

Ba Ami Nia Belun Sira

Newsletter for Friends and Benefactors



Mary MacKillop East Timor Mission

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Vol. 17 No. 4 Dec. 2010
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Celebrating the Canonisation of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop

Canonisation Celebration Events in Timor

There was great excitement within *Mary MacKillop East Timor Mission* as six staff members travelled to Rome with our parish priest in Dili Fr Guilhermino da Silva.

Difficulties arose early into their pilgrimage when it was found that the pilgrims did not have visas to enter Italy. Many people worked long hours over two and a half days to secure the necessary documents, and the group finally flew out on November 13th. More negotiations in Rome were successful in gaining the Timorese more time there, so that they were able to go to Assisi, one of the events they had missed. During their time waiting for the visas they conducted themselves with superb poise and generosity of spirit, impressing all who met them. Two of the girls said that if they couldn't get to Rome, it didn't matter as they could say their prayers in North Sydney.

The time in Rome was unforgettable but busy. Having negotiated the long flights and the complex airports like seasoned world travellers, they were awestruck by the ancient city of Rome and the splendour of the Vatican. Of course, the ceremonies surrounding the canonisation were the climax of this memorable experience. The Timorese were involved in the big events, wearing traditional dress for the Vigil concert and the Thanksgiving Mass. António de Padua was in the entrance procession with the Pope at the Canonisation Mass and was one of the two servers at the Altar.

On Tuesday, November 9th, there was a Thanksgiving Mass to honour the new Saint in the Dili Cathedral. This was celebrated by two Bishops and 20 priests, with 600 people in attendance. The flowers were provided and beautifully arranged by the Carmelite Sisters. We were delighted to welcome to the celebration Sister Anne Derwin, Congregational Leader of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, a number of visiting Sisters as well as members of staff and the Australian Ambassador, Mr Peter Heyward.

After the Mass there was entertainment provided by St Cecilia's Choir, the University students supported by MMETM and children from Bedois and Sabrakalaran schools. Food, cake and champagne were presented in true Timorese style.

The MMETM staff excelled themselves in the organisation of all facets of this memorable event.



Display in Cathedral sanctuary



Some of the Sisters present at the Mass



Ermera children singing their Mary MacKillop song

Just before the Canonisation we received a letter from the Prime Minister, Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão.....

"This is a wonderful occasion and one to celebrate and rejoice at the life of Blessed Mary MacKillop. It also provides us all with an opportunity to reflect on the meaning of her good works and charity and to commit to peace. I am particularly pleased that there will be a Mass in Dili to honour her Canonisation.

"The canonisation of the Blessed Mary MacKillop also gives us a moment to reflect upon and thank the Mary MacKillop East Timor Mission for its dedicated, selfless and valuable contribution to the people of Timor-Leste. The Mission's remarkable commitment to the Timorese people, both in Timor-Leste and in Australia, is making a great difference. All members of the Church that support this Mission's good work should be thanked and congratulated.

"I wish you all the best in your preparations to celebrate the canonisation of the Blessed Mary MacKillop and I trust that you will rejoice at this great occasion."

Déjà Vu

Some weeks ago there were reports in the media concerning the torture of West Papuans. Graphic images were displayed and cries of suffering could be heard. There was widespread condemnation and seemingly, swift action by the Indonesian authorities who admitted that their military were responsible for these atrocities.

The Indonesian President said that justice would be speedily done and these assurances were accepted by the Australian Prime Minister. It is feared, however, that there will be no serious investigation at all, and that instead, another whitewash will be the outcome. There was a trial of sorts in West Papua, but amazingly, it concerned other unreported torture episodes caught on video.

One can only wonder what response would have been made had we seen the photograph of a naked, tortured,

white Australian, American or British person on the front page of our newspapers, but one does not have to wonder for very long. "Worthy victims" have their names read out on their anniversaries as the bells toll; "unworthy victims" receive transitory head shakes and tut-tuts as they are sacrificed on the altar of the political and economic relationship with big neighbours.

The parallels between the treatment of the West Papuan people and that given to the East Timorese are compelling. How can these things continue on our doorstep?

One of the reasons is the impunity that Indonesia enjoys, shown in the complete lack of responsibility taken for what happened in Timor-Leste between 1974 and 1999. That 24 year period saw the violent deaths of 183,000 Timorese men, women and children which occurred as a result of the brutal Indonesian occupation. The CAVR Report commissioned by the East Timorese Government and presented to the United Nations in 2005 clearly shows the extent of Indonesian guilt (www.cavr-timorleste.org).

There were some attempts to evade international scrutiny in the establishment of an ad hoc Human Rights Court and a Truth and Friendship Commission, neither of which brought anyone to justice. So no one has been held accountable for the crimes against humanity committed in East Timor, a situation which has resulted in a further vacuum of human responsibility in West Papua.

It was the visual evidence of full scale massacre in the cemetery in Santa Cruz, Dili, which finally woke the world to the suffering in East Timor. With the veil of secrecy drawn aside by that event, other massacres came to light, displaying the endemic violence that inhabited East Timor all those years. It is criminal that similar treatment is being suffered by West Papuans; criminal on the part of Indonesia whose military machine still considers itself above human decency, and criminal on the part of Indonesia's neighbours, including Australia.

