

## **“What would you do with \$26,000? Give opportunities to 1,000s”**

If someone gave you \$26,000, what would you do? Take a long holiday? Put a down payment on a nice car?

For the students of McCarthy Catholic College, Tamworth, it's money to invest in the hopes and dreams of the other children. McCarthy College's annual walkathon in September raised a whopping \$26,885 for a Catholic Mission children's project in Zambia.

McCarthy College's big effort – smashing a total of \$40,000 raised over three previous walkathons - is money that will go directly to fit-out The Mary Queen of Peace Parish School in Kalikiliki settlement in Lusaka, Zambia.

McCarthy's money will pay for laying cement floors, installing an electric generator and a water pump, fitting windows and painting the walls of a school that is a symbol of hope in Kalikiliki, an impoverished settlement whose very name translates as “hard labour”.

When completed, Mary Queen of Peace school will give educate 300 local children who would otherwise be denied any education. The school is one of dozens of examples of the practical development projects undertaken by Catholic Mission's Work with Children.

Zambia's National Director of Catholic Mission, Father Bernard Makadani Zulu, on his first trip to Australia travelled to Tamworth to personally thank the students of McCarthy College for their amazing efforts.

“From the children of Kalikiliki, I extend an emphatic, ‘Thank you and God's blessings on all of your generous endeavours’,” Fr Bernard told the school assembly.

When senior McCarthy students presented him with a giant cheque made out in the amount of \$26,885, Father Bernard responded: “This money is a means to make dreams come true.”

Fr Bernard said Catholic Mission donors in Australia make a big impact in the life of the Church in Zambia, one of Africa's poorest countries where more than 68 per cent of children live below the poverty line. A landlocked country, Zambia's population of 12 million is divided between areas of urban density and rural subsistence farmers and fishing communities.

Zambia also suffers from one of the highest rates of HIV/AIDS infection in Africa, with some estimates putting the number of people with the virus to be as high as one in five.

“Our pastoral initiatives are beyond what we can manage,” said Fr Bernard.

“Donations through Catholic Mission assist us incredibly. Catholic Mission has been

a reliable friend to all of the bishops of Zambia and we are extremely grateful for the positive impact this makes on the people of our nation.”

On the eve of World Mission Month (October), Catholic Mission’s National Director, Martin Teulan said, “The young people of McCarthy College, their teachers, parents and supporters really do understand the true spirit of mission. I think we can all be inspired by their determination and dedication to make a difference in the lives of less fortunate kids.

“They are not simply fitting out a school they are giving children an education and the possibility of creating their own destiny. In Zambia they are helping break the cycle of poverty and building hope for the future”, said Mr Teulan.

**Media Inquiries Catholic Mission Communications Officer,  
Netta Kovach Ph: 02 9919 7800; 0418 996 889**