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MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release:

#ShoeStories, innovative youth engagement platform, online from today

#ShoeStories, an innovative online engagement platform for young Catholics, officially goes live today.

The initiative was launched at the Australian Catholic Youth Festival in December, where participants were invited to share stories of where their shoes have taken them and how they were moved, challenged and changed by the encounters along the way.

A selection of those stories, and an ACYF highlights video, will be online from Tuesday at www.shoestories.org.au.

'The ShoeStories initiative was born out of a desire to engage young people in a conversation about mission, justice and evangelisation, at the ACYF and beyond,' says Catholic Mission's Roza Vukovich, who developed the idea.

'In this Year of Youth, our hope is that the webpage will be a place of encounter and engagement through personal stories, all of which will challenge us, renew us, inspire us and give us the courage we need to be a generation of peacemakers, spreading God's love in all we do.'

In addition to over 40 stories of young people from around the country at the Youth Festival, the Australian bishops are well represented, with Archbishop Mark Coleridge, Bishop Bill Wright and Bishop Peter Comensoli among those leaving their personal #ShoeStories at the festival.

'Catholic Mission is all about ShoeStories—it's about encounter but the encounter is bringing Christ himself face to face with those who are desperately in need of the good news that Jesus Christ is,' says Archbishop Coleridge.

Ms Vukovich says that the #ShoeStories initiative is intended to be a resource throughout the 2018 Year of Youth and beyond, with stories of encounter to inspire, and to celebrate.

She says throughout the year, #ShoeStories will be a living and evolving resource. 'At Catholic Mission we recognise that many young people, inspired by the Gospel are transforming lives and we want to highlight it, celebrate it and share it.

'We also want others to share their stories of encounter and mission. We invite all young people and those young in heart to share their own #ShoeStories. You can do this by emailing shoestories@catholicmission.org.au.'

You can also follow #ShoeStories on Facebook and Instagram, and join the conversation using the hashtag #ShoeStories.

ENDS

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