

Gratitude Report

2021



Jesuit Mission

From the Provincial

I am delighted to present the 2021 Jesuit Mission Gratitude Report. For the past 71 years, Jesuit Mission has played an integral role in inviting our Australian Jesuit family into relationship with our brothers and sisters overseas, particularly those people living on the margins of society.

Your solidarity enables my Jesuit brothers and their lay collaborators to accompany communities who are facing extreme injustice, poverty and conflict. Communities are empowered to actively participate in activities that build their skills and capacity to live independent, full and free lives.

The 2021 Gratitude Report bears authentic witness to how your generosity is making a tangible difference to the lives of vulnerable communities. Last year, with your support Jesuit Mission reached more than 170,000 people through projects across Asia and Africa, and through collaborative efforts with the global Jesuit network

helped 430,000 people survive the pandemic. This is extraordinary outreach in such a time of global need.

I extend my sincere thanks to each and every one of you who has supported our international relief and development works overseas. I also thank the Jesuit Mission Board, staff, committee members and volunteers for their efforts last year and hope that we can gather in person this year.

Finally, the Jesuits and the wider Ignatian family are currently celebrating an Ignatian Year, which began with the 500th anniversary of Ignatius of Loyola being seriously injured by a cannonball at Pamplona. This experience led to Ignatius' spiritual conversion and later to the establishment of the Society of Jesus.

With Jesuit Mission developing its new 5-year strategic plan this year, I conclude with the words of Jesuit Father General, Fr Arturo Sosa SJ, "We celebrate this [Ignatian] year to



remind us of the daily opportunity to experience a new conversion and to live a transforming experience. It is a call to allow the Lord to reveal to us a new enthusiasm, interior and apostolic, a new life, new ways of following Christ: 'To see all things new in Christ.'"

Blessings,

Fr Quyen Vu SJ
Australian Jesuit Provincial

From our CEO

The COVID-19 pandemic has been an event unlike any other in our world's history. It has impacted every country, every community and every individual in different ways.

But, without a doubt, it has been the most marginalised and vulnerable communities that have lived in the darkest shadows over the past two years.

Job losses have led to extreme hunger. Poor and stressed healthcare systems have left many dead or desperate for care. Extended school closures have seen millions of boys and girls without education and worse still, many children have been forced into the labour market to support their families.

These vulnerable communities have not been alone. Our Jesuit partners have walked beside the excluded, providing emergency food relief and medical supplies; offering cash for work and

livelihood activities to generate income; and visiting villages to educate young students.

It has only been through the extraordinary generosity of our Jesuit Mission family here in Australia that our COVID-19 emergency programs have touched the lives of 430,000 women, men and children across Asia in 2021. We offer our heartfelt thanks to you, our supporters, for bringing light, hope and healing to these communities. This life-saving and vital work was realised through your solidarity.

This 2021 Gratitude Report shares many inspiring stories of courage and resilience. You contribute to these stories of change and impact. Thank you for making a difference in so many lives.

Finally, I ask you to join Jesuit Mission in keeping those communities still affected by COVID-19 and sustained conflict in our hearts and prayers.



With deep gratitude,

Helen Forde
CEO, Jesuit Mission

About Jesuit Mission

A ministry of the Australian Jesuit Province, Jesuit Mission works with our most vulnerable sisters and brothers empowering them to live full and free lives. To create the greatest change, we go where we are needed most in Asia and Africa.

Our Vision: Faith, justice and reconciliation for a full and free life.

Our Mission: In the name of Jesus and in the spirit of Ignatius, we are called to the generous service of others.

We have a preferential love of the poor and uphold the innate dignity and promote the rights of God's most vulnerable people from all faiths and cultures. We 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.

We invite Australian companions into communion with our global human family. 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.

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Your support, your impact



You provided critical access to healthcare for over **15,000** people living in remote and rural areas and detention centres.



You brought easy access to safe and clean drinking water for families in Vietnam and Timor-Leste – improving health and quality of life for over **60,000** people.



