

Ba Ami Nia Belun Sira

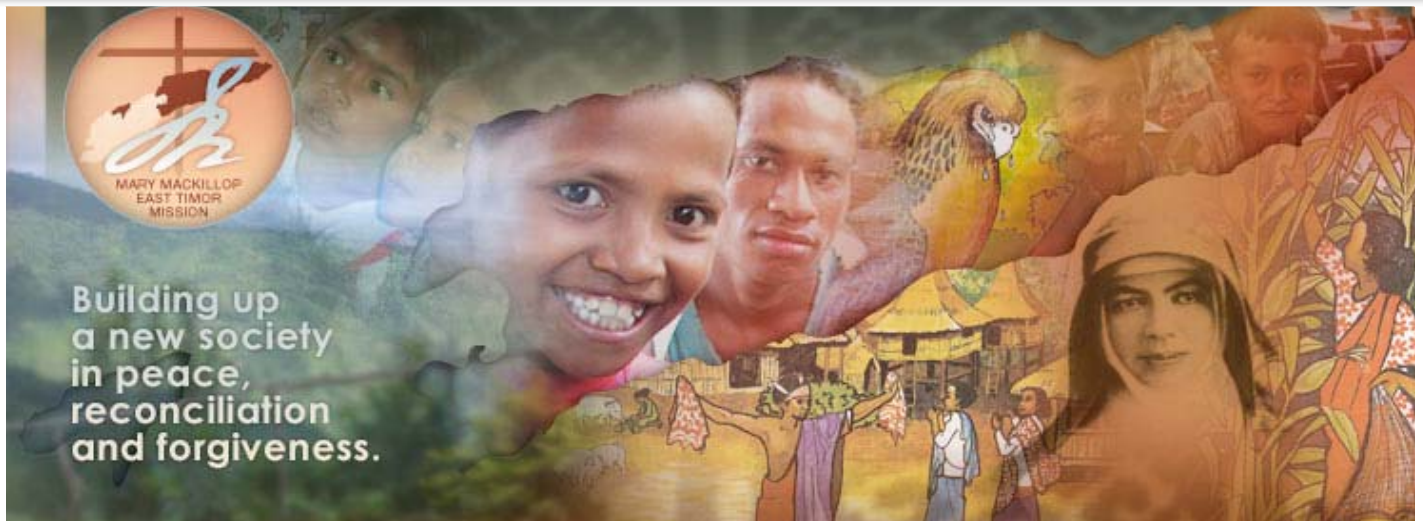
Newsletter for Friends and Benefactors

Mary MacKillop East Timor Mission

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www.mmiets.org.au



OUR NEW WEBSITE

After a great deal of work and the very special skills of the website producers at Fraynetwork, Melbourne, we are pleased to announce our new website, which we believe will be useful to schools, groups and individuals to come to know more about the people of Timor-Leste and the partnership which the Mary MacKillop East Timor Mission has with them. The address is www.mmiets.org.au and we hope you will be able to visit often.

God Bless Us and Disturb Us

(From the Iona Community, with changes.
To be sung to "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen")

God bless us and disturb us as we celebrate the Feast
When he who ranked the highest came to earth to be the least,
And showed us all that loving is the only way to peace:

**O come, Christ our Saviour bring us home, send us forth:
May each Christian learn to live as you have taught.**

When Christian folk detach themselves from following the cross
By spotlighting the cradle as if that was all there was,
Where who'll get what at Christmas turns our minds from grace to
dross: **(O come...)**

To Washington, Guantanamo, Afghanistan, Iraq,
To where a star is needed since the dark is doubly dark;
To where our lives await the Lord to set us on his mark: **(O come...)**

Santu Natál ba Ema Tomak !

Dear Friends,

Our thanks and good wishes go to you and your families as we celebrate another Christmas.

May God's peace fill our hearts and our world.

You are always remembered in our prayers.

Sincerely,

Josephine Mitchell R SJ

Coro Loro Sa'e

In 1975 many of the East Timorese who had escaped to West Timor went to Portugal, and a bond of friendship emerged, especially among the young ones.

Maestro Cornélio Vianey da Cruz gathered a group of 40 of them to join some seminarians and together they formed a choir known as Coro Loro Sa'e (Sunrise Choir) and invitations seeking the choir's performances were plentiful.

