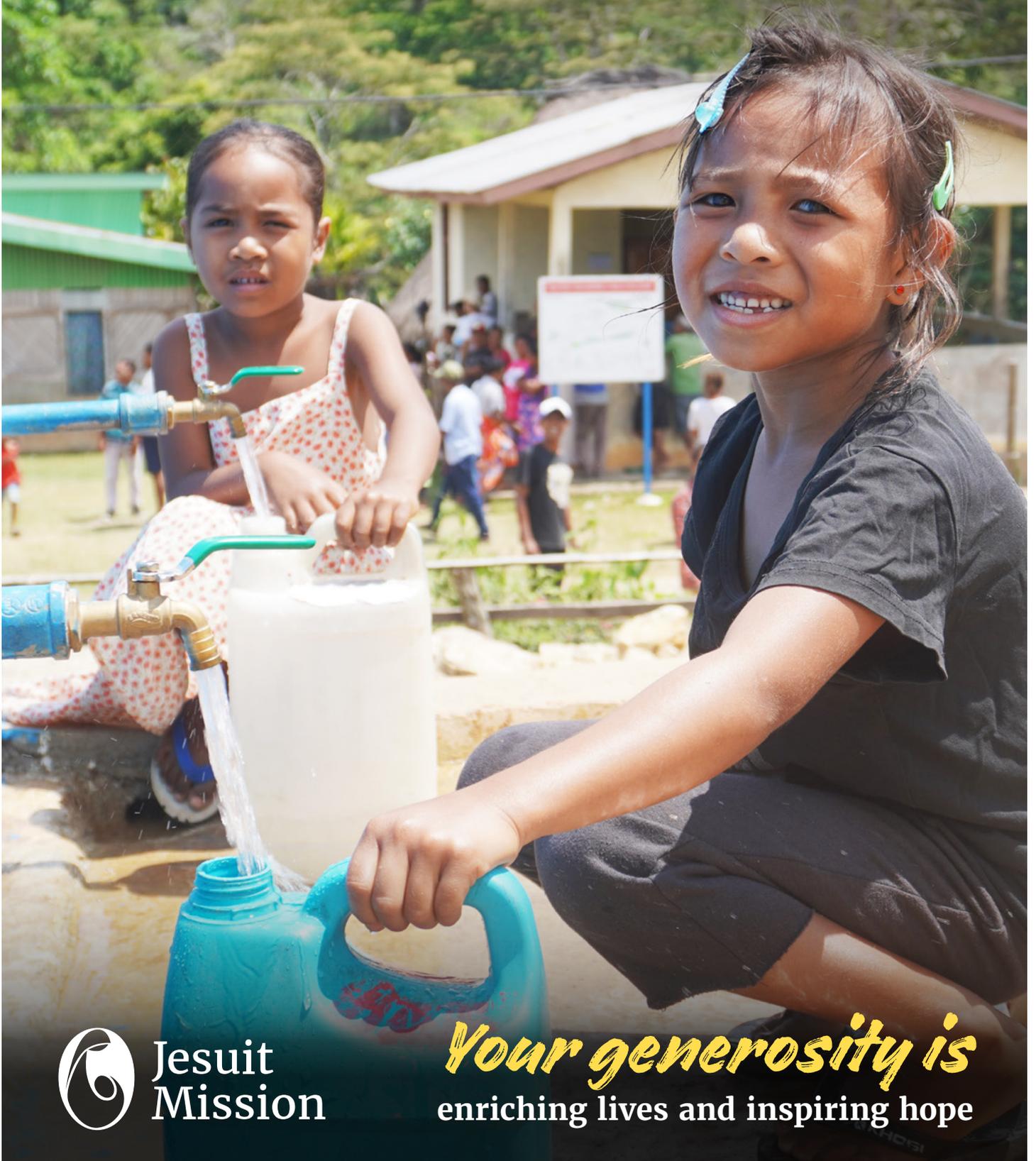


Reflections

Our actions in review

Issue #634 Summer 2025



Jesuit
Mission

Your generosity is
enriching lives and inspiring hope

From our CEO



Dear Friends,

As we reflect on the joy of Christmas and the promise of a new year, I hope you and your loved ones have experienced a season of peace, grace, and renewal.

As always, I'm delighted to share the latest edition of our newsletter, Reflections.

The following pages are filled with stories of hope, empowerment and transformation that are only possible thanks to your solidarity and unwavering support. Please enjoy reading about your incredible impact which includes helping farmers in Cambodia develop new skills to build sustainable incomes; opening new pathways for refugees in camps in Malawi; and creating independent futures for children living with disabilities in India.

