

# Gratitude Report 2023



# From the Provincial

---



Dear Companions in Mission,

I am delighted to present the 2023 Jesuit Mission Gratitude Report. For over 70 years Jesuit Mission has led by example as the development arm of the Australian Jesuit Province, standing in solidarity with

our marginalised sisters and brothers around the world.

Pope Francis says, *“For the poor to overcome their oppressive situation, they need to sense the presence of brothers and sisters who are concerned for them and, by opening the doors of their hearts and lives, make them feel like friends and family.”*

This year, I have seen our Jesuit Mission community truly acting in this spirit, opening your hearts with compassion and generosity to make a tangible difference to the lives of our sisters and brothers living in the global margins.

Your solidarity enables my Jesuit brothers and their lay collaborators to accompany marginalised communities to liberate themselves from poverty and injustice.

In 2023, our joint efforts positively impacted the lives of over **260,000** individuals through various projects spanning Asia and Africa. In addition, we reached another **290,000** people through our Lok Manch advocacy and tribal empowerment project in India. This was made possible through collaborative initiatives with the global Jesuit network. I sincerely express my gratitude for all that you’ve generously contributed towards building a more inclusive and just world, where humanity can truly flourish.

I would also like to thank the Jesuit Mission Board and staff here in Australia who work tirelessly to facilitate our local and global efforts.

As we look forward to the year ahead, and renew our commitment to work together to uplift communities around the world, let us draw inspiration from the wisdom of St Ignatius: *“Go forth and set the world on fire.”*

With blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Quyen', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Fr Quyen Vu SJ**  
Australian Jesuit Provincial

---

## About Jesuit Mission Australia

*Jesuit Mission is the international development organisation of the Australian Jesuits.*

Founded in 1951, Jesuit Mission partners with Jesuit networks overseas to deliver community-led, sustainable programs that cultivate resilience and self-reliance for vulnerable communities, primarily in India and south-east Asia.

### *Our Vision*

An inclusive and just world where humanity flourishes.

### *Our Inspiration*

*‘I came so that they may have life and have it more abundantly’* John 10:10

# From the CEO

---



Dear Friends,

Reflecting on 2023, I am deeply moved by the faith, compassion and action of our Jesuit Mission family. As our sisters and brothers overseas faced another year shouldering hardships including war, conflict,

natural disasters and poverty, you have not turned away.

Once again, you, our faithful companions in mission, have stood in solidarity with the most vulnerable members of our global family. You have prayed, acted and responded to our call to serve, raising an incredible \$7 million in the last year.

This extraordinary outpouring of love – including the compassionate efforts of all our supporters, parishes, committees, schools and volunteers – has enabled our local Jesuit partners in 14 countries to reach more than 550,000 people through 63 life-changing projects.

Your assistance through the Emergency Action Fund has been crucial for those impacted by natural disasters in Syria and Myanmar, and conflicts in Ukraine, Myanmar and South Sudan.

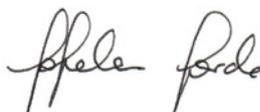
Thanks to your generosity, our partners on the frontlines could deliver prompt, life-saving relief and ongoing support during the darkest times.

The trust that you place in Jesuit Mission and our partners is humbling, and something we do not take lightly. Jesuit Mission is committed to stewarding all donated funds to best serve our global family as we work to empower the vulnerable, to challenge unjust structures that perpetrate poverty, and to create a world where all people are equal.

I sincerely thank our project partners overseas who work hand in hand with local communities to realise our mission, and our dedicated Board, staff and volunteers whose passion inspires me every day.

Please enjoy reading the stories of your impact in this Gratitude Report and join me in keeping the displaced and marginalised members of our global family in your thoughts and prayers.

With deep gratitude,



**Helen Forde**  
CEO, Jesuit Mission

---

## Our Mission

Inspired by the Gospel of Jesus Christ and in the spirit of St Ignatius of Loyola, we partner with international Jesuit networks to empower communities living on the margins to free themselves from poverty and injustice.

