

Timor Leste – a mission of Marists

In what ways have the PRIORITIES of the 2012 Mission Assembly influenced the ministry in Timor Leste these past few years?

How do the DREAMS from International Mission Assembly, held in Nairobi last year, inform new directions?



- ✓ Timor Leste is on the periphery as the poorest nation in Asia. The professional preparation of teachers through the ICFP (Teachers' College) means young people's right to education as inclusive and transformative.
- ✓ Small local Timorese initiatives supported by Australian Marist Solidarity (AMS) also give more access to education - renovation of a number of diocesan school renovations and study centres, vocational training centres etc.
- ✓ A Foundation is in the process of being established to facilitate and promote the apostolic works of the Marist Brothers in Timor Leste. Dialogue with the local bishop is in train with a view to establishing a Marist school.
- ✓ There is increased internationalization within the Marist Brothers' community in Baucau (now five Brothers, including three Australian and two Brazilian) and of Marist volunteers, from Brazil and Australia, assisting at ICFP.
- ✓ There is ongoing promotion of leadership and professional development of East Timorese staff at ICFP and those associated with Marist Solidarity projects.
- ✓ Formation of the Timorese people to build the skills and the wisdom of self-determination and collegial responsibility for the common good.

- ✓ To help facilitate authentic solidarity experiences for students and staff, the Marist Community Baucau continues to host each year a number (8) of immersion groups from Australian Marist and Catholic schools. These experiences offer opportunities for learning and insight into the history, life and cultural realities of the East Timorese people, and aspects of the Marist mission in action.
- ✓ There is ongoing promotion of Marist charism and mission, especially among young people, through formal and informal formation experiences.
- ✓ The Brothers are active in inviting young people to consider and take up living a Marist vocation. This has resulted in some young people choosing to consider discerning the Brothers vocation and some lay people wanting to learn more about the Lay Marist vocation.
- ✓ Land has been purchased and plans are being drawn up for the construction of a house for the initial formation of candidates to the Marist Brothers.
- ✓ Apart from the formal ministry roles, various Brothers are involved in a range of pastoral and devotional activities, at the neighbourhood, parish and Diocesan levels. Their active presence, particularly at the small neighbourhood and parish levels, is highly valued by the local people. These encounters remain excellent opportunities for mutual evangelization.
- ✓ The Brothers offer a very different model and way of being Church in a country that is highly clericalized and hierarchical. The East Timorese people, including fellow religious and clergy, often put the Brothers in the same category as priests, or don't acknowledge the Brothers at all. In being the 'Marian face of the Church', the Brothers witness to relationships that are based on equality, mutual respect and compassion.
- ✓ The Province's Timor Leste Committee exists as a reference group to the Province leadership and to support the work of Marists in Timor Leste.