying “All kinds of stuff”. And I said, “That’s not very classy” and he said, “It’s not classy. That’s exactly what it is: it’s all kinds of stuff.”

Mary, who had visited India in 1972, returned early last year. The progress made in the intervening years was self-evident, she says.

“You couldn’t calculate how many hundreds of thousands of kids they’ve educated and the education of girls is just such an extraordinary achievement.”

In Sydney, 82-year-old Maureen Punch, recalls being asked as a teenager to run a stall at the

Jesuit Mission Bazaar. She was president at the time of the Riverview Younger Set.

“We had drinks and ice creams and they had umbrellas around the quadrangle and Cardinal Gilroy came and opened the Bazaar with great fanfare.”



A curry stall at the Bazaar in 1985.

Years later, when her three sons were enrolled at St Ignatius’ College Riverview, she was asked to run the cake stall.

“We used to make 360 dozen lamingtons in the boys’ refectory and they would all sell.”

After her children had left school, Maureen started selling second-hand clothing at the Bazaar and at a monthly market in Sydney.

“My mother was mortified that I was doing it – fancy handling second-hand clothes?” she laughs.

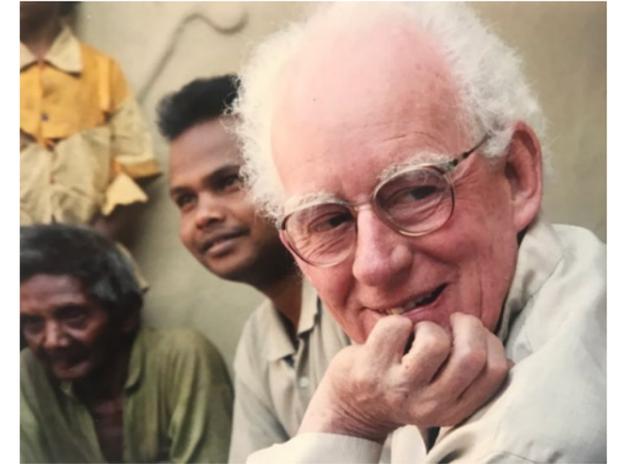
“But I’m glad I did it because we made so much money for the mission.”

Fr Phil Crotty SJ 1932-2021

We were deeply saddened when Fr Phil Crotty SJ, former Jesuit Mission Director and Hazaribag Missionary of more than 50 years, passed away peacefully in his sleep on 7 April. Fr Phil was sent on mission to Hazaribag, India at 20 years old, where he devoted himself to a life of total service to the marginalised communities there.

His legacy of teambuilding, tribal enculturation, collaboration with religious sisters and Jesuit formation endure to this day.

“I will forever cherish the times I spent with Fr Phil over the past few years. He was a wonderful companion who offered wise counsel and



friendship. I will greatly miss our catch ups where he reminisced so beautifully about his time in Hazaribag. He touched so many lives there and here in Australia – his legacy will be everlasting,” said Helen Forde, CEO of Jesuit Mission.

40 water stations for coastal villages in Vietnam

In coastal Vietnam, many water sources are highly contaminated by dangerous industrial waste. Local people have no choice but to purchase bottled water or drink the contaminated water and risk becoming sick with life-threatening diseases.

With your support, our partner the Jesuit Province in Vietnam, is installing 40 RO UV water stations (‘Reverse Osmosis Ultraviolet’) that sterilise and filter contaminated water, across four coastal districts in Vietnam.

“The quality of life of local people will be better thanks to these hygienic water stations,” said Fr Peter Than Van Chat, local parish priest.

Before a water station was installed in her village, Mrs Loan, a mother of five children and a widow from the coastal village Lang Khe, had to purchase bottled water to use for drinking and cooking. This cost her \$2 per day – a large portion of her total daily income of \$11 per day.



The cost of buying water was compounding Mrs Loan’s poverty.

Thanks to your financial support, that changed when a new water station was installed in her village, providing Mrs Loan with access to safe, clean water which she collects twice per week. Now she pays only 50 cents for this water, as part of her community contribution towards the ongoing operation of the filter system.

“From this water station, the union of our community as both Catholics and non-Catholics is strengthened,” said Mrs Loan.



Win a \$5,000 shopping spree

You can help support our brothers and sisters overseas by purchasing tickets to our annual raffle. Enter for your chance to win:

- **1st prize: \$5,000 Coles Myer gift cards**
- **2nd prize: \$1,000 Coles Myer gift cards**
- **3rd prize: \$500 Coles Myer gift cards**

Tickets are now available online at: jesuitmission.org.au/raffle or call us on 02 8918 4109.

Raffle closes 29 Oct 2021 and winner drawn 1 Nov. NSW, VIC, WA and NT residents only.



Ignatian Year, poem by Fr Andy Bullen SJ

The Ignatian Year celebrates the 500th anniversary of St Ignatius' cannonball wound at the battle of Pamplona and his subsequent conversion to commit himself to God's work, to walk with the marginalised.

While recovering from his injury, St Ignatius discerned a call to the religious life, leaving his desire for fame and glory as a military leader behind to found the Society of Jesus and the Spiritual Exercises.

We invite you to reflect on Fr Andy Bullen's SJ poem on St Ignatius, 'Pamplona'.

Pamplona

Wherever Pamplona is:
you mistake the enemy
and overtrust your own boldness,
flourish an outdated flag
for the last time and with style:
you're on the defensive.

The yells and roar and fire
are a dazzling confusion:
then the long quiet proclaims defeat.
Pain tells the soldier his leg
is turned to a mess of blood
– the wound will heal all his life.
Call this Pamplona.

Pamplona is whatever
wrenches failure into blessing.
It is the end of noise
and can happen anywhere.
Whenever fame goes – and style goes –
and you're useless is Pamplona.
Only later will it announce
a new away of being history.

Pamplona is the lifelong beginning
of the journey into silence.

Consider your own 'cannonball' moment, where did trials or failures become blessings in your own life?