## Our Values



**Faith & Compassion**



**Justice & Integrity**



**Solidarity & Empowerment**

# Your support, your impact



You are helping to break stigma, discrimination and provide vital assistance and independence to **3,500 people living with a disability and their families.**



**Vocational training skills** leads to empowerment, employment and freedom. You uplifted **3,000 participants**, enabling them to learn new skills to flourish and live with dignity.



Education is the key towards a brighter future. Through your generosity, **22,500 students throughout Asia have received quality education** from the Jesuits, unlocking new pathways out of poverty for those on the margins. Through your continuous support over many years, building critical education infrastructure in India, Timor-Leste and Cambodia, **more than 28,000 students are educated each year**, thanks to your legacy and long-term commitment to Jesuit Mission.



Almost **300,000 people have participated in capacity building initiatives** across Jesuit supported projects in India. Through advocacy and awareness raising, vulnerable communities receive greater access to basic services and become empowered with new skills.



Thanks to you, **171,000 people received emergency humanitarian assistance** this past year alone. By offering essential services and psychosocial support, your contribution ensures that people in crisis are receiving the care they need, when they need it most.



**Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) programs** ensure children have access to safe drinking water, accessible toilet facilities and practice good hygiene to contribute to their well-being and vitality. Your support has improved the standard of health for **more than 23,000 people**, building resilience, encouraging school attendance, inspiring new livelihood opportunities and healthier environments.



You accompanied over **25,000 refugees** across Asia and Africa with much needed education, livelihood training, psychosocial support and housing assistance.



Healthcare is a critical element of living a full life. Through your support **25,000 individuals now have access to healthcare** in remote and rural areas as well as detention centres.



You have supported the **planting of over 13,000 seedlings** as part of our ecology project in Cambodia. This project educates children on the importance of caring for our common home and associated environmental impacts.



Please scan the QR code to see our full financial statement.



Over  
**550,000**  
people supported  
through our programs



**63**  
projects



**14**  
countries



**28**  
partners

# Legacy of compassion

**Thanks to kind gifts left by Jesuit Mission supporters in their Wills, the lives of vulnerable young people in Cambodia are being transformed through educational scholarships.**

Before receiving a scholarship to Xavier Jesuit School (XJS), Rany never imagined she'd have the opportunity to complete her schooling. *"If I wasn't in this program, I may have already stopped studying,"* she says.

Like many in her rural community in northern Cambodia, Rany's family has faced many challenges. With little education, her parents worked tirelessly to provide for the family, often crossing the border to work in Thailand for extended periods.

But thanks to the scholarship she received four years ago, Rany is now getting the education she needs to build a pathway out of poverty for her and her family.

With the inspiring objective *"Dare to Dream of a Brighter Future"*, XJS was founded in 2015 by our local Jesuit partner Jesuit Service Cambodia. The school offers more than 800 students in one of

the poorest regions of Cambodia affordable, comprehensive education across the full Cambodian curriculum, including English, Khmer, maths and computer studies.

For scholarship students, like Rany, the costs of food, accommodation, school fees, and uniforms are funded by bequest gifts from Jesuit Mission supporters like you, allowing students to fully participate in school without placing any financial burden on their families.

Now in Year 12, Rany has been thriving at XJS, regularly receiving class honours. She plans to go on to study Khmer Literature at university and one day become a middle school teacher. *"I hope I can return to my village and share my knowledge,"* she says. *"I want to do this because I know not many kids in my village have the opportunity to learn."*

***We are deeply grateful to every compassionate person who has left a gift in their Will to Jesuit Mission. The impact of their legacy is profound and will be felt for generations to come by students like Rany, her family and community.***



*Rany (centre) studying with her peers.*

# Cultivating seeds of change

**With you by their side, our local partner Karuna Battambang Organisation (KBO) is bringing together almost 650 rural farmers in Cambodia and equipping them with sustainable agricultural techniques and skills to sell their produce.**

KBO's Community Development program works by establishing small, local self-help co-operatives. These co-ops include around 23 member farmers and one team leader, like Kem Mao who leads the co-op in rural Pursat province.

Each co-op receives \$250 to begin sustainable farming activities and set up a savings plan that will help their operations continue to run smoothly. The co-op might use these savings to purchase items like new farm kits, buy new breeds of chickens or respond to damaging events like flooding.

