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ATAURO NEWS

AUGUST 2009



Leaving for Timor



Streets of Dili



Atauro Island



Homemade Toys



Riding in the open air taxi!



Altar at Macadade



Jennie with Father Chico

PARTNERING—A SISTER PARISH

Father Ron has always had a secret dream (well a bit of a secret that he shared with many parishioners!). He imagined that one day we would partner with a parish in a third world country—in particular East Timor.

A Sister Parish

A parish that we could support in many ways; prayer, financial and physical support.

The Pastoral Council undertook preliminary investigations in 2008 and in 2009 the Mission Ministry Team offered to continue these investigations on behalf of the Pastoral Council and as representatives of the Parish.

Father Ron had a contact, Deacon Gary Stone, who was actively involved in a group known as FPET (Friends and Partners with East Timor).

Contact was made with Deacon Gary so that Cathy, Jennie and Larry could attend a couple of meetings with FPET to establish a relationship.

As a parish we are very fortunate to have this relationship, which we will continue to foster, as they have done so much preparation and partnering with a parish in East Timor (Timor Leste).

They currently have two PALMS volunteers permanently on the ground in Timor Leste. Their names are Margaret and David Hall and they have worked for FPET for a number of years now, establishing relationships with the people of Atabae (27kms from the western border with Indonesia). Margaret is a community health nurse, who

specialises in preventative health and David is a project manager.

They have built a Community Health Centre where three local girls have been employed and trained to care for their own people. The people of Timor Leste have never before known of a thing called preventative health and only visit the hospital if they are gravely ill. Now they have a chance at a different outlook and best of all it is with the help of three of their own Isabelle, Leper and Maria



Isabelle, Leper and Maria

THE JOURNEY BEGINS—Jennie and Cathy

Thanks to FPET and David and Margaret Hall we had someone to greet us and look after us in this country so many have talked about—Timor Leste.

We were nervous and apprehensive as we sat on the plane.

What would we find when we arrived? What conditions would we have to live in? What would the people of Timor Leste be like?

All natural questions, but ones we can now answer easily.

We found a delightful dignified respectful and timid people, but don't kid yourself they have a great sense of humour!

The streets of Dili were not quite as we imagined them as they have been rebuilding their country for three years now and changes are happening, some say slowly, but all the same they are happening.

There were no beggars on the streets, this is not encouraged in any way. The people of Timor Leste are proud people

and this would not be appropriate.



Housing in Dili

The area around the houses is all dirt which is swept daily by the owners to ensure that cleanliness is maintained

There is no rubbish scattered through the streets either and every Friday is National clean up day when everyone takes to the streets to pick up rubbish.

WHERE IS ATAURO ISLAND?



MAP OF ATAURO ISLAND?



THERE'S TOO MUCH TO TELL IN SUCH A LITTLE SPACE!
MORE INFO TO FOLLOW SOON



The Ferry to Atauro comes and goes only on a Saturday



Taxi!



The local hospital. Doctors available 9am-12pm each weekday

The people of Atauro Island are already undertaking community projects like, the Craft Group, the Pescatori school, jewellery making and the restaurant all run by co-ops where the funds go back to the community.

LIFE ON ATAURO ISLAND

Margaret and David had referred us to Atauro Island as Margaret has been working with the local parish priest, Father Chico in preventative health.

He knew of our visit and was very excited that we were coming.

While we were only there briefly we learnt so much.

- Electricity—available 6.30-12.00pm each night in certain areas, otherwise a kero lamp
- Water—available for a couple of hours each morning in certain areas, if you are lucky and a rock hasn't fallen on the pipeline which dangles precariously on the cliff face of the extremities of the island
- Primary school—generally each village has one with volunteer teachers, as the government can't afford to pay them as yet
- High School—available in the larger town and all the children from the outer villages walk to that village on a Sunday afternoon to stay with family or friends for the week and they return home (walk—sometimes 8kms up very steep hills) on the Saturday afternoon after school
- School Resources—what's that?
- No flushing toilets—use the pit in the ground and the bucket of water beside it
- No running showers—collect the water from either the tap in the morning (if it

appears) or from the well shared by all the houses around you and then tip the cold water over your body

- Food—limited supply, especially in the dry season. It is local produce only as money is scarce. There are pigs, goats, chooks and geese that wonder around and these are to share. Some are lucky enough to have cattle and again these are to share
- Deafness—the villagers rely on catching fish, but have to dive deep to reap their harvest, so many of the pescatori (fishermen) are deaf from this
- Roads—very bumpy, if they still exist because of the monsoons

Rebuilding their lives after many years of oppression, the people of Atauro Island live an isolated life. They need our prayer, financial and physical support.

Please pray for discernment as to how we are best able to play a part in their lives.

If you wish to donate towards this ministry, please leave your donation either in the thanksgiving plate in a marked envelope, or drop it to the parish office.

BUT.....SMILES AND LAUGHS AND COMMITMENT TO EACH OTHER AND THEIR FAMILIES AROUND