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MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

World Mission Sunday a reminder that we are all mission

As World Mission Sunday is celebrated in parishes and communities around the world today, Catholic Mission is calling on Australians to cast their hearts and minds to the missionary work of the Church in places of need.

The mission agency's dual-focus World Mission Appeal draws on the message of Pope Francis for World Mission Sunday, in which he says, "Every man and woman is a mission. That is the reason for our life on this earth."

In parish appeals happening all around the country today, Australians will hear inspiring stories of mission work changing lives in Myanmar, India and other parts of the world.

'World Mission Sunday is the ultimate global celebration of mission,' said Father Brian Lucas, National Director of Catholic Mission. 'It is a special day where, as Christians, we are called to reflect on how we can be a part of bringing about the Reign of God and continuing Jesus' mission in the world.'

Drawing on the Pope's words, Catholic Mission's 2018 World Mission Appeal, "You Are Mission", is a reminder that we are all a part of the mission work celebrated globally on this day.

'The work of mission is not limited to "missionaries" in the traditional sense of the religious,' said Father Lucas. 'In supporting the work of both lay and religious leaders in dioceses around the world—through our prayers, donations or advocacy—we are being missionary ourselves.'

Some of the stories heard today will include that of local communities in Myanmar running programs to revolutionise the education system, to heal the country's wounds, improve the lives of its children and prepare them to be leaders into the future.

Others may hear the uplifting story of Shorti and Vandoosha, who came to the Marialaya Home for Girls in Chennai as very young children from backgrounds of exploitation and abuse, and who have been given the chance to grow into intelligent and kind girls, with hearts for social justice.

'These are just two examples of how mission around the world is continuing to transform lives and form strong, resilient and faithful people and communities who love one another,' said Father Lucas.

'Today is a reminder that we can all be a part of it, no matter how small we think our contribution may be. I urge every Australian to open their hearts to mission and consider how they can be the difference in someone's life today.'

Thoughts will quickly turn to October next year, which Pope Francis has declared an Extraordinary Month of Mission. 'Catholic Mission looks forward to working closely with the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, and the local bishops, parishes and religious congregations to make October 2019 a time for all Australian Catholics to recommit to their baptismal calling to be missionaries of Christ's saving message,' Father Lucas said.

For more information about the 2018 World Mission Appeal, visit www.catholicmission.org.au.

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