



Volunteer Profile

VOLUNTEER WORKGROUP BUILD NEW TOILET AND LAUNDRY BLOCK AT ORPHANAGE

Following a public appeal by the Order to raise funds to build a much needed new toilet block and laundry facility for the Carmelite Sisters orphanage in Maubara, the Ambassador of the Order of Malta to Timor-Leste, H.E. David Scarf, arranged for a volunteer workgroup from Warrane College at the University of NSW to travel to Timor-Leste to complete the project. The volunteer workgroup not only covered their own expenses and provided free labour for the project, they also raised funds to purchase the materials required for the job.

Adrian Morris, one of the volunteers in the workgroup, describes the experience.

"On 19th November 2011, the Warrane College Workcamp Team were greeted by the jagged mountains and crystal clear waters of Timor-Leste. The tropical sun beamed down upon our two Assistant Deans, Phil Elias and Miguel Paredes, our builder Mike Greenwell, plumber Andrew Quinn, Father Joe Pro and 15 eager College residents, all coming to grips with the blazing heat and the relentless humidity. For the next three weeks, we would be occupied in constructing a new toilet block for the Carmelite Sisters' orphanage in Maubara, about 50 km west of the capital Dili.

Having seen the various TV ads for charities in Africa and South East Asia I felt I was prepared for whatever I may encounter. It wasn't until I saw the dominance of corrugated iron, thatch and cinder block in the local

architecture that I realised the very real poverty facing the local populace. The dilapidated roads added to my dismay, as the constant bumping in the orphanage's truck made me a little carsick and more than a little homesick. Perhaps not an ideal beginning to three weeks away from my comfortable air-conditioned home.

However, thanks to the Sisters' brilliant cooking skills the occasional beach visit and the camaraderie of the Team my spirits rose once more. The children began spending a lot of time with us, and we attempted to teach each other our native language. One night, as we continued our cultural exchange, orphans and campers broke into song and the cheerful strains of 'Waltzing Matilda' and 'Sweet Molly Malone' mingled with the quick-paced Tetum folk songs of the locals. As I sang until my throat gave out, I caught a glimpse into the lives of the children and how much they value friendly company.

Holding English classes for the youngsters was another exciting challenge. Luckily, my 'Lonely Planet guide to East Timor' came in handy for some basic phrases and greetings. In class, I attempted to teach 'Baa Baa Black Sheep' with some minor success, but by this stage most of the littlies were much more interested in running around and kicking soccer balls with us.

One thing I which really stood out was the pure happiness these kids exhibited. Not once did they complain about anything, they were always excited to see and greet us, and would gladly take us by the hand and show us what English they had learnt. They do not place great value on material possessions like many Western peoples, but rather on friendship and company.

After many early-morning starts and late evening finishes, the new toilet block was finally completed. On our

last day at the orphanage, we took great pleasure in presenting the 'best tin shed in East Timor' to the orphans for their use. As we were leaving, much comforting was required; the kids crying and dreading the moment we drove off into the distance for the last time. While holding hands with many of the youngsters at this time, I thought about what we had accomplished in the past three weeks. There was the concrete and steel testament to our dedication, but the tears showed that we had made a much more profound impact on their lives than just providing a new building.

I found this to be a life-changing experience taking me far outside of my previous comfort zone, and I am sure that all of us who were involved consider ourselves blessed to have been given this opportunity by Warrane College, the Order of Malta and our generous sponsors."



If you are interested in volunteering opportunities with the Order, please email us at volunteers@smom.org.au

COATS FOR THE HOMELESS PROJECT GOES INTERNATIONAL



Following the fantastic success of the 2011 Coats for the Homeless project, the British Association of the Order of Malta is looking to adopt the project in 2012.

Last year the UK experienced its coldest winter in 300 years and record levels of rainfall fell. In London alone it was reported that 4,000 people were sleeping on the streets in these conditions. With equally severe weather forecast for 2012, the British Association recognised how this Australian project could help those sleeping on the streets in the UK.

Furthermore Members of the Order in New Zealand are in the process of planning a Fundraising breakfast in Wellington for the Coats programme so that they can also roll out the project in New Zealand.



Philippine Association of the Order of Malta is taking to support the people severely affected by the tropical storm "Washi". Heavy rainfall and flash floods caused by the storm in mid-December destroyed whole parts of the island and rendered hundreds of thousands homeless.

"Especially the children, being highly vulnerable, need immediate care and protection. They are at risk of sexual abuse and trafficking because of the congested situation in the evacuation centres and the breakdown of social structures," explains Dr. Melgabal Capistrano, Malteser International consultant for disaster risk reduction, currently supporting the team on Mindanao.

