

## **Melbourne student's illustration may catch Pope's eye**

When year 4 student, Peter, from Melbourne's South submitted an entry to an international drawing competition last year, he may never have thought it would reach the Vatican. But after his illustration was selected as Australia's winning entry, it is now set to gain the approval of Pope Francis.

Last October, 15 schools from seven dioceses across Australia participated in a drawing competition to celebrate the 180th anniversary of the Society of the Holy Childhood, one of the four societies that make up Catholic Mission. The competition encouraged students to reflect on how Pope Francis inspires children to help other children.

Over 200 entries were submitted. The selection process involved shortlisting entries from each diocese that met the theme, and a winner was picked from each diocese. The final winning entry was chosen by Fr Brian Lucas, Catholic Mission National Director.

An illustration by Peter, a year 4 student at Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School in South Melbourne, was chosen from a shortlist of ten finalists as the winning entry from Australia.

Peter's illustration, which used bubbles to represent 'Hope, Teach and Charity', showed the dynamic ways in which Pope Francis aims to inspire children by example. It will be published in a book of entries from children around the world and presented to the Holy Father himself in celebration of the anniversary.

One of the recurring themes of the entries was the care for Creation and the Common Home, with many children referring to Pope Francis and the Laudato Si' teachings. Reflecting on the theme given, many students learned a lot about the reality of other children's lives around the world and how they could be a voice for change.

'Engaging primary school children through creative mediums and storytelling is an important aspect of our formation pedagogy. This competition is a demonstration of it, as it not only encouraged creativity and imagination but also fostered a sense of social responsibility in the children,' says Liesje Barratt, Mission Formation Coordinator at Catholic Mission.

The competition was also integrated as an activity alongside Socktober, Catholic Mission's school and community engagement program.

'Socktober aims to bring Mission alive for students across Australia by engaging their talents and interests in various activities and to support other children who are in need,' says Matt Poynting, the program's coordinator. 'This was a fun activity on the side and we were thrilled to see such broad and creative uptake among participating students.'

Overall, the drawing competition was a huge success, with many children showcasing their talents and learning about the importance of helping others. Catholic Mission congratulates all the winners and participants.

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**For further information:**

Astrid Delayre  
*Communications Officer*

**Tel:** 0458 489 877

**Email:**  
[media@catholicmission.org.au](mailto:media@catholicmission.org.au)

**Website:**  
[catholicmission.org.au](http://catholicmission.org.au)

### **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.