



Carmelite Friars of Australia and Timor-Leste

MISSION COORDINATOR UPDATE 22.11.06

Br Sean Keefe, Fr Bruce Clark and myself have all visited the Carmelite mission in Timor-Leste during September and October.

Dili continues to remain volatile and probably will remain so until well after the elections in April 2007. The Carmelite men are all well and facing the challenges of this present situation. One of these challenges is working towards making peace between the eastern and western side of Timor-Leste.

I spent a month in Timor-Leste and was very happy with my visit because I was able to achieve far more than I expected. I spent three weeks in Zumalai and a week in Dili. It is Dili where the trouble is at present and the political issues will have to be resolved. The people themselves have lost confidence in their government as a result of the present crisis.

The infrastructure of the country is still in very poor condition. Roads especially in the south west have deteriorated. Access to **any** running water is only in the main three cities. Access to electricity was better in Dili but was still not available for 24 hours.

The following describes some of the educational achievements of the Carmelites in the past year:

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Primary School Zumalai

I have followed the progress of the renovation of this school with keen interest. This is the first major project that Br Antonio has planned, developed and implemented. The three classrooms at the school have been renovated under his very watchful eye. Ceilings have been put in all the classrooms, there are new doors with locks, the walls on both the inside and outside of the school have been painted, a fence has been built around the school and with a new entrance path and welcome sign. Other additions to the school are a water tank to collect water in the wet season, a staff room, curtains which I have not seen in any other school and the Carmelite monogram has been painted on the outside wall.

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Proud Junior School Children have their photo taken in front of their new school.

Nando, a little boy who was diagnosed with tuberculosis at one of the mobile medical clinics is now attending the OLMC school in Zumalai. He is a clever boy who loves going to school. While I was in Zumalai, I also looked at the area where three new classrooms will be built when the wet season has finished. It will be great news when the next three classrooms are built as at present school hours are staggered. The junior children attend school from 8.00am -10.00am and the senior children from 10.30am-1.00pm.

Special thanks to Mount Carmel Primary School Coorparoo who have paid for all these renovations and are now fundraising for the 2nd stage of the school.

Education Scholarships for Zumalai subdistrict
Seven scholarships for students from Zumalai have been awarded for the 2006/ 2007 school year. Two students have gone to Fatamaca, a Salesian TAFE school on the eastern side of Timor-Leste. One will do an electrical course and the other a woodwork course. After the three year course the students / young men will then return to the Carmelite work

shop in Zumalai where they will be able to use the skills they have learnt. It is the first time that students have gone to Fatamaca and it was a big thing for families at this troubled time in Timor-Leste. Two other students from Zumalai have scholarships to attend senior secondary schools in Dili and three students have scholarships to attend the junior secondary school in Zumalai.

Four other scholarships have been given to adults from Raimea and Zumalai. It is hoped that these four adults, after passing the entrance exam for Baucau Teacher's College in 2007/ 2008, will train as teachers and return to the Zumalai sub-district.

These student and adult scholarships have been donated by Wentworthville Parish in Sydney, Whitefriars College, Donvale and Holy Saviour parish, Vermont South, Melbourne.

Renovations at Raimea Catholic Primary School
During my last visit to Timor-Leste, I also viewed with Br Sean the plan to renovate Raimea Catholic Primary School. Raimea is a village six kilometers from Zumalai. It is situated between two rivers. Part of the road to Raimea is along a river bed which means that the village is isolated during the wet season. I visited Raimea twice during my visit in October which was the dry season. We traveled in a four wheel drive car at about 5 kilometers an hour. The road is rarely used by cars and therefore has a huge amount of undergrowth and rocks.

During both my visits to Raimea we had a meeting with the local people to update them on what is happening with the school renovations and to organize with them to clear the road in order for a truck to bring in building materials for the school renovations. Br Antonio showed me the river bed where good quality sand will be collected. The sand will be used to make concrete to repair the floor and walls of the school. The wood for the school will be purchased in Suai and brought to the school on the Carmelite truck. The local people will do the renovations which is a wonderful opportunity for some employment for them. This project is being supported by Whitefriars College, Donvale and OLMC Parish Wentworthville, Sydney.



Raimea School is being held in a Private House until the Renovations are completed

Agusto Sampio O.Carm

Fr Agusto has spent the last 12 months doing a PostGraduate Diploma in Pastoral Ministry. He lived with the Carmelites in Coorparoo, Brisbane and studied at the Brisbane Theological College. He completed a specialised study in Ministry and Mission in the East Timorese context which was commended by his lecturers. Agusto continually says how grateful he is for the opportunity he has been given. He returns to Timor-Leste Wednesday the 20th December. A very special thanks is extended to the Carmelite parish of Port Melbourne/ Middle Park who established an East Timor scholarship fund to cover the cost of Agusto's study.

I would like to wish each Carmelite Support Group all the special blessings of the Christmas season.

Rosemary Patterson, RSM
Timor-Leste Mission Coordinator

Rosemary Patterson



The old school building with the windows and doors gutted