To ensure success, KBO provides co-op members with skills training, which includes learning how to sustainably raise livestock, farm vegetables and implement a system of growing

rice called SRI (System of Rice Intensification) that uses fewer seeds, less water and no chemicals. KBO also promotes direct access to markets that helps farmers receive fair prices for their crops.

*"Our team plants various vegetables such as corn, pumpkin, eggplant, cabbage, cucumber and string beans," says Kem Mao. "We also rear animals... and grow rice by implementing the SRI."* As team leader, Kem Mao also manages the savings plan for her community, distributing seeds and lending money for villagers to start rice plantations and for livestock farming. She manages the sale of the group's harvest to local shops and markets, and deposits the earnings back into the co-op's savings plan.

While very busy with her responsibilities to the co-op, the mother of four is delighted by the many improvements she's seen in her community as they learn and share new techniques. *"We also started a local community shop to help farmers sell their produce," she says. "And the prices are fair. Everything at the shop is fresh."*



*Kem Mao (left) now empowered along with other farmers to work sustainably and set up a savings plan that will benefit the whole community.*

# From student to mentor

***“This project is giving more children opportunities to progress in life. I am proud to be a tutor here,” says Deepak, who is living with a polio-related disability and began teaching Dalit children through the Ankur Project when he was a high school student himself.***

Run by the Hazaribag Jesuits in India, the Ankur Project provides education to Dalit children, who are part of the group of marginalised and excluded people formerly referred to as ‘untouchables’.

The Ankur Project initially began in 2020 in response to COVID-19. As schools closed, the project set up tuition centres in five parishes to ensure vulnerable Dalit children in rural areas had ongoing access to education.

With your support, the Ankur Project has now grown to include 100 tuition centres and supported almost 3,000 Dalit children in 2023.

At each tuition centre, students learn English, Hindi and maths, giving them the skills they need to access new opportunities and uplift themselves and their families.

The project also aims to reach Dalit parents and nurture their interest in the educational life of their children, helping them develop greater confidence in their children’s capabilities.



***Deepak is proud to inspire the next generation to pursue an education.***

Importantly, Ankur also provides job opportunities for local tutors, like Deepak, who are not only role models for the children in the community, but understand the challenges faced by students and other community members.

In his final year at a college in Tandwa, studying an honours degree in history, Deepak is a beacon of courage and inspiration for his students. *“I find it so rewarding,”* he says. *“I think it’s important to demonstrate to the young people in this community that education is a powerful tool to determine their own futures.”*



***Deepak’s students studying outside on the rooftop.***

# Empowering young minds

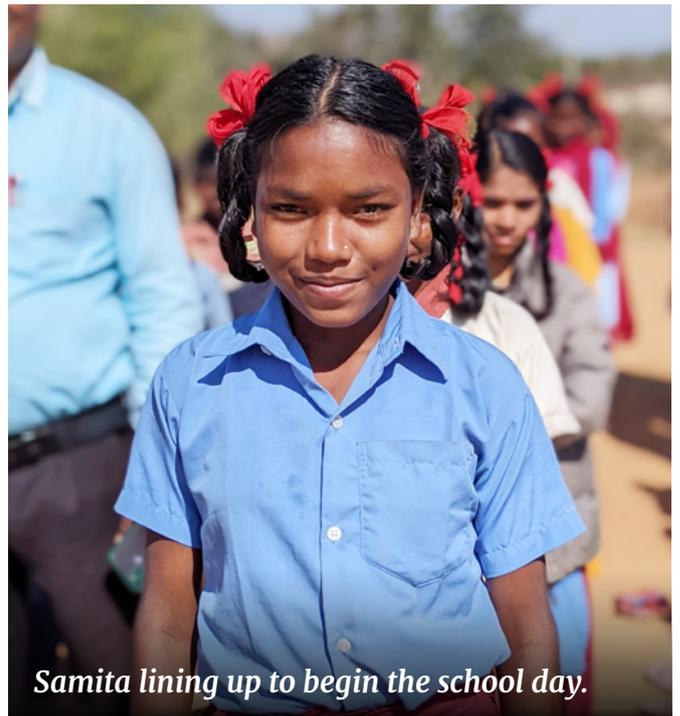
**What began as lessons under a tree on 12 acres of land owned by the Hazaribag Jesuits has blossomed into a vibrant learning environment that is providing quality education to more than 200 enthusiastic students from the Korwa tribe in north-eastern India.**

At the request of villagers who felt the local government school was unable to provide adequate education for their children, the Hazaribag Jesuits started the Tenuahi primary school in April 2022. Since then, word of the school has spread, with some children, like Samita, travelling by public transport for two hours each way to attend this new school.