ORDER OF MALTA AROUND THE WORLD

TROPICAL STORM 'WASHI' IN THE PHILIPPINES: EMERGENCY RELIEF EFFORT CONTINUES

A total of 100 temporary homes including latrines as well as community taps for safe drinking water will be constructed in Iligan, a medium-sized city located on the Philippine island Mindanao. This is the next step the

With this special focus on the safety of unaccompanied and separated children, psycho-social support and preventive measures are part of the relief measures. In response to an appeal of the local authorities, the Philippine Association also supports the management and coordination of the evacuation centres.

Directly after "Washi" hit the island, Malteser International, the relief service of the Order of Malta for worldwide humanitarian aid, supported the Philippine Association with an initial



The project is also being considered by the Associations in America.

"It is fantastic that other Associations have learnt about this project and recognise the value it can have for some of the most vulnerable people in their communities" explains Fundraising Manager, Michelle Rees. "It is wonderful achievement that a project that started in Australia will now be adopted in other parts of the world to help those sleeping on the streets."

Donations are now being taken for the 2012 project. Please see page 5 to make a donation or visit www.coatsforthehomeless.org

If you are able to help promote the project in your local community, workplace or parish, please email mrees@smom.org.au

10,000 euros. The relief measures can now be expanded, thanks to Caritas International providing an additional 50,000 euros.

Immediately after the tropical storm, the Philippine Association sent two tonnes of food, medicines and supplies to the disaster area around Cagayan de Oro and Iligan.



PLEASE HELP IF YOU CAN. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A DONATION VISIT PAGE 5.

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FEBRUARY 2012 THE HOSPITALER NEWSLETTER

IN THIS ISSUE - MEMBERS NEWS / LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES / TIMOR-LESTE



As the Hospitaller for South Australia it is my pleasure to introduce the first newsletter of 2012. Since the last edition, the Order's calendar has been full of engagements and the following pages will include commentary on Lourdes Day Mass celebrations, the Investitures of sixteen new Members and an Inaugural Mass in Timor-Leste.

In November, two Members were honoured in the Pride of Australia awards for their work following the Queensland floods. Contained is an article on this deserving accolade, for the work they continue to do in the Lockyer Valley.

This edition also contains an update on our humanitarian projects in Timor-Leste, including an inspirational volunteer account from a student at Warrane College, who was part of a work party that constructed a toilet block at the Carmelite Orphanage. This fantastic project was completed in December to the delight of the Sisters and children.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue. Thank you for your continued support.

Ian Leitch
Dr. Ian Leitch FRD



OVER 3,000 PILGRIMS NATIONWIDE ATTEND LOURDES DAY MASS CELEBRATIONS

Every May members of the Order of Malta from around the world make a pilgrimage to Lourdes bringing malades (the sick) from their own country together with their own prayers, troubles, and hopes to Mary the Immaculate Conception and bathe in the healing water.

In response to the large number of pilgrims in Australia unable to make that long journey to France, in 2004 members of the Order in Victoria brought Lourdes to the malades in Australia by way of large containers of Lourdes Holy Water, generously donated by Confreere Simon Grenfell.

Confreere Dr Bernard Clarke, with assistance from Confreeres Damian Benson and Tony Heath arranged a 'Lourdes Day Mass' in Melbourne where attendees could receive special Blessings and bottles of Lourdes water. This first Mass was celebrated by Archbishop Denis Hart and took place in the gymnasium at Xavier College and attracted a congregation of almost 400 people.

Seven years later the Lourdes Day Mass in Victoria is now a fixed event in the Order's calendar, attended by over 2,000 pilgrims. Due to the overwhelming popularity of this special mass, which continues to distribute Lourdes water and anoint the sick, it is now celebrated across Australia. On the first

weekend in December 2011, Lourdes Day Masses were celebrated in Melbourne, Sydney and Perth with a combined attendance of over 3,000 pilgrims.

In **VICTORIA** around 2,000 pilgrims attended the service in December which was again celebrated by Most Reverend Denis J Hart, Archbishop of Melbourne with Magistral Chaplains Fr Terry Curfin and Fr Brian Boyle. The Mass was held at St Patrick's Cathedral, which was filled to capacity. Volunteers from both the community and local schools helped with the movement of the frail aged.

