

Ba Ami Nia Belun Sira

Newsletter for Friends and Benefactors



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www.mmiets.org.au

Some Major Developments

Palliative Care

Following a successful visit to Timor-Leste during June 2008 by Dr Frank Brennan, Dr Matthew Links, Ms Joan Ryan RN and Sr Joan Westblade LCM, the Little Company of Mary Provincial and Leadership Team gave their wholehearted moral and financial support to the implementation of a program of palliative care in East Timor. This is a significant development in an area of specialisation which is much needed in East Timor and which is central to the spirit of the LCM Sisters. A report is now being prepared for the Minister for Health Dr Nelson, and his adviser Dr Rui, outlining a proposal. The first stage of the plan will extend over a period of three years. Sr Josephine Mitchell RSJ is a member of the Project Committee.

First Aid

Anthony Craig, a Registered Nurse and Trainer in First Aid, has been a long-time supporter of *Mary MacKillop East Timor*. With Sr Maria Dunell and António de Padua as interpreter he recently conducted two First Aid Courses at Becora, one for health workers and the other for a group of local people. These were probably the first workshops of their kind in East Timor and both sessions were very well received. Anthony introduced nurses at the Dili hospital to the benefits of defibrillators and is now fund-raising to provide one to the hospital.

English School Dili

A recent request by Bishop Ricardo to us was the establishment of an English School. Margaret Taylor from Bega conducted a three-week intensive English Course recently and her efforts and comprehensive report will guide the development of this initiative.

World Youth Day

The twelve WYD pilgrims whom MMET brought to Australia, including our good friend Fr António Alves, were joined by four Pilgrims from Alas, a remote village in Timor, brought to Australia by Leo Ward and his parish which assists the Alas villagers and is undertaking a major water project in that area. We were also joined by our parish Priest in Becora, Fr Guilhermino da Silva, and the Parish Priest of Same, Fr Gelasio da Silva.



Anthony Craig and António work with a course participant

English lessons with Margaret Taylor were most productive. António de Padua had music lessons in preparation for exams next year. The group was introduced to the MMET Literacy Programme. They were enthusiastic about an offer made to them to become Associates of the Sisters of St Joseph, and together with a group of Australian Timorese people who have been connected with us for many years, were received as Associates

on July 24 at Mary MacKillop's tomb in North Sydney. Upon their return to Timor-Leste, the group met to elect office bearers and have taken upon themselves the task of visiting the sick and those in prison, as Mary MacKillop often did. There were opportunities for interaction with Timorese groups in Sydney, for meeting the generous people who financed their trip and the Pilgrims attended Staff and Board Meetings. Possibilities exist for further staff placement and training as a result of the WYD visit.

'The East Timor missionary initiative,, clearly a work along the Foundress' line of thinking and so devotedly carried out in her spirit, is a marvellous contribution to the resurrection and the future of East Timor's people.... The cooperative way in which the apostolate has been begun and perseveringly continued is also admirable. God bless all those working on the ground and all who have been and are their support. Every blessing and best wish.'

+Patrick Dougherty, Bishop of Bathurst

A Cry for Justice

On Channel Seven's "Today Tonight" programme on September 9 and 10, it was broadcast that a Timorese man accused of killing Timorese people on behalf of the Indonesian military was in Australia on a World Youth Day visa. Joana Ximenes' brother was beaten to death when he was 11 years old in 1975 by a man identified as Guy Campos, who was never charged with any offence and who is now staying just a few streets away from Joana's home. Other Timorese have contacted the programme adding further accusations against Mr Campos.

Apart from the disturbing situation of having people accused of murder entering Australia with ease, a matter which has been discussed widely with reference to Nazi war criminals among others (cf Mark Aarons' book "War Criminals Welcome"), Joana Ximenes' story brings the lack of justice in East Timor into focus. It highlights the constant human dilemma of trying to balance justice with forgiveness. Xanana's DVD "A Hero's Journey" has grappled with these realities, Xanana deciding that it is impossible for Timor to pursue justice on a large scale. He said that if all collaborators and militia were tried and jailed in Timor the prisons would have to provide shelter and food, basic necessities which so many innocent Timorese do not have. He counselled his people to go into the future as the heroes they are and to renounce the temptation to be victims, chaining themselves for the rest of their lives to bitter revenge.

On a practical note, Timor in its present fragile state is unable to demand from Indonesia what is its due, that is, trials for the 330 high ranking military personnel responsible for the 24 years of torture and death in Timor, and financial recompense for the wholesale destruction of 1999. The Timorese Government does not have the resources to pursue such an agenda, resulting in the freedom of Mr Campos and others.

It is up to Australia, the United States, Britain and Canada, whose covert support enabled so much violent death in Timor through the sale of weapons, training of military and diplomatic inaction, to take the lead by supporting both Indonesia and Timor-Leste to adopt the findings of the Report of the Commission for Truth and Friendship and the CAVR Report (www.cavr-timorleste.org). As well as calling Indonesia to account, these nations ought to implement the many recommendations which apply to themselves. The young democracies of Indonesia and Timor could find no greater example in their task of making the rule of law a fundamental building block for their nations.

Australia now has such an opportunity. Guy Campos is on Australian soil and has been accused by Australian citizens of murder and torture committed as an agent of Indonesia. The sticking point always is, though, that to pursue justice for any matters relating to Timor either risks blaming Indonesia for its crimes, a path Australian Governments have assiduously skirted, or raises again the question of the resources of the Timor Sea, access to which has been the cause of most of Australia's reluctance to honour the human rights of the Timorese people.

It is pleasing that "Today Tonight" and other media has put effort into raising this story. How far will they go?

Susan Connelly RSJ



Joan Westblade and Maria Dunell with Joan Ryan and Drs Frank Brennan and Matthew Links at Suai.

In 1975 most of the East Timorese who had escaped to West Timor went to Portugal where some formed a choir known as **Coro Loro Sa'e** (Sunrise Choir). The choir travelled throughout Portugal to perform, and was a significant part of its members' lives. After thirty years there will be a reunion:
December 26, 2008 All Saints' Church, Liverpool

3:00-5:00 pm ... Display of Memorabilia 5:30-8:30 pm Concert

8:30 pm 'til late ... Dinner and Party

Tickets: \$25/\$15 Payable at the door.

Welcome!

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