

MEDIA RELEASE

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Celebrate World Mission Month

World Mission Month is a time when Catholics all over the world join to support and celebrate global missionary work. Catholic Mission, as the Australian arm of the Pontifical Mission Societies, plays a vital role.

“What Catholic Mission and the international network of Pontifical Mission Societies can do, is to help some of the most vulnerable people in the world”, says Catholic Mission National Director, Fr Brian Lucas.

“This year World Mission Month in October focuses on the essential work of priests, religious and lay missionaries in Cambodia, supporting people with disability and their families.”

The Arrupe Centre and Outreach Program, run by Bishop Enrique ‘Kike’ Figaredo Alvargonzalez in the Apostolic Prefecture of Battambang in the north-west Cambodia is critical in providing learning and growth opportunities.

“For over 20 years, Bishop ‘Kike’ and his team have been working to advocate for people with disability,” says Fr Brian.

“This program is just one of the many examples of the global work supported by Catholic Mission.”

Started in 2001 by Bishop ‘Kike’, the Centre provides education, healthcare and support for children and young adults with disability due to landmine incidents or other illnesses such as polio or cancer.

“Thanks to the generosity of our donors, this support can be life changing”, Fr Brian, says.

Dara is an amazing example of how this support can be lifechanging. When he was 11, Dara lost his right hand and most of his sight following a landmine accident. Unexploded landmines still litter the countryside where he lives, in the rural village of Koh Kralar.

For the past two years, Dara has been living at the Arrupe Centre. He has learnt Braille, continued his schooling and made many friends.

Chen, also a landmine survivor, lost both his legs when he was 16. Unable to help his parents on the family farm, his prospects were low. The accident caused Chen to face the reality that his life will never be the same. His parents, who already struggled for money, suddenly faced new challenges in caring for their son.

“But thanks to the Arrupe Centre and Outreach program, Dara and Chen can lead a fulfilling and dignified life,” says Fr Brian.

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Reach out. Give life.

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“World Mission Month in October provides an impetus for the work of mission, for our supporters, parishioners, teachers, students and parents. It promotes the awareness of the rights of people with a disability and empowering those in need.”

This year Catholic Mission’s Socktober program encourages schools to support the Arrupe Centre through learning about mission and social justice.

Soccer, the world game, is used to encourage students to learn more about the reality of living in other parts of the world. The six-week Socktober Challenge ties in with the core values of the Catholic curriculum: of mission and social justice.

“Over 200 schools have already signed up for Socktober, kicking goals for people in need like Dara and Chen,” says Matt Poynting, Catholic Mission’s National Community Engagement Officer

“One of the most important things to do when we look to support people in need around the world is to first learn their reality. Socktober helps students and their families to do that, while having fun and making a difference.”

ENDS

For more information about Socktober, or to register your school, visit the website www.socktober.org.au today.

You can help Catholic Mission support people with disability and their families. Visit www.catholicmission/cambodia for more information.

About Catholic Mission

Catholic Mission is the Australian agency of the Pontifical Mission Societies – the Catholic Church’s global organisation dedicated to continuing Jesus Christ’s mission in the world: that all may have life to the full. Founded in Sydney in 1847, Catholic Mission contributes funding and project support to critical church-run initiatives in Africa, Asia, Oceania, and South America. These include spiritual formation, pastoral care, education, health, sanitation and agricultural programs. Here in Australia, we form people to go out and be missionary in their professional and personal lives; to pray, advocate and take action for those on the margins. Catholic Mission has offices in 27 Australian dioceses.