"But what about forgiveness?" some will say. The delicate balance between justice and reconciliation has to be achieved however long it takes, but both elements are necessary in the evolution of a truly human response to suffering on such a scale. The Timorese people have already offered the hand of friendship to past oppressors, but the admission of guilt has to be part of the process at some stage, otherwise suffering is belittled and others are endangered, as is the case at present.

One major difference between the Timor/Papua situations is this: Australia might claim some small refuge in ignorance regarding Timor, but as we now know what Indonesia did there and how responsibility has been successfully evaded, we cannot claim any wide-eyed innocence regarding West Papua. *Susan Connelly*

<http://www.abc.net.au/pm/content/2010/s3073359.htm>
www.zulenet.com/awpa/

Happy
Christmas
to
all.



May the humanity of God touch each of us this Christmas, leading us once again to set ourselves on the path of bringing good news to the poor, binding up broken hearts and setting captives free.

Everyone at MMETM sends best wishes to all our supporters and donors and we trust in God's blessings on all of us in the coming year.

MARY MACKILLOP EAST TIMOR MISSION GREETING CARDS and "AVE MARIA" CD

HELP A CHILD TO READ There are two different sets of ten cards, each featuring artwork from the Literacy program and a saying of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop. The cards are blank inside. Each set costs \$10 - proceeds to our Literacy program.

HELP US TEACH MUSIC The CD features members of St Cecilia's Choir singing "Ave Maria" and the Trio from "Cosi Fan Tutte". Cost is \$10 and all money goes to our Music program, building on the wonderful existing skills of Timorese youth.

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Please send:

Description	Number of items required	Cost
Cards Set 1 @\$10 ea		
Cards Set 2 @\$10 ea		
CD Ave Maria @ \$10 ea		
Postage/Handling		
Total		

1 item post/handling = \$1.50

2 items post/handling = \$2.00

3 or more items = \$3.00

I enclose cheque/money order for \$ _____ or

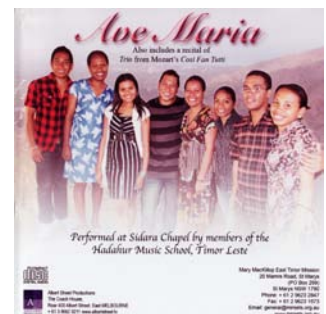
Cardholder's name _____

Visa Mastercard

Card Number

Expiry Date ___/___/___ Signature _____

Post to MMETM PO Box 299 St Marys NSW 1790



SNIPPETS

Library Books

Children from schools attending our "A Touch of Timor" event in June this year wrote stories for our literacy program. We are pleased to announce that all stories have been accepted, some with a little editing, and we will begin to produce them as library books for the children in Timor in the new year.

Student Support

Five students in our Tertiary support scheme "Buka Matenek" in Timor-Leste are scheduled for Graduation on December 4.

Literacy

An agreement has been reached between the Timorese Government and the Church concerning Tetum orthography. As a result of this, we will be using *Tetun Ofisial* in all publications which are used in general schooling.

Teacher Training

Consolidation of our teacher workshops is underway, aiming to enhance further the skills of our staff so that they in turn can help teachers to develop theirs.



Santa Mary da Cruz MacKillop, harohan mai ami.

For all that has been, thanks.....

What a memorable year it has been! It has taken us from the mountains of Timor to the grandeur of Rome and all in the same cause - that of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop. As reported earlier in this newsletter, we were blessed to have with us in Rome seven pilgrims from East Timor. They stood proudly among Australians, New Zealanders, peoples from Peru, Ireland, Scotland and many other countries of the world to celebrate our new Saint. We were proud of them and their contribution to the various celebrations. The Mass of Thanksgiving which followed on 9 November in the Dili Cathedral was very special indeed. Our young staff put their hearts and souls into its preparation and the liturgy flowed with the "beauty and grace" which so typifies Timorese life and culture. There's no doubt that Mary MacKillop's spirit is alive and growing among the East Timorese people.

In this special year and at this blessed time, we remember you, our friends and supporters, in our prayers. We thank you for your generous support for our mission in East Timor where, in the spirit of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, we make the cause of the poor our cause. We look forward to the future with hope.

Josephine Mitchell

If you'd like this newsletter by email, please contact Susan Connelly at sc@mmiets.org.au

PLEASE NOTE THAT OUR OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED from December 23rd 2010 to January 27th 2011

DONATIONS / SUBSCRIPTION TO NEWSLETTER

TITLE (Mr/ Mrs/Miss/Ms).....
 FIRST NAME.....SURNAME.....
 ADDRESS.....POSTCODE.....

I wish to donate reading books to children in East Timorese schools... \$.....
 I wish to subscribe to "Ba Ami Nia Belun Sira" @ \$5.00 per year... \$.....
I wish to contribute to the MMETM Building Project by making a donation.... \$.....

I enclose cheque/money order.... \$.....
 (Please make cheques payable to Mary MacKillop East Timor Mission)
 OR by Credit Card: Master Card..... Visa..... \$.....

Cardholder's Name:
 Card Number: Expiry Date...../.....

Signature.....
 I wish to claim tax deductibility: YES NO

Please return this form to : Mary MacKillop East Timor Mission PO Box 299 St Marys NSW 1790

The Mary MacKillop East Timor Mission (MMETM) operates within the Mary MacKillop International Mission Inc. (MMIM). MMIM is a signatory to ACFID, the Australian Council for International Development.