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many schools in countries such as India, Cambodia and Myanmar were closed for most of 2021. However, your support still enabled more than **10,000** students throughout Asia Pacific to create a brighter future through the gift of education. Close to **500** students in the most vulnerable situations were given the opportunity to be educated through scholarships.

Through your continuous support over many years building critical education infrastructure in India, Timor-Leste and Cambodia, more than **27,000** students continue to be educated each year.



You accompanied **21,460** refugees across South-East Asia and Africa by providing much needed education, livelihood training, psychosocial support and housing assistance.



You helped deliver humanitarian assistance to over **45,000** people in response to the Myanmar crisis and the Timor-Leste floods, enabling us to stand in solidarity with those affected and provide life-sustaining assistance.



As COVID-19 continued to impact the most vulnerable throughout our world, thanks to your support and our collaboration with the global Jesuit Network, **430,000** people in India received emergency relief, medical support and guidance.



You enabled vocational skills development for more than **2,500** participants in Asia Pacific and Africa, empowering them to build secure livelihoods for their families.



You fostered independence and upheld the dignity of more than **1,200** people living with a disability by giving access to education and vocational training, health and sanitation, housing and wheelchairs.



58 projects
26 partners
14 countries



Over **170,000** people directly supported through our programs.

Emergency Response

As part of a global community of faith, love and service, your support enables Jesuit Mission to respond to communities devastated by humanitarian crises and natural disasters.

Cambodia

In late 2020, Cambodia experienced consecutive tropical storms, leading to unprecedented flooding and landslides, affecting the lives of thousands of people who were already struggling to cope with the pandemic.

Our Jesuit partner Karuna Battambang Organisation (KBO) assisted over 1,000 people affected by the flood and COVID-19 in the Provinces of Kompong Chhnang, Pursat, Battambang and Banteay Meanchey in Cambodia.

The project also helped farmers affected by the Coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent

flooding disaster, recover from these calamities in a sustainable way so that the benefits were ongoing. Emergency packages were sent to alleviate the immediate need for food, as well as chickens and rapid crops for planting to provide income generation.

Self-Help Groups were also created to promote trust, team work and savings among vulnerable communities. Once the groups were functioning, each member received funds to be put in the group's bank account, to be used to support other members when needed.



Emergency food packages, rapid crops and chickens, were given to farmers to stimulate income-generation and help them get back on their feet.

Timor-Leste

Jesuits in Timor-Leste responded to the widespread destruction of Tropical Cyclone Seroja, an Easter Sunday nightmare that brought flash flooding and left 48 people dead, including a Timorese teacher at the Jesuit Mission supported Loyola College.

The mass displacement and infrastructure damage caused by flood waters and landslides

additionally increased the spread of COVID-19, forcing many families into greater levels of poverty and risk.

With your generous support, our partner Jesuit Social Service (JSS) responded to the flood crisis by providing emergency food supplies, mattresses and kitchen utensils for 330 families significantly affected by the floods.



Mattresses were distributed to families who lost their livelihoods in the floods.

India

In response to the COVID-19 crisis in India, our Jesuit partner Indian Social Institute established a Community Health Surveillance System to break the chain of COVID-19 transmission among migrant workers, slum and rural communities in 12 states, including Jharkhand state.

In addition to face masks, sanitisers, general medicines and dry ration kits being distributed to the most vulnerable, 1,070 volunteers were trained as Community Workers to support those people with symptoms and provide assistance to healthcare

workers. Moreover, COVID-19 information sharing campaigns reached out to more than 150,000 people and over 30,000 people were vaccinated.

Simultaneously, Lenity Australia generously funded the work of the Hazaribag Jesuits reaching out to struggling communities affected by COVID-19. Thousands of Indigenous Dalit women, men and children have benefitted from the Coronavirus Relief Project through income-generating activities and the provision of emergency food packages and masks.



A man carries an emergency bag of rice.

Vietnam

For three months, Ho Chi Minh City was in complete lockdown, where residents were forbidden from leaving their homes – even to shop for food, or exercise. Soldiers enforced stay at home orders and helped with limited food deliveries.



