

Ba Ami Nia Belun Sira

Newsletter for Friends and Benefactors



Mary MacKillop East Timor Mission

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Celebrating the Centenary of the death of Blessed Mary MacKillop

Moving right along...

For many years, Mary MacKillop East Timor Mission has found its home in rented premises. Earlier this year, it came to our attention that the property we have been occupying for five years would no longer be available to us for family reasons. It was time to move on.

On 22 October, Sr Julian and staff started packing furniture and office equipment to be stored in the Parish Hall across the road or in a temporary office space generously supplied by our Parish Priest, Fr Guilhermino da Silva. Our Dili correspondent, António, reports:

"Vital and Paulino went out to get some boxes for packing the equipment from the Becora office. Everyone was busy and full of energy. A tremendous job was done by all."



Frederico, Maria and Vital making the 200m trek to the road

Given that there was no vehicle access to the property and the furniture and equipment (including a refrigerator and a large photocopier) had to be transported by hand or wheelbarrow at least 200 metres up a rough and narrow laneway

to the main road, it certainly was a mighty effort! However, as the saying goes, one door closes and another opens. Bishop Ricardo has kindly allocated a piece of land in the Becora Parish for our work and we are presently negotiating the terms of the agreement.

The next challenge is erecting suitable buildings for our offices, teacher training and music facilities as well as simple accommodation for the Sisters. This is no small task especially in East Timor but, thankfully, we have a very knowledgeable group of advisers who are generously assisting us.

This is a very significant development which marks a new stage of consolidation of our work in East Timor. We ask your prayers and support as we move into the future.

Alex de Almeida
25 May 1951 - 8 October 2009

We are deeply saddened to have lost our good friend and devoted volunteer, Alex de Almeida, who died after long illness. Alex and his family have given steadfast support over many years to us and our work. He was a quiet achiever, always there when needed. Our sympathy goes to his family: Juliana, Miriam, Eddie, Jessica, and to Phil and Felice. May Alex rest in peace.



News from the Dili Newsletter...

Teacher Training

"The usual teacher training was held in Becora Hall on the 22nd of October. The instructions for the workshop were completed and directed by Sister Julian Langton and Milka Pinheiro with the help of a new assistant Anabela Saldanha. Ana taught them three songs for the children and interpreted for Sister Julian. All the teachers were so happy with the method of teaching they had received from the three trainers.

António de Padua jumped in vigorously with the children's song "ARAM-SAMSAM" for everyone to learn in a round. At the conclusion the teachers wrote out the evaluation of the workshop. It was a great experience for all of them and hopefully they will expand their talent in teaching the children for the future of Timor-Leste."



Anabela Saldanha and Sister Julian Langton

"Milka Pinheiro has got a Certificate of Teacher Training for Kindergarten. Sister Josephine Mitchell presented the certificate at the Becora Office."

"A meeting of the Buka Matenek Students with Sister Josephine was held in the Becora Office. About twenty students attended. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the new staff member of Buka Matenek Frederico Bernadino to the tertiary students.

António de Padua has handed the position to the new staff member and still is helping him in terms of taking more students and interviewing them. The meeting went really well and Sister Josephine enjoyed the assembly."

Josephine thanked António for his excellent work as coordinator over the last four years. He now moves into the position of Director of the Music School *Hadahur*.

"Our courage should rise with difficulties and obstacles."

Bl. Mary MacKillop 14.12.1890

In Memoriam

"On the 29th of September this year the team of Mary MacKillop East Timor Mission celebrated the memorial of Andrew McNaughtan outside of Dili in one of the villages on the hill facing the Ramelau Mountain.

Sister Joan Westblade from the Little Company of Mary who works for Mary MacKillop East Timor Mission here in Dili and Australia, organised this trip for all the MMETM team workers to express their thoughts and prayers for all the heroes who sacrificed their lives for their Nation.

This ceremony was to locate the cross that represented all the heroes from the East to the West of Timor. The Tais around the cross was the symbol of thanking the Timorese People who helped the Australians in the World War Two. It was also to thank Andrew McNaughtan for what he did for East Timor.

Father Guilhermino da Silva conducted the prayer and the *Foho Ramelau* song was sung by Maria dos Santos and António de Padua alternating with the people who lived in the area.

Paulino Santos constructed the steps and the area for the cross to be erected with the help of a few people including his brothers and friends.

Sister Josephine Mitchell and Sister Julian Langton attended the ritual for the cross and expressed their thoughts and prayers.

These two Countries will never forget each other and all the memories that have been buried in the minds of the people. As travellers pass by daily the cross will be a constant reminder to the people of Timor Leste of what many people have suffered and died for.

Thank you Sister Joan for this idea."



