

## **Hope in Hardship: The Vital Role of Missionaries in Myanmar's Humanitarian Challenge**

Earlier this week, the United Nations provided an update on the devastating situation in Myanmar. Since the military take-over in 2021, many have had to flee multiple times, “eroding their coping capacity with each move,” commented the United Nations.

Within the last two weeks, in Northern Shan state, 50,000 people were reported to have fled to find a safe refuge. Unfortunately, this is a reality for many people around the world today.

As people are looking for shelter, they are often finding refuge in the jungle, a hostile environment lacking basic infrastructure and access to vital resources.

“Many Internally Displaced People in camps and other places are faced with the difficulty of having basic food. They live in fear and anxiety,” said Cardinal Charles Maung Bo, Archbishop of Yangon.

Due to the political situation, no direct emergency aid can enter the border and provide help, leaving the local population with low hope.

“Humanitarians continue to face access constraints across the country due to ongoing military operations and refusals to grant travel authorisation,” the United Nations communicated.

Thanks to its network of the Pontifical Mission Societies, Catholic Mission is able to provide direct support on the ground. By mobilising its missionary network already present in Myanmar, they are able to provide life-giving support to the people.

“More than providing vital resources such as food packs, we are able to bring hope to the people and to show them that we are here with them, with our brothers and sisters,” said Fr Brian Lucas, National Director of Catholic Mission.

In addition to the current political situation, the people are facing harsh weather conditions, making their stay in the jungle even more precarious.

By providing them with food packs, vital resources, and access to education by recreating basic classrooms in the camps, people are able to continue their lives and pursue a brighter future.

Cardinal Bo is calling for assistance and prayers for our brothers and sisters in Myanmar.

“Pray for children in the jungle, as sorrow and suffering visit them at such a tender age. May they have safety and security from all dangers that threaten their health. Pray for the youth of Myanmar, whose dreams evaporated into overnight nightmares, that they may continue to believe in themselves, in peace and reconciliation.”

This Christmas, join Catholic Mission and support our brothers and sisters in Myanmar, donate now at [www.catholicmission.org.au/myanmar](http://www.catholicmission.org.au/myanmar)

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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.