These restrictions to control the spread of COVID-19, since lifted, forced millions of migrant workers out of employment and into emergency levels of poverty and hunger. Mothers struggled to feed their babies because of poor diet, leaving thousands of children malnourished.

The Jesuits in Vietnam launched the Charity Rice and Food Supplies project to support families in crisis and provided milk to 8,000 children in the Southern Provinces of Vietnam.



Delivering emergency food and milk to a family.



India

Igniting a 'we can' mentality

For Australian Jesuit Fr Tony Herbert SJ, the impact of the Utthan Uplift project for the marginalised Dalit people in Hazaribag Province in India has been extraordinary.

“The most dramatic result I have seen is the change of mentality, from ‘not us, we can’t’ to ‘see, we also can’” said Fr Tony.

For generations, vulnerable Dalit people have been reliant on systems that trap them in a cycle of poverty, where oppression and lack of both education and opportunity has stunted communities.

The aim of Fr Tony’s project was to enhance the capability of the Dalits to be subjects of their own uplift through Women’s Savings Groups, opening Tuition Centres in villages to lift literacy rates and by empowering villagers to confront social issues that affect their communities.

“The (new) opportunities offer greater control over their own lives, control of their land, participation in the decisions of the village...seeking good employment opportunities and pursuing tertiary education,” said Fr Tony.

The overall change in perspective to ‘we can’ has been vital to empower women in these rural villages, who no longer need to borrow money.

“The women’s saving groups have given women a financial independence, in the house they have their own money to spend in the way they see necessary (usually on the children),” he said.

The Uplift Project responded to two years of government ordered school closures due to COVID-19, by opening Tuition Centres to provide daily lessons to children who would otherwise miss out. The youth from the villages

teach children basic literacy and numeracy for two to three hours a day, ensuring that the next generation has access to education.

“We will avoid a whole generation slipping back into illiteracy,” he said.

Thanks to the generosity of our Jesuit Mission family, 12 trained Dalit team members supported almost 15,000 people across 60 villages, shifting the mentality from ‘we can’t’ to ‘we can.’ Quite an impact!



Above: Fr Tony Herbert SJ with a Women’s Savings Group.
Top: Fr Tony with village children.



Thanks to the Women’s Savings Groups, women have greater financial independence.



Timor-Leste

Called to serve others

Through faith in action, we can truly serve the needs of the marginalised, according to Fr Júlio António Sousa SJ, Director of Jesuit Social Service (JSS) Timor-Leste and project partner of Jesuit Mission.

After his ordination, his first mission as Director of JSS has him overseeing the provision of clean water and mobile health clinics to uplift remote communities.

The water project helps bring life-changing new water systems to remote villages in Timor-Leste, which is vital in a country where one-third of people in rural villages do not have access to clean, safe water.

The burden of collecting water often falls to children, who have to walk up to five hours each day, carrying heavy containers of water.

Jesuit Mission has been supporting the water program for the past three years and during this time JSS has brought clean water to more than 12 villages, transforming the lives of thousands of people.

“We are really happy that Jesuit Mission supporters have been really generous to us. In our partnership we are building the kingdom of heaven in the world,” he says.

With many projects greatly disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic and Easter Sunday floods, Fr Júlio ensures that JSS continues to stand in solidarity with those people on the fringes of society, integrating the example of Jesus into his mission.

“When Jesus was here around 2,000 years ago, one of his main

ministries was going around, healing the people, supporting those in need,” he says.

“So we are doing the same thing, just in different form and in a different situation, we are trying to uplift the light within people.”



Above: Children of Rematu village celebrate the installation of clean water. **Top:** Fr Júlio welcomed into a remote village in Timor-Leste.

An update from *our friends in Railaco*

What a year for Railaco! Thanks to your generosity and the support of Jesuit parish St Canice’s in Kings Cross and the South Australian group Pilgrims 100, Railaco Jesuit Mission continued its three main programs empowering rural communities through: the mobile medical clinic, the feeding program and the secondary school.