Samita, a bright Grade 4 student who diligently attends classes so she can one day become a nurse, writes:

*"I'm the youngest of 11. I have eight sisters and two brothers. They are all married and not studying. My father is a farmer and my mother does not work. I used to attend the school in my family's village; however, I did not receive the quality of education I needed. I chose to come to Tenuahi on my own and my mother supported this and brought me. I like to play here with my friends and my favourite subject is English. My parents are very happy that I am attending this school."*

Thanks to the compassionate support from our Jesuit Mission family, six classrooms were built in 2023 to facilitate teaching and learning, and plans are underway for further essential buildings. In addition, your generosity is helping to fund teacher salaries, training for teachers and parents, and learning materials so that rural children, like Samita, can receive the education they need to achieve their dreams.



*Samita lining up to begin the school day.*



*Young students joyfully dancing in the classroom.*

# Dreamers become achievers

**For students, like 24-year-old Su Mae, from ethnic minority groups in rural northern Thailand, a scholarship to study a Bachelor Degree at Xavier Learning Community in Chiang Rai, Thailand opens doors to a better life filled with boundless possibilities.**

*"Before coming here, I did not think I had many opportunities in life," she says. "Now I understand if I apply myself to my studies, I will be able to have a career and help support my family."*

As the youngest daughter of rural subsistence farmers, Su Mae felt her future was pre-determined as both of her older sisters had to abandon their studies to start working to support the family. Yet, thanks to your generosity, Su Mae can receive a quality education and rewrite her future.

In 2023, XLC supported more than 100 students from vulnerable Indigenous groups including Akha, H'mong, Karen and Lanna. This holistic education model helps students find meaningful employment, build more sustainable communities and to serve others.



*Grateful for receiving an education Sue Mae now dreams of a brighter future.*

# Teaching against the odds

**Maiah's family has spent over 27 years living in a refugee camp with over 8,000 displaced people on the Thailand-Myanmar border. Maiah and her three younger siblings have known no other home.**

As the conflict in Myanmar continues to displace vulnerable communities, your support is building better foundations for family's like Maiah's, who wait tirelessly for resettlement or safe return to their homes. *"It was too difficult to leave the camp, to find a job and make a living," she says.*

But, with your help, Maiah, now 21, has secured employment as a teacher through the 'Sustaining education for Burmese Refugees' program run by our local partner Jesuit Refugee Service Asia Pacific.

The program funds training and salaries for teachers in the camp. *"Teaching helps me serve my community and inspire my younger siblings,"* says Maiah, who has become the sole income earner for her family.



*Maiah teaching in the classroom.*

# A water project making waves

**Thanks to the generous support of our Jesuit Mission family, vulnerable people in rural Timor-Leste are gaining vital access to safe water.**

Run by our local partner Jesuit Social Service Timor-Leste (JSS), in partnership with local communities, six new water systems were installed in rural communities in Ermera and Liquica in 2023.

*“After 20 years of independence, many Timorese living in rural areas still do not have access to basic water facilities,”* says Fr Júlio Sosa SJ, Director of JSS Timor-Leste. *“We thought that as Jesuits we could help lessen this burden.”*

The impact of this project is life-changing. Villagers can now easily access fresh and clean water in safe conditions. They now have more time in their day as the average water collection round-trip, including queuing, has significantly reduced to less than 30 minutes.

In 2023, the project provided 1,862 people, including 500 children, with access to clean water. Another six communities are scheduled to receive water systems in 2024.



*Fr Júlio Sosa SJ (second right) and the community of Manuleu celebrate the inauguration of a new water facility.*

## Better facilities for better health

**Alongside safe water systems, in 2023 our local Jesuit partner, Jesuit Social Service, installed 15 new toilet units and ran hygiene promotion activities in two rural Timorese communities, directly benefitting a total of 50 people.**

Thanks to your kindness, this sanitation project is having an immediate impact on the health and dignity of rural community members. With facilities including showers and toilets in place in several villages, there are already fewer reported instances of diarrhoea and skin irritations.