I also want to thank everyone who supported our Emergency Action Fund, and our partners overseas who responded to the conflict in Lebanon and the devastation of Typhoon Yagi in Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam. We pray for those living in emergency crises around the world.

With blessings for the year ahead,

Helen Forde
Chief Executive Officer

A family of faith

We're deeply grateful to our compassionate community, including people like Paul and Harry Brogan, whose devotion to our mission is truly inspiring.

For 40 years, Paul served on the organising committee of the Jesuit Mission Bazaar held annually at Saint Ignatius' College Riverview. Paul began volunteering in 1977 as an 'apprentice' of previous Bazaar Convenor, Darcy Hall, and has been a driving force in Bazaar logistics and rides.

Often inspired by his friend Fr Phil Crotty SJ, previous Director of Jesuit Mission and Hazaribag Missionary of over 50 years, who'd say: ***"It is the small acts of kindness to total strangers that holds us all together."***

Paul's son, Harry, has attended the Bazaar since he was born, taking on different roles helping his dad more and more as he grew. Now an adult, Harry hasn't yet missed a Bazaar.



Thank you Paul & Harry for your incredible support!



With sadness, we share the passing of Fr William (Bill) Dwyer SJ (1930-2024). Fr Bill devoted decades in India to uplifting tribal communities through education and spiritual guidance. We keep him in our prayers. Rest in Peace.

The end of water scarcity

“We never had clean water since the time of our parents and grandparents,” says Leocardia, one of the 204 residents from a small village in Dili, Timor-Leste.

For decades, the locals have had to seek out water. With no clean sources available, they'd risk drinking slightly salty water from a source on a nearby hill. Often vulnerable families would be forced to choose between buying clean water or paying for food or education.

Your kind support has helped make a vital change. Thanks to you, our partner Jesuit Social Service Timor-Leste has worked alongside community members to bring clean water to over 6,524 people since 2018.

Women and children no longer face the exhausting daily task of walking one to two kilometres to find water.

“This year, our children will focus only on their studies rather than taking buckets to fetch water from other places,” says Floriano, the project's Community Coordinator.



The water project has also expanded beyond Dili to bring clean water to villages in Suai.

Empowering families through sanitation

Bikaun is a widow who lives with her children and grandchildren in a village in the Dili Municipality of Timor-Leste. Until recently, the family's living conditions made it challenging to maintain good hygiene and sanitation.

“Previously we relied on my eldest sister's toilet nearby,” Bikaun said. *“Before that, we used open spaces in the woods or grass, which was very unhygienic.”*

Supported by people like you, our local partner Jesuit Social Service Timor-Leste (JSS), is helping to improve basic sanitation and access to water for families like Bikaun's.

The project constructed a new toilet for Bikaun's family and they are accessing the new community water station.



Bikaun (centre), Fr Julio Sousa SJ, Director of JSS (second right) and the JSS team.

For Bikaun the change has been transformative, enabling her and her family to live healthier lives with greater dignity. *“I am very happy and thankful to JSS,”* she says.

As a result children are now using proper sanitation facilities, which has led to a decrease in diseases related to poor waste management.



MLI students participated in a workshop designed to equip young people with essential communication skills, including effective listening to become active and engaged leaders.

Inspiring compassionate leaders

With over four million people displaced from the escalating political crisis in Myanmar, our sisters and brothers there are seeking new ways to build a better, more just society. Jesuit Mission has long stood in solidarity with the people of Myanmar, and we continue to pray for strength, hope, and healing in this time of deep struggle.

For those who aspire to lead Myanmar into an era of peace and hope, the Myanmar Leadership Institute (MLI), run by our local partner Myanmar Jesuit Region, offers courses that provide a new vision of leadership built on social justice, critical thinking and compassion.

Your compassionate generosity is helping MLI educate over 500 students every year from all walks of life. These leaders-in-training study a well-designed curriculum that includes nation-building, ethical principles, social inclusion, leadership and strategic thinking.

Sister Margaret, who oversees a kindergarten in Yangon, was nominated by her parish to participate in an MLI 'Religious Life and Leadership Skills' workshop. The workshop, which includes a mix of exercises, activities and group discussions, empowers participants like Sister Margaret with leadership techniques that help them make a meaningful contribution in their individual workplaces and the community beyond.

“Before the program, I was not sure how to guide my teachers. Now I understand how to create a positive learning environment,” Sister Margaret says. *“I’ve also learned that to be a good facilitator it means to work with local people and know how to approach the local leaders.”*

MLI alumni like Sister Margaret are already proving to be inspiring, creative leaders who are actively building a more peaceful and harmonious society in Myanmar.

For supporters like you, Sister Margaret has this heartfelt message:

“I would like to thank you, who are responsible for our learning experiences. I found meaning in this course, and believe I can bring a little hope and make the future brighter for the education of our generation in Myanmar.”