Coro Loro Sa'e travelled throughout Portugal to perform, expressing the Timorese culture, identity and struggle. In 1977 they made a recording, sponsored by the Red Cross.

The choir was a significant part of the children's lives. It helped them to overcome the upheaval that took them from their home, East Timor. It helped them to overcome fear and gave them laughter and contentment, becoming the family that they were forced to leave behind in their beloved East Timor.

Many of the choir members settled in Australia, some still reside in Portugal and some have returned to East Timor.

Thirty years after the foundation of Coro Loro Sa'e, a reunion of its original members, including Maestro Cornélio, will be held in December 2008 to relive the memories of a childhood lived away from home and loved ones and to sing the songs which kept them together.

Programme

Christmas Mass

December 24, 2008 9:00 pm
St Elias' Church
Cnr Elizabeth Drive and Maxwells Avenue,
Ashcroft NSW

Reunion Concert

December 26, 2008
All Saints' Church, George St, Liverpool NSW
3:00-5:00 pm Display of Memorabilia
Powerpoint Presentation
5:30-8:30 pm Welcoming Tebe (Lemorai)
Introduction
Concert
(Refreshments available)
8:30 pm 'til late Dinner and Party
Bands: *Reggae Temptation*
New Pop Orchestra

Tickets for Concert, Dinner and Party

8-15 years.....\$15
15 years and over.....\$25

Soccer Match

December 27
from 9:30 am
Bamfield Park
Cnr Elizabeth Drive and Maxwells Avenue,
Ashcroft NSW

Luisa Margues and Joana Ximenes

Justice and Peace Commission

In a building near the Dili Cathedral, Fr Flavie Villaneuva SVD and Sister Wendy Mea OP work with a small staff in the Justice and Peace Commission set up by Bishop Belo after his Nobel Peace Prize.

Their main current work is in "Active Non-Violence" where they work with 17 of the 23 gangs in Dili. The programme is based on a Philippines model and focuses on dialogue. They have ANV training of between 3 and 7 days and 4000 people have done this training, divided between parish workers, Internally Displaced Persons and staff of the Diocese. The success of their work they believe is seen in the response of the gangs to the events of February 11, where the gang leaders rang in to the Commission expressing their concern and frustration, and through dialogue decided not to take violent measures in response to the attacks on the President and Prime Minister.

Janssen-Cilag

So many people support our work generously and consistently and without you we would not be able to operate at all.

Recently the firm Janssen-Cilag held a nationwide team-building exercise among their staff, the proceeds of which were to support a charity.

We were the lucky recipients of the immense goodwill and hard work of so many staff members and the \$80,000.00 which they raised. The money will be used for various health projects, including the Marungi Nutrition Project and basic health education.

We are deeply grateful for this outstanding effort.



Tim James, Luisa Marques, Josephine Mitchell, Maria Dunell and Caitlin Lang

Our new Tetun-English Dictionary of Everyday Words is proving a real hit in East Timor. Thank you donors!

Labarik ba Mary MacKillop

One of the Timorese people who came to World Youth Day through Mary MacKillop East Timor is João Parada Ferreira. João is studying Law at UNDIL, the University of Dili, and we have supported him with his studies since 2005.

It emerged during conversations in July that João has been gathering young people from his area on Thursdays and Sundays for some years. He and his helpers provide the young people with informal educational opportunities, including games, religious instruction and basic literacy. He gave the name "Labarik ba Mary MacKillop" (Children of Mary MacKillop) long before we knew of it.

I visited his group whilst in Timor recently, although my visit was not on one of the usual days. Nevertheless, some children eagerly attended, proud to talk about their activities.

João is also heavily involved in other youth initiatives in neighbouring areas, one of which is "Games of Peace" which ran during October. João says: "No matter how small I start, this is the only way to get a result. We have to start something, otherwise nothing goes forward."



João and some of his group "Labarik ba Mary MacKillop"

João has written a report of his activities after World Youth Day, which includes teaching Christian Meditation to groups. He is also the contact person for the RSJ Associates in Timor-Leste.