Improved hygiene practices have also helped prevent the spread of diseases.

Mario and his family are grateful to receive the new sanitation facilities. *“My children and I have no problem with water now ... and now we have showers and a toilet for our necessities. Thank you to the Jesuits and the donors who continue to improve our lives.”*



*Mario stands out the front of the new sanitation facility next door to his house.*

# Emergency Action Fund

---

When conflict, war and natural disasters devastate communities, your support through our Emergency Action Fund helps Jesuit Mission provide immediate relief and ongoing assistance to our brothers and sisters in need.

Since 2020, the Emergency Action Fund has provided vital help to more than 700,000 people. In 2023, your gifts have helped bring tangible support and vital hope to people affected by crisis across four countries.

## Syria

The Jesuits in Syria are providing vital aid to survivors of the devastating February 2023 earthquakes that struck Syria and Turkey. Your generosity has helped deliver food, life-saving winter-kits and psychosocial support to 44,000 people and will continue to bring longer term support to traumatised children, women and men in hard-hit Aleppo and neighbouring areas.



## Myanmar

In the last few months of 2023, conflict intensified in Myanmar displacing another 600,000 people. With growing political conflict combined with the devastating and far reaching impact of Cyclone Mocha in May 2023, your support is helping our partner, Myanmar Jesuit Region, to provide shelter, food and medicine for immediate relief, and vital education outreach programs.



## Ukraine

Our brothers and sisters in Ukraine continue to endure the largest European humanitarian crisis in recent history. Thanks to your support, our collaboration with Jesuit Refugee Service Europe and the Xavier Network has helped over 100,000 forcibly displaced people in neighbouring countries to rebuild their lives. With our Australian Jesuit Mission family by their side, our partners are able to welcome, protect, promote and integrate displaced Ukrainians into new communities, and provide accommodation, legal assistance and education programs.



In 2023, we supported Jesuit Refugee Service **South Sudan** to respond to the refugee crisis in Sudan helping hundreds of families who crossed the border, with shelter, food, water and psychosocial support.

# Shaping a nation's future

**With the important support of our Jesuit Mission family, our partner Myanmar Jesuit Region is offering more than 2,800 students quality education programs that are building tangible hope for a more just and democratic future for the nation.**

*"This program is very important to me," says Seng Ra, a 22-year-old scholarship student at St Aloysius Gonzaga Institute. "It has always been my dream to study. In the future I want to become a teacher and share my knowledge and experiences with my community."*

Before beginning at St Aloysius Gonzaga Institute (SAG), Seng Ra was a shy teenager, unable to speak English or confidently express herself. Now she is just one of the many young people who will go on to create real and meaningful change in Myanmar – starting in the camps for Internally Displaced People, where Seng Ra's family lives.

Thanks to the support of people like you, Myanmar Jesuit Region is able to provide outstanding education to young people, like Seng Ra, through three key education institutions across the country: Myanmar Leadership Institute (MLI), St Aloysius Gonzaga Institute (SAG), and Campion Institute.

These schools aim to transform Myanmar society by building the capacity of young

women and men, especially those from poor and marginalised communities. To maximise societal impact, each school has a special focus. In 2023, MLI trained 541 post-graduate students to become compassionate leaders; SAG offered English language courses and teacher training that empowered 1,300 young people to educate others in their community; and Campion Institute provided English language courses to 1,019 younger students from the poorest communities.

In partnership with Jesuit Mission, Myanmar Jesuit Region is now expanding their reach and running a network of Community Colleges. In 2023, 400 marginalised young people who had dropped out of school or cannot access formal education were trained and provided with practical skills and new employment opportunities.

Sut Mai Tu Ja, the new Coordinator of the Community College program, is inspired by the difference this program will make to the lives of young people – and his country. *"Our vision is to help vulnerable youth become mature and employable individuals who can contribute to Myanmar society,"* he says. *"I am fully committed to this vision and look forward to creating a brighter future for the individuals we serve."*



Seng Ra studying at SAG.