Currently the Railaco Feeding Program in Timor-Leste provides weekly meals to 360 children, ensuring the healthy nutritional development of remote communities since 2004.

“We rarely had meat in our diet. Now through the Feeding Program, my children eat chicken, tofu and tempeh, which is hard to obtain in my village. My daughters are growing and look healthier than before,” said Miralda, a mother of two daughters who are both participants of the feeding program.

Meanwhile, the Jesuit-supported secondary school NOSSEF (Escola Secundaria Católica Nossa Senhora de Fátima), 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 reignited hope



in the students at NOSSEF, who feel especially grateful for your support, which enables them to continue with their studies.

The mobile medical clinic visits 12 stations in remote villages in Railaco, providing medicine and medical assistance to those who would otherwise have no access to adequate healthcare.

“Normally we go to two to three different locations per day. In one location, sometimes we treat up to 100 patients per day,” said Georgina, a NOSSEF alumni who today works as a nurse for the mobile medical clinic.

Our partner Jesuit Region of Timor-Leste works tirelessly to ensure that vulnerable

Above: NOSSEF students with new musical instruments. **Below:** Children sharing a nutritious meal.



communities rise from strength to strength, and supported over 11,500 people through these three programs last year.

Cambodia

Resilience in a tough situation

Whenever we think about the impacts of the pandemic towards education, we often think of the challenges it brings due to repetitive school closures.

However, not even COVID-19 put the brakes on Xavier Jesuit School (XJS) student Rumi's determination to study.

In August last year, 14 year old Rumi, and all her family, tested positive after COVID-19 began to spread in the local market where her parents make a living by selling food.

A military car came to pick them up and brought them all to a quarantine facility – a high school that was converted to isolate people who had contracted the virus.

During her stay, Rumi says that her parents and friends were incredibly supportive, which encouraged her to continue her studies and find resilience in a tough situation.

“At that time, I saw how my parents were trying hard to help us all recover. So even though I was sick, I tried my best to continue studying online. Also, my friends kept on contacting me and were helping me cope with my studies,” she said.

Rumi's friends highlight the supportive culture built by the Jesuits at XJS, where disadvantaged students not only receive a quality



education, but also learn to be men and women for others.

Sadly, Rumi's resilience was further tested during her time at the quarantine facility, as she had her 14th birthday there and her grandpa's condition became critical, with him passing away days later.

“I had to remain strong for my grandma and my younger sister,” she said.

With your help, XJS offered Rumi extensive support during this difficult situation and continues to ensure the welfare of all the members of the school community.

Now, Rumi misses her grandpa but is back to her cheerful self and participating well in her classes. She recently passed all her exams and is very grateful for the love and support she has been receiving from her whole family and XJS.

Above: XJS student Rumi in art class.
Below: Rumi (behind) with her father and younger sister at the quarantine facility.



Staying Strong together

Our Livelihood Enhancement Program for People Living with Disabilities at Prey Thom Community is vital in Cambodia.

Injured by a landmine in 1989, 54 year old Saron's journey is nothing short of inspirational. With the support of our local Jesuit partner Karuna Battambang Organisation (KBO), Saron and his wife brought their family out of homelessness and into a world full of opportunity and hope.

Before KBO's support, life was extremely difficult. A stroke of bad luck ruined the family business and they were forced out of their hometown.

“Almost all of the ducks on our farm died of a disease. Of more than 15,000, only 100 survived, which drove us to a grinding poverty,” he said.

They sold their property to survive this financial loss and the family then lived on the move, relying on others for a place to stay and continued raising the remaining ducks as best as they could.

Fortunately, Saron heard about the opportunity of KBO's Prey Thom Community, approached the outreach team and was welcomed into the community in 2006.

Today his farmland is thriving, where he raises lobsters, cows and chickens, earning a living for his family.



Left: Saron outside of his home.
Above: Saron's family are now one of the most prosperous families in Prey thom community.

“Our family receives a lot of help from the project such as rice support, crops and loans for agriculture, animals, and other professional skills,” he said.

Since they became a part of the community, all members of the family have flourished.

