



MEDIA RELEASE

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Today marks the beginning of World Mission Month, a time when Catholics all over the world join together to support and celebrate global missionary work. It also marks the feast day of St Therese of Lisieux, the patron of the missions.

“October is an opportunity for us to give particular attention to the work of mission,” says Catholic Mission National Director Fr Brian Lucas.

This year World Mission Month in October focuses on the essential work of priests, religious and lay missionaries in Cambodia, supporting people with disability and their families.

“Through our prayerful support and solidarity, and through our generosity we are able to make available resources to those mission churches,” says Fr Brian.

“To help spread the gospel, and also to be of service to people who are often very vulnerable.”

The Arrupe Centre and Outreach Program, run by Bishop Enrique “Kike” Figaredo Alvargonzalez in the Apostolic Prefecture of Battambang in the north-west Cambodia is just one example of how the Church is empowering children and young adults with disability.

Bishop Kike’s approach to the vital work carried out at the Arrupe Centre is guided by his clear sense of mission.

“We are here for the common good... and to bring the joy of life everywhere... with hope and joy and happiness,” he says.

“We are giving back dignity to these children”.

Dara was just 11 years old when he lost his hand and most of his eyesight after finding an unexploded landmine on his family farm. But thanks to the Arrupe Centre, and Catholic Mission supporters with their prayers and generosity, Dara has received practical support and healthcare to help continue his education.

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"These Covid times are challenging for everyone but the missionaries of the church are still present, still available in service of the people," says Fr Brian.

Recognising the many languages of donors, friends and supporters whose generosity supports projects around the world, Catholic Mission launched a global video launched as part of World Mission Month.

"It connects more than 30 missionaries and mission partners based in over 25 different countries, speaking their own languages and the languages of those they work with," says Fr Brian.

Bishop "Kike", a familiar face to supporters of Catholic Mission's programs, and a tireless advocate for people with disability in Cambodia, also features in the video.

"Inspired by the words of the Holy Father, the global awareness campaign, invites you into the family of missionaries around the world who say: we are still here," says Fr Brian.

Giving support to people like Chen. He was just 16 years old when he lost both of his legs in a landmine accident near his home.

"Fearing that he would not be able to continue his education or help his family, Chen was grateful that Bishop Kike reached out to him in his time of need," says Fr Brian.

"Chen not only finish high school but continued into university study and gainful employment."

Chen gives testament to the work carried out by the Arrupe Centre and sums it up perfectly; *"It is like I have a new life."*

You can help Catholic Mission support people with disability and their families. Visit www.catholicmission/cambodia for more information.

View the Global Mission video at this link:
www.catholicmission.org.au/wearestillhere

ENDS



Reach out. Give life.

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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. 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.