Sister Margaret graduating from the Leadership skills workshop.



Mrs Narin and her husband are proud to have learnt new sustainable farming techniques.



Nurturing the land

“I would like to thank the Karuna Battambang Organisation (KBO) for supporting me and the members of my community. Thank you for instructing us to become farmers that are connected with nature and helping us to reduce the use of chemical fertilisers, which is better for the health of my family and community.”

These are the words of Mrs Houv Narin, a 34-year-old mother of two, who lives in a small village in a rural area of Battambang province, Cambodia.

Before attending the Community Development Program run by our local partner KBO, Mrs Narin and her husband could not make a sustainable living from their small subsistence farm. Instead, they had to travel great distances to make a livelihood from fishing.

The work was hard, after paying for travel and living expenses, the couple had little left over to support their two children. Both parents also felt very unhappy about being away from their children for extended periods of time and worried about their education.

Thanks to the support of people like you, Mrs Narin had the opportunity to change the future of her family.

She joined the Community Development Program, where farmers are empowered to form self-help cooperatives that receive training in eco-friendly farming methods. These include the System of Rice Intensification (SRI), a technique that requires fewer seeds, less water, and no chemicals.

Mrs Narin is one of the 600 rural farmers who has participated in the program and now utilises the SRI method to grow more food with reduced exposure to harmful chemicals and fertilisers. Farmers receive some income to kick-start other sustainable farming activities and establish a savings plan which in turn supports a circular economy within their villages.

These days Mrs Narin and her family are thriving, with both children attending school and being cared for by their loving parents who no longer need to travel to make a living.



Kabir (right) with his mother and brother.



Once unable to speak or socialise, Kabir is now becoming an independent and active member of his family and community.

Inclusion through early intervention

Until recently, 9-year-old Kabir lived in a silent world. He was unable to hear, speak or socialise, and couldn't look after himself like other children his age.

Kabir, who is autistic, lives in a small village in Karnataka Province in southwest India. He belongs to an Indigenous tribal group, Vaddar, which suffers ongoing discrimination. Living with autism, Kabir was pushed even further into the margins.

Without intervention, he was facing a future with very limited opportunities.

But, with the compassionate support of people like you, our local partners North Karnataka Jesuits and Loyola Vikasa Kendra (LVK), have launched a Sustainable Development project that's helping marginalised Indigenous people – like Kabir – realise their full potential.

This three-year project is fostering social inclusion in a range of ways, including Jesuit-run tuition centres that offer early intervention training and workshops on disability and inclusion for health and pre-school workers.

For Kabir, the support he's received has been life-changing.

Kabir is now learning to speak and, thanks to a scholarship, he's attending school for the first time.

At the special-needs school he attends in Mundgod, Kabir and his peers receive the guided support they need to thrive.

For Kabir, who'll continue at the school until Year 10, tutors are helping him to socialise, develop his basic literacy and improve his communication and living skills. Although still a little shy, he is an eager learner and, during his time at the school, will build the skills he needs to become independent and self-reliant in future.

This inspiring project also empowers village leaders to become effective advocates for their communities, working towards more sustainable development and bringing hope and opportunity to Indigenous people living with discrimination.



Joseph (left) with his peers.

Recoding the future of camp-bound refugees

“My life before was very tough. I had no activity that could help me generate any income. My family and I were really suffering,” says Joseph, a participant in the Pathfinder Digital Inclusion Program, Malawi. *“Now my life has changed completely. With the money that I earn online, I can cover our daily needs.”*

Joseph, 24, is one of 56,000 people living in the Dzaleka camp in Malawi. Life in Dzaleka is extremely challenging for our sisters and brothers. Resettlement takes an average of 21-26 years, and during those long years, movement is restricted with very limited opportunity to leave the camp to earn a livelihood. As a result, many people live in poverty, forced to rely on food rations to survive.

To help create income streams for camp-bound refugees, our local partner Jesuit Refugee Service Malawi runs the Pathfinder Digital Inclusion Program.