“My children now go to school, my wife has a job weaving in the kromas workshop, which contributes significantly to our income, my eldest son now works as a Community Leader for KBO

and I can raise animals and grow vegetables around the house,” he said proudly.

Currently there are 22 families living in the program and over 120 people being supported.

“Living with a disability is not easy, but the important thing is to accept ourselves and to stay strong,” said Saron.



Thailand

Hope-filled futures for ethnic minorities in Chiang Rai

We are truly grateful to supporters who have left a gift in their Will to Jesuit Mission. It is thanks to these incredible gifts, that Jesuit Mission can continue to help change the futures of young people like Chai.

21 year old Chai, of the ethnic group Lahu, is one of four siblings.

Chai's parents do not earn much and did not have enough money to send him to school. As farmers cultivating only a small piece of land for a big family, Chai while in high school had to find financial assistance to support his education.

Thanks to the generosity of Jesuit Mission supporters, Chai is delighted that he can now pursue his higher education at Jesuit-run tertiary institution Xavier Learning Community (XLC).

"It is a precious opportunity to study at XLC, I will use this opportunity wisely," he said.

Living in XLC since 2018, Chai has been inspired by the community life there, learning sustainable agricultural practices, English and he is enjoying living with people from different 'hill tribes' groups.

Chai's dream is to take his Ecotourism and Hospitality Management skills to his village.

"I want to promote the beauty of my village, the richness of its cultures and traditions to other people, especially foreigners," said Chai.

XLC provides education to almost 100 tertiary students from the 'hill tribes' around Chiang Rai.

All students study a Bachelor of English, along with eco-tourism, teaching and hospitality. With a fully operational farm on the campus, sustainability is key to the ethos of XLC.

As a lasting legacy, a gift in your Will could bring hope to future generations of vulnerable communities in Chiang Rai, Thailand and many more of our programs around the world. If you would like more information about leaving a gift in your Will to Jesuit Mission, please contact Susan Vaz on 02 8918 4109 for a confidential discussion.



Left: Chai planting rice with his peers at XLC.
Top: The road to Chai's village.

Teaching

on the run

Thanks to your generosity, 73 year old Soe Meh can now live in peace and continue to teach the next generation in Ban Mae Surin Refugee Camp in Thailand.

Originally from Myanmar, Soe Meh has lived and worked with Karenni people as a teacher since 1968. The Karenni are a marginalised ethnic minority in Myanmar who for decades have been targeted by a military dictatorship that recently assumed power again in a violent coup.

As head teacher, much of her professional life has unfortunately been marred by civil war, that first destroyed the local high school in 1989.

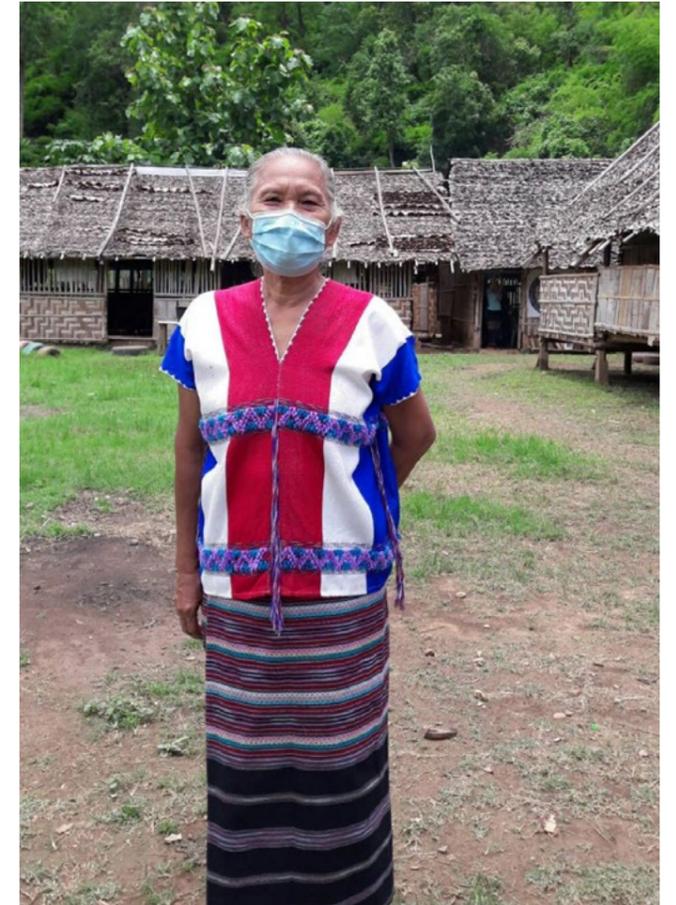
After rebuilding the school in another village, she was head teacher until 2003, when the village was attacked and burnt down forcing them to move yet again and rebuild the school in a village further away.

