

Christmas reflection “inspire and provoke” a call to action.

Modern slavery was the theme of Catholic Mission’s 2020 Christmas Reflection. Hosted in partnership with the University of Notre Dame and the Oblates of Mary Immaculate at St Patrick’s Basilica in Fremantle, it drew an international audience, live-streamed for the first time.

The event was organised in response to a call by the Australian Bishop’s Conference to raise awareness and inspire action to counter the problem of modern slavery and human trafficking, says Perth Diocesan Director, Francis Leong.

“The more light we can shine on this problem, the greater is the potential for change for the better,” Mr Leong says.

“The themes we choose each year are designed to not only inspire but to provoke. They draw on the darker yet hope-giving side of the Christmas narrative, focussing on the experience of those who are marginalised, oppressed and vulnerable in our world today.”

The keynote speaker was Professor Francis Campbell, Vice Chancellor of Notre Dame University.

“Drawing on personal encounters of modern slavery issues as a diplomat in Europe, Professor Campbell’s meditation invited us all to not only do our bit in slave-free purchasing over the Christmas period but also raise awareness of this issue in our circles and networks.”

Proceeds from the Reflection will support Catholic Mission’s ongoing partnership with local and international congregations of religious sisters who work to protect vulnerable women and children, many of whom are survivors of modern slavery and human trafficking, by providing education and vocational training opportunities.

“Pope Francis says effective evangelisation is done not by winning arguments but by showing something beautiful, and that was the premise of Catholic Mission’s Christmas Reflection to not only inspire the heart but also a call to action,” Mr Leong says.

The 2020 Catholic Mission Reflection was live streamed to an international audience, and a recording is available for viewing.

“This liturgical event of sacred music interspersed with scripture and narrative, drew both local and national attention to the scourge of modern slavery and human trafficking afflicting our world today”, Mr Leong says.

“We encourage everyone to gather amongst friends, family or colleagues to experience this beautiful reflection together.”

Catholic Mission would like to warmly acknowledge our event partners; The Good Shepherd Sisters WA branch, The University of Notre Dame Australia, Catholic Education WA, St John of God Health Care, The Catholic Archdiocese of Perth, The WA Catholic Migrant &

Refugee Office, ACRATH, Iona Presentation College, Aquinas College, St Patrick's Basilica and Merus Sound.

The Catholic Mission Christmas Reflection can be accessed at the following link:
www.catholicmission.org.au/perth2020.

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For further information:

John Hyde
Senior Communications Officer

Tel: 0419 997 857

Email:

media@catholicmission.org.au

Website:

catholicmission.org.au

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.