

The Uncommon Joy of New School Shoes

If you're sending your child off to a new school this year the costs are significant. A uniform, shoes, sports kit, bag and books can easily run to several hundred dollars - or more.

And then there are the added costs of excursions, lunches and extracurricular activities like sport, music and dance lessons.

But would we really have it any other way? Our kids are the great love of our lives and we want them to get the most out of their school years. Despite the costs, the 'old school tie' builds camaraderie, school pride and puts every kid on an even footing.

However don't expect your kids to say "thank you" for buying them a school uniform!

But that isn't the case in other places in the world. As the school year begins in India Catholic Mission has received one special "thank you" we'd like to share with you.

The letter is from Father John Chiman, parish priest in the village of Laliyana in Baghpat district, India. As manager of St Joseph's High School, Fr John is always trying to make ends meet: and school uniforms are high on the list of essentials at the beginning of the new school year.



"Because of the generosity of Catholic Mission donors we have received an allocation of \$3,000 which we've used to pay fees, buy sweaters and shoes for 250 of our boys and girls," says Father John.

"Thank you. Your gift makes a world of difference to our students, all of whom are from struggling families. By equipping them for the school year you've helped them to feel equal to the other children and as a result they are now regular attendees to our school.

For this blessing on these children we offer our sincere gratitude. The children and myself remember our donors in our prayers on a regular basis, even as we pray for the health and safety of all the world's children. God bless you."

In large and small ways, last year Catholic Mission helped over 2.66 million children around the world through subsidies for food, clothing, housing, education and medicines. Catholic Mission does not discriminate by race or religion: all the children in communities where we work benefit. Catholic Mission is the Australian arm of the Church's global mission aid agency, the Pontifical Mission Societies.

We believe that all people are gifted with great potential for growth to reach fullness of life and happiness. We invite you to share our vision and join our global mission in 2011. Visit our website at www.catholicmission.org.au

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