"However, in 2009 we came under continuous attack. We were forced to hide in the jungle and carried on teaching children in the jungle."

"We became homeless, living in caves. We did not have enough food. This forced us to cross the border to come to Ban Mae Surin Camp in Thailand," she said.

Our partner, Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) welcomed the group of 240 Karenni refugees in December 2009, allowing Soe Meh and her community to escape the violence and rebuild their lives again.

With your support, JRS's Sustaining Education for Burmese Refugees project enhances the capacity of the Karenni Education Department (KnED) to run their schools and formal educational programs in the camps.



KnED supports the practical needs of school operations, by building teacher capacity through training, and improving the curriculum.

JRS also runs psychosocial and life skills activities within the camps to build community, hope and resilience for youth who have experienced devastating trauma.

"From 2010 I have worked together with JRS and have responsibilities within KnED. I have learned a lot, along with receiving love and kindness."

Webinars

Meeting our Jesuit partners and program-participants

A pandemic-ridden last year gave us the opportunity to explore new avenues of staying connected virtually. For the first time our supporters had the chance to meet some of our Jesuit partners and program-participants together through webinars.

In our first webinar of 2021, Australian Fr David Holdcroft SJ, founder of the Digital Inclusion Program shared how he developed the innovative project and the opportunity it brings to refugees living in Dzaleka refugee camp in

Malawi. Program participant Stany shared how he is now able to earn a living for his family, despite his geographical limitations.

In June a record 3,000 people joined our Prayer Vigil for Myanmar and India, which was a powerful expression of faith, love and support from the international community, shared by our Jesuit partners from around the world.

For our third webinar we were very grateful to have had Fr Augustinus Pitoyo SJ, Vice Director

for Institutional Development at Xavier Learning Community (XLC), share his insights on the power of education to uplift marginalised communities in Chiang Rai, Thailand. Recent graduate of Xavier Learning Community Chalerm Sri shared about the many opportunities that her education at XLC has brought her.



Thank you to our wonderful community

For the second year in a row, Jesuit Mission community events could not go ahead in their traditional forms due to COVID-19 restrictions. However, this did not stop our supporters rallying together to support those people living on the margins in new and creative ways.

Our supporters in both Sydney and Melbourne generously got behind the virtual Maytime Fair and the Bazaar, donating funds, purchasing raffle tickets and buying online jams, preserves and wine from virtual fair stalls.

This would have been the 70th year of both events and we are extremely grateful to the Maytime Fair and the Bazaar committees, students, parents, staff and alumni of St Aloysius, St Ignatius and Xavier Colleges for their creativity, flexibility and generosity.

Students at our Jesuit and Companion schools participated in peer-to-peer walks, readathons, online cook-offs, mini-fairs, and mission days. Following Ignatius' call to be 'men and women for others', our students found ways to stand in solidarity and raise funds for our



brothers and sisters overseas who were facing even greater challenges due to the health and economic impacts of this pandemic.

We are also very grateful to all the parishes, who despite COVID restrictions and online Masses, ran parish appeals, raising funds for Jesuit Mission works.



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Names of some of the participants mentioned in this report have been changed to protect their privacy.



Thanks to your generosity, over 12 remote villages in Timor-Leste now have access to clean water.