

For immediate release

Monday, 28 September 2026

An Invitation to Experience Hope

‘What does hope look like?’ Catholic Mission is inviting Australians to explore this question through *Hope*, a unique photographic exhibition celebrating 100 years of World Mission Sunday, opening in Sydney and online this October.

Through photographs capturing moments of encounter, faith, care and connection in communities around the world, *Hope* offers a glimpse into the people and experiences that have shaped Catholic Mission’s story.

Presented to mark the centenary of World Mission Sunday, the exhibition brings together photographs captured over the past decade across Africa, Asia and beyond, alongside historical World Mission Sunday posters that have accompanied generations of Australian Catholics.

Together, they tell a story that stretches across decades and continents, inviting visitors to discover mission not simply through projects or places, but through the people who live it.

“Hope is often found in the simplest moments, a gesture, in an encounter, in the care we show one another, perhaps in faith lived quietly through prayer and action and in people and communities working together for a better future,” said Peter Gates, Catholic Mission National Director. “This exhibition is an opportunity to recognise those moments and to celebrate the extraordinary missionary spirit that continues to connect our Church communities in Australia with the local Church communities around the world.”

Established by Pope Pius XI in 1926, World Mission Sunday created an annual moment for the whole Church to unite in support of its missionary work.

A century later, that invitation continues. Under the 2026 theme, *‘One in Christ, united in mission’*, Catholics are once again invited to recognise their shared responsibility for mission and their connection with communities throughout the world.

Using photography as a medium to connect 100 years of faith in action was a deliberate choice for Catholic Mission Communications and Digital Director Simone Medri.

“When I first started at Catholic Mission, I was blessed to travel and meet communities overseas who welcomed me and allowed me to walk alongside them, even for a moment. I wanted to find a way to capture those unique encounters and share what I had witnessed,” shared Simone. “Through photography, I was able to capture a glimpse of those moments. Today, we want to share them as a celebration of our sisters and brothers around the world, and of our unity as one human family in Christ.”

At the heart of *Hope* is the power of partnership and the belief that, together, we can achieve so much more. In that spirit, the exhibition will be hosted in partnership with Australian Catholic University at its North Sydney campus.

Reverend Dr Gerald Gleeson, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Catholic Mission), said the university was delighted to support the work of the Pope’s mission agency in Australia by hosting this unique exhibition.

“Catholic Mission’s powerful exhibition *Hope* embodies ACU’s commitment to pursuing the dignity of the human person and the common good, in telling the stories of the marginalised and forgotten,” Dr Gleeson said.

“Pope Leo this year has called on the entire Church – one in Christ – to support the life giving work of mission.

“ACU as a Catholic university achieves this mission work by providing opportunities for our students to serve communities around the world but especially in developing nations.

“We are excited to join with Catholic Mission in celebrating the 100th World Mission Sunday with this exhibition at our North Sydney Campus.”

To extend the exhibition beyond its physical home in North Sydney, *Hope* will also be available through an immersive online gallery, giving communities across Australia the opportunity to experience the exhibition wherever they are.

From **22 October**, the exhibition will also be available online, inviting parishes, schools and individuals across the country to immerse themselves in the World Mission Sunday celebrations.

For those in Sydney, Catholic Mission is also extending an invitation to come together for the **opening of *Hope* on Friday 23 October at Australian Catholic University in North Sydney.**

The evening will offer an opportunity to experience the exhibition in person, connect with others and celebrate 100 years of World Mission Sunday through the stories and encounters captured in *Hope*.

The physical exhibition will remain open until **9 November 2026**, while the online experience will make *Hope* accessible nationally.

Experience *Hope* online: Available nationally from 22 October 2026

www.catholicmission.org.au/exhibition

Grand opening: Friday 23 October 2026

Level 12, Tenison Woods House

Australian Catholic University

8–20 Napier Street, North Sydney NSW

Exhibition: 23 October – 9 November 2026

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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.