



NEWSLETTER

What a busy three weeks we have just spent in Timor-Leste.

Before heading over we purchased a container and filled it up with toys, music instruments, desks, chairs, office equipment, furniture, clothes, shoes etc for delivery to the Dominican Sisters in Timor-Leste.



Students from Timor-Leste, studying on Gold Coast, helping Mano fill the container

We were fortunate to be able to have the container delivered just prior to our arrival so that we could spend the three weeks in Timor-Leste unloading and distributing the goods to the various recipients. All was going well until the container was delayed and we didn't get possession of the container until mid way through the second week of our trip.



Mano & Mano unloading container off boat in Dili

Once we got the container it was full steam ahead emptying it out and transporting the goods to the Dominican Sisters place so that we could then distribute to the various recipients in Oecusse and Salau. We were lucky to have the help of Manuel and his friends to assist us with the unloading.

While we were waiting for the container to arrive we headed out to the mountain area of Salau to attend the official opening and blessing of our "Resource Room". Everyone from the village turned out to witness the event and it turned into a real party. Sisters Rosario, Sabina and Ella all did a wonderful job organising everything for the day and Sister Sabina excelled on her cooking for the event. Fr Tiago conducted the Mass and blessing.



Celebrating with a toast, Mameo, Sr Rosario, Fr Tiago and Marc



Children reading the books we bought, in the local language Tetum

For the "Resource Room", we gave Sr Rosario 2 new laptops, a new Casio Keyboard, general office supplies and 2 sets of 20 books written in the local language of Tetum. These books have just recently been published and are the only books the children have to read in their own language. Once the computers were set up

the children showed us how quickly they got the hang of using computers. It is amazing how quickly they picked it up.



children using the computers and books we supplied

As well as helping the orphanage we also provided, for the local school, desks, filing cabinets, lockers, chairs, 2 x new desktop computers, a new printer and maps to assist them with the education of the children from the orphanage as well as the local village.



Fr Tiago invited us to visit his Parish in Soibada so while in Salau we headed across the river, no bridge, to visit him in Soibada. It was a bit scary crossing the river as it had been raining all day and the river was quite high, but with the help of the locals we managed to make it through. I can tell you I was holding my breath the whole way.

Once in Soibada Fr Tiago and the boys welcomed us with a song before showing us around. It wasn't long before it was time to head back across the river to Salau for the night.



While we were in Timor-Leste they held their Independence Day Celebrations. Instead of staying in Dili, which was very hot, we headed out to the districts to see

how they celebrated this day. It was amazing to see everyone dressed up



in their traditional costumes, some of which were really elaborate

All in all it was a very successful, though exhausting, trip with a lot accomplished. We can't wait until our next visit to see how much the children have advanced with the computers and music instruments.

To see more photos and find out more about what we do visit our web site

www.easttimorchildrensfund.org