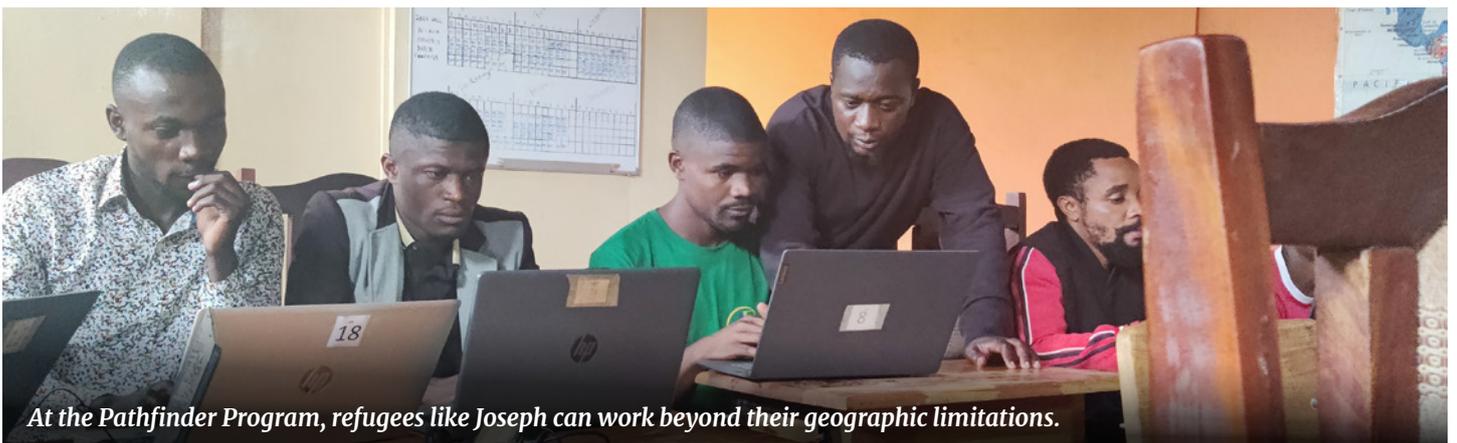
With the kind support of people like you, this innovative program trains over 400 participants each year in marketable digital skills.

Comprehensive courses empower students to compete in the global online job market and earn valuable income from freelancing and remote work.

Joseph first became involved in the program in 2021, and has become a top-earning freelancer, consistently making enough money to support himself and his family.

Over the last three years, Joseph has worked hard to hone his skills and expand his online services, frequently engaging other community members to work on projects. *“I receive contracts in Data Management with Artificial Intelligence companies that require native people who can speak local languages,”* he explains. *“I hire people to work with me, and the money I pay them helps my community to live a better life.”*

As graduates like Joseph harness their skills and uplift their community, there is a new feeling of hope for the future within the confines of the Dzaleka camp. *“With Digital Inclusion, all our dreams become true,”* he says.



At the Pathfinder Program, refugees like Joseph can work beyond their geographic limitations.



The Arrupe Migrant Centre provides shelter for migrants who were denied support from other shelters.



Faith moves mountains

Typhoon Yagi, one of the strongest storms to hit Southeast Asia in decades, brought severe flooding and landslides, especially to Myanmar, Vietnam and Laos.

Tragically, hundreds of lives were lost, thousands of people displaced and countless homes, schools and businesses were destroyed. Many people across the region were left struggling to access food and clean water.

Assisted by our Emergency Action Fund, our local Jesuit partners in Myanmar, Vietnam, and Laos worked with people of all faiths to deliver essential relief to those in urgent need.

“I witnessed how the Catholic and Buddhist faiths met, as persons of goodwill to love and serve the neediest flood-affected displaced persons,” said Fr Girish Santiago SJ, Regional Superior of Myanmar. *“I was truly touched by how faith moves mountains to serve all without any discrimination, with compassion.”*

Sheltering hope

Generous contributions to the Emergency Action Fund have helped our local partner, Jesuit Refugee Service Lebanon, with the support of Middle East & North Africa (JRS MENA), provide urgent relief to over 12,000 displaced people in southern Lebanon.

As the crisis in the Middle East continues, airstrikes have forced many families in southern Lebanon to flee their homes. Alongside these locals, already vulnerable migrant workers and Syrian refugees have also been displaced.

With a harsh winter fast approaching, JRS Lebanon has provided much needed

food, hygiene kits and winter essentials to over 6,000 families by December, reaching an additional 1,000 per week.

At the Jesuit Church of St Joseph, the Arrupe Migrant Centre has been fitted out with beds and mattresses, in order to provide a safe haven for migrants and refugees who have been turned away from other shelters.

Additionally, JRS MENA is offering protection and psychological support for vulnerable people and families – especially children – dealing with the trauma of conflict and displacement.

Our wonderful Melbourne Stampies send a message of thanks to everyone who has collected and donated stamps to them throughout the year. If you're interested in donating stamps or volunteering on the 'Stampies' team, please contact our office at support@jesuitmission.org.au

Upcoming Events

Melbourne Golf Day
28 February

Maytime Fair
3 May

Jesuit Mission Bazaar
13 September



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



With clean water now practically on their doorstep, children in rural Timor-Leste don't need to spend hours fetching water for their families and can focus on their education.