



*We proclaim a crucified Christ*

1Cor1.23

08 February 2022

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

My warm and prayerful greetings to you as the New Year gets underway.

In 2021, the **Palms** program celebrated sixty years of reaching beyond. Since first being prepared in 1961 for mission to Papua New Guinea, Catholic participants from all over Australia and New Zealand have been placed in forty countries, assisting the development of 408 communities globally.

Marking a jubilee in this era was a stark reminder that no-one can rest on their laurels. Like all of us, Palms Australia has continued to adapt to COVID normal. Their operational challenges have been insignificant compared to the impact of COVID-19 on the overseas communities that they support.

Palms is redoubling its efforts in response to communities request to assist individual and organisational capacity through skill exchange. Now that restrictions on international travel are starting to ease, new skilled and committed applicants will be thoroughly prepared for their cross-cultural mission in remote parishes, schools and communities.

I encourage you to promote [opportunities for individuals to engage in a Palms Global Mission](#). Also, based on their sixty years of preparing Australians to work and live across cultures they now have a **Neighbours Without Borders** program to assist Australian parishes and schools to better embrace diversity and build on gifts to grow stronger communities.

Those considering a global mission placement abroad can be advised of the following support:

1. The Archdiocese will support the preparation costs of participants at Palms' Orientation Course and a re-entry weekend on their return from mission placement.
2. Catholic Bishops support a Lay Missionary Gratuity Fund that provides a payment of \$2,500 for each year one is on this mission.
3. Palms negotiations with Catholic schools assures great support and benefits for teachers giving up to two years for this mission. Teachers should talk with Palms about the details.

The Palms mission offers a wonderful opportunity to affirm the dignity of all while *"promoting and implementing the development goals that are supported by our deepest religious and ethical values."* (Pope Francis).

With every grace and blessing, I remain,

Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus,

**Most Rev Peter A Comensoli**  
Archbishop of Melbourne