Sut Mai Tu Ja (left) teaching at the Community College.

# Faith in action

---

## It was a delight to see our faithful community come together at events in 2023.

From the Jesuit Mission Bazaar held at Saint Ignatius' College, Riverview, to the Melbourne Golf Day and Maytime Fair held at Xavier College, Kew – and all the bake sales, walks and fundraisers in between – each event was infused with a sense of joy, purpose and companionship. Every event centres on a shared humanity and putting our faith in action.

We're so grateful to all the volunteers, committee members, teachers, students and friends across parishes, schools and communities who go above and beyond to make these events possible.

We're thrilled to see our community embrace sustainability, ensuring events are more and more eco-friendly by reducing waste, recycling and minimising our environmental impact.



# Thank you to the Korean-Australian community

---

## A heartfelt thank you to the compassionate Jesuit Mission Korean community in Australia for their unwavering support of Xavier Jesuit School (XJS) in Cambodia.

Their dedication shines through a collaborative effort with our esteemed Jesuit partner, Gipum Nanum (Joy of Sharing Foundation), based in Seoul, Korea. Together, a sponsorship campaign from Korean-Australians, in Australia, is orchestrating a transformative journey for the rural students of XJS.

*"Your support is making a profound difference. Most of the students enrolled at XJS come from families facing economic hardships, where the dream of receiving even a primary school education seems distant,"* says Fr Yoseop Seok SJ, the Executive Director of Gipum Nanum.

Our Korean-Australian companions are travelling on a journey of education with the students, fostering dreams and instilling hope.

*"Through our collaborative efforts, we are not just providing education; we are building a bridge of compassion between Korean-Australians and the students in Cambodia,"* says Fr Yoseop.



*Students at Xavier Jesuit School Cambodia.*

# Empowering international collaboration

From 26 to 30 June, Jesuit Mission held our inaugural partners meeting at the Cebu Centre of Ignatian Spirituality in the Philippines. Fifty-three Jesuit and lay collaborators attended from 11 different countries across South-East Asia.

The meeting served as a valuable platform for Jesuit Mission and our partners to come together and discuss key focus areas. Topics and workshops included Compliance, Financial Management, Fe y Alegria, Disability Inclusive Development, Project Management, Impact and Reporting.

The program reinvigorated our collaborative mission and commitment to ensuring that effective and responsible practices are upheld by all partners in all of their programs.

Dedicated training sessions on Child Safeguarding, facilitated by a technical expert from Jesuit Refugee Service International, further emphasised the importance of protecting vulnerable individuals and upholding ethical standards within Jesuit Mission's projects and initiatives around the world.

*"We feel enriched, challenged, empowered and supported to continue God's mission entrusted to each one of us in our respective place,"* says Fr Júlio Sosa SJ, project partner and Director of Jesuit Social Service Timor-Leste.



The meeting was a wonderful opportunity to collaborate and form friendships with people from different countries, to share and learn from each other's experiences in Jesuit ministries.

*"It was such a fruitful and encouraging experience celebrated with great solidarity, friendship, exchange and learning. A very blessed time together indeed, guided by the Spirit and listening to the voices of our International Jesuit partners. Our Jesuit partners are capable local and international leaders, cultivating a better tomorrow for our marginalised sisters and brothers around the world. Here's to the next one!"* said Helen Forde, CEO of Jesuit Mission.





*Eladia (left), treasurer for the school garden council is learning sustainable farming practices through the food security project in Timor-Leste.*



**Mail:** PO Box 193, North Sydney 2059  
**Phone:** (02) 8918 4109  
**Website:** [jesuitmission.org.au](http://jesuitmission.org.au)  
**Email:** [support@jesuitmission.org.au](mailto:support@jesuitmission.org.au)  
**Facebook:** [facebook.com/jesuitmission](https://facebook.com/jesuitmission)  
**Instagram:** [instagram.com/jesuitmissionaus/](https://instagram.com/jesuitmissionaus/)

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



Australian Jesuit Fr Mark Raper SJ captured this young girl who is from a community where one of our Community Colleges in Myanmar is located. As she watched bicycles being distributed to the college students, she shared how she is excited to pursue her own education.