In **NEW SOUTH WALES** the mass was held at St Mary's Cathedral and was attended by almost 600 pilgrims. The Principal Celebrant was H.E. Cardinal Cassidy, with Bishop Fisher, Msgr Doherty, Msgr Redden, Fr Meagher and Fr McCarthy concelebrating. Transport, generously supplied by Murrays Coaches, enabled the participation of malades from all over the city and who otherwise would not have been able to attend.

In **WESTERN AUSTRALIA** the mass was held at St Mary's Cathedral in co-operation the Catholic Doctors Association and was attended by over 600 pilgrims. Mass was celebrated by the Cathedral Dean, Msgr Michael Keating.

UPCOMING LOURDES DAY MASS CELEBRATIONS IN OTHER STATES:
* **Adelaide** - Saturday 11th February 2012, St Francis Xavier Cathedral
* **Brisbane** - Saturday 12th May 2012, St Pascal's Church

If you would like to learn more about the Order's pilgrimage to Lourdes in 2012, please email Lourdes@smom.org.au or telephone 02 9331 8477.



1 CLINIC, 2 VOLUNTEER VISITING DOCTORS, 250 PATIENTS... AND NO MEDICATION TO PRESCRIBE

The Order of Malta's role as a 'Hospitaller' goes back to its origins in 1048, where a hospital was built in Jerusalem to care for pilgrims of any religious faith or race. Now in the 21st Century, the Order supports and runs medical facilities worldwide and for a decade the Australian Association has provided four clinics in Timor-Leste, run by local congregations, with medical and surgical supplies. These clinics offer medical services to the local population who would otherwise be unable to access treatment.

Recently our Hospitaller, Dr. Ian Marshall and another volunteer doctor visited a clinic run by the Carmelites to offer their professional services. The one day clinic was attended by 250 locals, all hoping to receive medical attention. Unfortunately, due to the overwhelming demand, many patients left the clinic without seeing a doctor.

The Order is currently contacting medical associations in the Asia Pacific region to appeal for medical staff to offer their services at clinics such as the Carmelites. However, as Dr. Marshall explains, staffing the clinics is only half the battle, "The tragedy is that of those who were able to see a doctor, almost all left the clinic with insufficient medication to treat their conditions".



At the clinic, this elderly man (pictured) in his seventies was examined. Like many Timorese, he has worked long and hard all his life, providing his family with a subsistence living off the off the land. He is riddled with arthritis due to 'wear and tear' of his joints and is in constant pain. His condition requires long term pain relief and anti-arthritis drugs - basic treatments we would expect in Australia. Unfortunately, he received only one week's supply of

medication from the clinic as that was all that was available.

A year's supply of anti-arthritis drugs costs less than \$50. However with over half of the Timorese population living below the poverty line of less than \$1 per day, funding medication themselves is not an option.

Unfortunately, heartbreaking cases such as this are not unique. At the same clinic this elderly woman (pictured), who was brought in by her concerned family after she had been suffering from severe headaches, was examined. Her examination revealed that she had extremely high blood pressure and was in serious danger of suffering a stroke. Despite needing permanent blood pressure treatment the clinic was only able to offer her a week's supply of medication.

\$10 a month would have paid for this women's treatment.

Despite the Order donating medical supplies to clinics in Timor-Leste, Dr. Marshall's visit illustrated how there is still a great and increasing need for pharmaceuticals in these small clinics which provide primary medical care for significant numbers of Timorese in underprivileged urban and isolated rural areas.

Consequently Dr. Bob Britten Jones, a Member from South Australia and a former board member of 'OPAL' (Overseas Pharmaceutical Aid for Life), has initiated a project with the assistance of Dr. Ian Leitch and Mr. Alick Haddad, to purchase and distribute medicines for the clinics at discounted wholesale prices.

Mr. Haddad, a Pharmacist with longstanding

contacts in the industry has enabled the Order to purchase suitable pharmaceuticals at wholesale prices and assist with industry donations to maximise the size and quality of these shipments.

Dr. Leitch has first-hand experience in Timor-Leste after serving with the Australian Defence Force at UN Military Hospital in Dili in 2000 and subsequently visiting with a Plastic Surgical Team from the Overseas Specialist Surgical Association (OSSA). His experience has been invaluable in developing the project and prioritising supplies.

However to provide the clinics with the volume of pharmaceuticals necessary to service the clinics, lack of funding is currently inhibiting the progress of the project. Dr. Leitch explains "Even though the pharmaceuticals are purchased at wholesale prices, because of their poverty, most Timorese are not able to afford treatment. Our provision of pharmaceuticals at no cost, will allow the local population to receive treatment that would otherwise not be possible".



CAN YOU HELP?