The Cross and Tais Memorial honouring Andrew

Paddy's Chalice

Paddy Kenneally was in the middle of a serious engagement with Japanese forces at Darlau during his time as Commando in the 2/2 Independent Company in 1942, and in his many trips to Timor since the war he often spoke of Darlau and its people. Paddy attended daily Mass for many years and he relished the thought of giving a chalice to the people he so loved and respected. Josephine Mitchell had the opportunity to bring this part of his dream to a conclusion during a recent visit to Timor-Leste when she visited Darlau. She said to the people assembled for Mass:

"I want to present to you this chalice in memory of the Australian soldiers who fought here during World War II. It is also to say thank you for the help your people gave them. These men never forgot what you did for them - many times you saved their lives. On the base of the Chalice these words are written:

*Church of St John the Baptist,
Darlau
Remembering the Australian
2/2 Independent Company
1941-1945*

"This Chalice was used at the Funeral Mass of Mr Paddy Kenneally earlier this year. Mr Paddy loved the people of Darlau and said he owed his life to them. We remember also Mr Alan Luby of the 2/2 Independent Company who died this year. As we use this Chalice at Mass here in Darlau, we pray for all who have died, Australians and Timorese, and ask God to bless us all."



Maria dos Santos delivering food parcels at Sidara



Joan Westblade with the Chalice at Darlau

Music at Sidara

A film crew from Albert Street Productions in Melbourne arrived in Dili in October for a few days. They had come to East Timor for the first time to take some footage of the work of Mary MacKillop's mission in Timor-Leste as part of a DVD project in preparation for

the Canonisation of Blessed Mary MacKillop. Teachers came from the districts to do a workshop with Milka and Augusto. The teacher training workshop was held in the Becora hall. Many teachers attended the training for kindergarten and primary level. All of these methods of teaching will be delivered to the children in the districts.

The film crew also filmed a special Mass in Sidara in the Hera area which Sister Josephine Mitchell and other sisters attended. Father Guil spoke during his Homily about the work of the Mary MacKillop Mission and how generously helpful it is to the people in Timor-Leste.

The choir from Hadahur Music School conducted by António sang exceptionally well during the Mass, so well in fact that the film crew asked if they could record their singing after the Mass.

As a result of the generosity of Albert Street Productions, there is now a lovely CD available featuring two items: Schubert's "Ave Maria" and the Trio from "Cosi Fan Tutti" by Mozart. The CD is available from our Sydney office at the price of \$10 plus postage and handling. All proceeds will go to the Hadahur Music School. See the Donation Form on P.4 to order. *They may not be ready for Christmas.*

Christmas Blessings

Everyone at Mary MacKillop East Timor Mission wishes each one of you the very best blessings of Christmas!

We thank you for your support and interest during the year. This work could not continue without you.

May each of us come to appreciate more and more the God who loved the world so much, and who loves us so much.

Visit of Staff from Timor-Leste

Augusto Salsinha, a member of the Mary MacKillop Literacy team came to Australia on October 12 for a two months' training visit. He has been working as a teachers' aide at Our Lady of the Rosary School, St Marys, assisting teachers in the infants and primary areas and observing how schools are conducted in Australia.

Grateful thanks to the Principal, Mr Mark Geerligs, the teachers and children for welcoming Augusto into the school community.



Back left to right: *Luisa Marques, Rosita Kiss, António de Padua, Susan Connelly, Irene Macinante, Julian Langton*
 Front: *Milka Pinheiro, Augusto Salsinha, Josephine Mitchell, Maria dos Santos, Noreen Nicoara, Janet Borg*
 Missing in action: *Joan Westblade, Cheryl Barnes and volunteers*

On November 23rd, three more members of staff arrived from Timor-Leste: António de Padua, Milka Pinheiro and Maria dos Santos. Their three-week visit was designed to give them a greater insight into the organisation of MMETM, to be part of policy-making and also to give advice on important matters which affect the work, e.g. language.

Activities included numerous whole-staff meetings and individual interviews on specific topics like literacy, accountancy, music and child protection.

These four staff members spent time at OLR School, attended the NSW Schools' Spectacular at the Sydney Entertainment Centre and a Fete at Darlinghurst, gave valuable advice to a Christian Meditation meeting, attended a performance of Handel's "Messiah", took part in a Communication workshop and attended an evening for Board and staff members of the Mary MacKillop International Mission. They also undertook an externally administered English test and all scored very creditably.

António and Milka had individual music lessons, while Maria was engaged in Human Resource Management tuition and in the process of packing and shipping goods to Timor in her capacity as Office Manager in Dili. Each has a greater understanding of the evolving processes through which we assist them to re-build their nation.

A wonderful team indeed!

On Line Petition for an Award for Timor on GoPetition: <http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/remembertimor.html>
You Tube Video: <http://www.youtube.com/bestkeptsecretwwii>
<http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/australian-award-for-timor-leste.html>

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

This Office closes on December 23rd
 and re-opens on Wednesday, January 27, 2010.

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 work of MMETM by making a donation... \$.....
I wish to receive a copy of the CD "Ave Maria" at \$10 plus \$2 postage/handling \$.....
 I enclose cheque/money order.... \$.....

(Please make cheques out 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