The poem on the column opposite is part of one of João's many poems. As he was part of the demonstration which ended in the Dili Massacre, much of his work has November 12th as its theme.

An entirely dedicated young man such as this deserves our support.

Susan Connelly RSJ

Anniversary

*November 12th in the year 1991:
The world can see now and know
what happened in a small land named Timor-Leste,
in a place named Santa Cruz, now so famous.*

*In that year
The story of Timor-Leste spread all around the world,
the story of the little people, the innocents who are
gone.
We offer our suffering to our Lord Father.*

*Santa Cruz, you are the paper
upon which is written the story of Timor
as witness to the world:
from the dripping blood to those missing ones
for whom today there is still no grave.*

*Santa Cruz
There are no other stories,
only stories about our lives.
Santa Cruz, from you we transmit the true story to the
world.
But today for ourselves, we still seek the right way.
Santa Cruz, how can we send the message of the
soul of Timor
unless we dedicate ourselves to our country?*

João Parada Ferreira



*RSJ Associates at their November meeting in Dili:
Augusto, Elisa, Silvina, João, Milka, António, Leonel,
Maria and Judit.*

Buy East Timor Coffee

Please check the website on www.tradewinds.org.au,
or email at
info@tradewinds.org.au
or give them a ring on 9252 5265.

Rob Wesley-Smith

We are pleased to learn of the steady progress back to health of one of East Timor's most committed supporters. Rob Wesley-Smith had been helping a friend unload roofing iron from the top of a Landcruiser on September 9 when he was blown off of the vehicle by a gust of wind, hitting his head as he fell. His serious injuries meant that doctors initially thought he would not survive, but he has now left Darwin hospital. Rob has contributed to Northern Territory and general Australian life through engagement in agriculture, sport, environmental conservation, town planning and Aboriginal rights. His courageous and intelligent work on behalf of the Timorese people goes back decades, from before the Invasion right through to Independence and its aftermath. He brings his extensive experience to his writing, commentaries, advice and practical assistance to local Timorese communities as they work towards economic freedom. Everyone at Mary MacKillop wishes Rob the best of health and we continue to be mindful of him and his whole family.

Supporting the Growing Structures

The growth of Timorese structures and institutions must be supported as the Government and other agencies continue the arduous task of creating the systems which will bring hope and prosperity to the nation. *Rosita Kiss* *RSJ* writes of one recent meeting with Catholic Education authorities:

On September 30th 2008 our Mary MacKillop Literacy team meet with Father Giovanni Ribeiro, the director of Catholic Education in the Dili Diocese. He explained that the two Dioceses in East Timor were working together to promote Catholic Education and have had discussions with the Government regarding teacher training and future workshops.

We discussed the continuance of literacy workshops by the Mary MacKillop staff in accordance with the new Education Ministry requirements. Agreements were reached regarding informing and reporting to the Catholic Education office about all Mary MacKillop workshops. Father particularly asked that teachers from all surrounding schools be invited to attend any workshop in their region to help ensure that all teachers have training opportunities. Father expressed his thanks to the members of the Mary MacKillop East Timor Mission for their continued contribution to education in East Timor.

Rising food and fuel prices: Addressing the risks to future generations

The World Bank Group 12 October 2008 and Oxfam Oct 16

"While the rises in global food and fuel prices have moderated in recent months, domestic prices remain much higher than previous years and show few signs of abating. ... For those already struggling to meet their daily food and nutrient needs, the double shock of food and fuel price rises represents a threat to basic survival. The poorest households are reducing the quantity and/or quality of the food, schooling, and basic services that they consume, leading to irreparable damage to the health and education of millions of children.....Unhealthy, less-productive populations are less able to generate the growth needed to lift themselves and their country out of poverty. Progress in education is also being set back: evidence is mounting that poor children are missing school and families are cutting back on education spending as a result of the crisis."

"The hungry season in Timor-Leste, usually about two months, has now lengthened to five months. This is due to various factors such as drought, crop failure and climate change."

MMETM continues to support needy families through our Compassionate Care Programme.

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 MMET by making a donation.... \$.....

I enclose cheque/money order.... \$.....

(Please make cheques out to Mary MacKillop East Timor)

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 PO Box 299 St Marys NSW 1790