

Faith, Sport and Mission inspire Hundreds in Socktober Launch

Catholic Mission is proud to announce the launch of Socktober 2025, an annual initiative that focuses on inspiring young people to make a difference through the universal game of soccer.

This year, several schools across Australia have come together in support of the people of Mpika, Zambia, where their generosity has contributed to the establishment of a vital maize mill. This project provides families with a sustainable source of food, addressing the country's growing food insecurity.

The program was recently launched with two liturgies held across the Archdioceses of Sydney and Melbourne, marking the beginning of a nationwide journey of solidarity and mission.

On Tuesday, 9th September 2025, Catholic Mission, in collaboration with Marist Catholic College North Shore, hosted the Sydney Socktober Launch at St Mary's Church, North Sydney. Over 500 students from 15 different schools gathered for a morning of prayer, reflection and solidarity.

The launch included a vibrant liturgy designed to inspire a spirit of global solidarity. We were honoured to welcome Bishop Danny Meagher, who celebrated the Mass, and Dr Elias Munshya, High Commissioner for Zambia, who joined us as our special guest in recognition of this year's focus on Zambia. Other special guests included: Ms Marita Winters the Deputy CEO of Catholic Schools NSW, Mrs MaryAnn Beregi North Sydney Councillor and Mr Peter Gates National Director of Catholic Mission.

Dr Elias Munshya shared "It was an honour to be here today with students and guests from across Sydney to stand in solidarity with Zambia."

Angus Rowan, Catholic Mission's National Schools Engagement Manager, expressed: "It was amazing to see students stand in solidarity with the people of Zambia and become Missionaries of Hope."

As well as this, On Wednesday the 3rd of September, over 200 students from over 22 Melbourne Archdiocese schools, came together at Mary MacKillop Centre at Mt St Joseph's Girls College for a special Socktober liturgy. The event highlighted the important role of education, awareness, and faith in addressing global issues, with a particular focus this year on empowering women.

The event included a moving liturgy by Bishop Martin Ashe and Fr Jackson Saunders which focused on the strength of Zambian mothers. Students also learned about the significance of the Sockball, a symbol of solidarity with children in developing countries. Students even had the chance to create and play with their own Sockballs, deepening their understanding of global mission through hands-on experience

"Sport is an amazing tool to engage students in Faith and Mission, and Socktober does exactly that" shared Fr Jackson Saunders.

This year, Socktober shines a spotlight on the Diocese of Mpika in Zambia, where families are grappling with the effects of drought, crop failures, and an ongoing economic crisis. In response,

Catholic Mission and the Diocese have launched the Maize Mill Project. An initiative that educates and equips women with the skills to grow their own maize, helping build long-term economic security for themselves and their families.

Women are at the centre of this initiative as many have been excluded from socioeconomic contributions. As Bishop Edwin Mulandu, a key advocate of the initiative, explains:

“As a diocese, we strongly feel and are convinced that empowering women will solve a lot of issues at the household level and in the community.”

By joining the Socktober campaign, students are playing an active role in supporting Catholic Mission’s vital work in Zambia and beyond. This gathering of faith and learning served as both a call to prayer and a call to action, connecting students with the wider mission of the Church during World Mission Month.

Learn more at www.socktober.org.au

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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. 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 act for those on the margins. Catholic Mission has offices in 27 Australian dioceses.