\$21 a month would pay for 3 courses of Amoxicillin, an antibiotic used to treat a wide range of infections, such as pneumonia, middle ear infections, kidney infections and even life threatening conditions such as peritonitis.

\$38 would pay for a year's course of Ibuprofen. In a country where most of the work is done in the field by manual labour, muscular aches and pains can be chronically debilitating. This inexpensive anti-inflammatory drug would allow the family bread winner to continue working.

\$110 a month would pay for 10 courses of Erythromycin, used to treat whooping cough – a potentially fatal infection.

\$500 would supply an entire clinic with a year's supply of Paracetamol to provide pain relief for a multitude of possible ailments.

If you would like to support the project, please see page 5 to make a donation.



ORDER MEMBERS HONOURED IN PRIDE OF AUSTRALIA AWARDS

Since it began seven years ago, the Pride of Australia has recognised and celebrated Australia's unsung heroes. At the end of last year two members of the Order, Derek and Chris Pingel, were awarded the Community Spirit Medal. This award recognises those whose selfless, tireless and largely unacknowledged actions have enriched the lives of those around them in their community.

Derek and wife Chris Pingel voluntarily took on one of the toughest jobs imaginable after the horror floods that swept through the Lockyer Valley. As co-ordinators of the Lockyer Valley Flood Relief effort they

managed the massive task of collecting and distributing much needed donations to flood affected residents. They successfully ran five large storage facilities, two distribution centres and a workforce of more than 100 volunteers. It was a very emotional time for the couple as they are also local residents who were scarred by the tragic events in January 2011. Twelve months on, Chris and Derek are still involved in the provision of donated goods for struggling families.

"We have been truly humbled and honoured by this award and most importantly, proud to be carrying out these works in the name of our Order" said Derek.

Following the relief effort, Derek and Chris have also been involved in the development of a facility that opened in November 2011, which will store supplies in the event of any future disasters in and around the area.

HISTORIC INVESTITURES WELCOME 16 NEW MEMBERS

At the end of last year, the Australian Association has welcomed sixteen new members at Investitures in New Zealand, Hong Kong and Bangkok.

On 9th October, at the first investiture held in New Zealand, the Order welcomed **Major-General (retd) Maurice Dodson** at an Investiture Mass held in Wellington. The Mass was celebrated by Rev. Father John O'Neill.

On 17th October, eight postulants were invested in Hong Kong. The Investiture was held in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception with Holy Mass celebrated by Very Rev Michael Yeung VG (a Magistral Chaplain of the Order) with Concelebrants Monsignor Ante Jozic and Father Frank Leo

with music by the Catholic Cathedral Choir. Those Invested were:

- * Denis Chang Khen-Lee
- * John Chu Chung Wah
- * Desiree Joanna Jebesen
- * Christina Lee Look Ngan Kwan
- * Peter Lee Shung Tak
- * Teresa Lam Yu Lai Ling
- * Thomas Francis Mitchell
- * Thomas Anthony Wong Sze Pok

On 26th November 2011, at the first ever Investiture in Thailand, seven new Members of the Order were invested at



INAUGURAL MASS FOR THE ORDER OF MALTA CELEBRATED IN TIMOR-LESTE

As the Order's humanitarian activities and projects in Timor-Leste grow in number and size, the Order's spiritual work in Timor-Leste was recognised with an Inaugural Mass for the Order of Malta on 16th November.

The Mass was held in the chapel of the Carmelite Convent in Dili and was celebrated by Fr. José Martins SJ with the Papal Nuncio's representative, Mgr. Bilbao, concelebrating. Around 50 people attended, including Government ministers, Ambassadors and Members of the Australian Association.

The Order's Ambassador to Timor-Leste, David Scarf, commented *"The Mass with the beautiful singing of the Carmelite nuns, novices and postulants was a wonderful inspiration to all of those present. I believe it was truly a pivotal moment for our presence and for our mission in Timor-Leste"*.



THE ORDER OF MALTA AROUND AUSTRALIA

THE NEW SOUTH WALES BRANCH were hosted by St. Vincent's Hospital at a fundraising function for Gorman House in September. \$77,000 remains to be raised by the Branch to reach its target of raising \$1 million dollars in 5 years for the detoxification facility.

During December 2011:

- * The newly formed Defence of the Faith working group held their inaugural meeting
- * A meeting was held with St. Joseph's Hospital, Auburn to further the Branch association with their Palliative Care Unit

Upcoming Events include:

- * The Branch White Knights formal dinner with funds raised proceeding to Gorman House, St Joseph's Hospital, Auburn Palliative Care Unit and the Homeless Coats project
- * First Friday Vigil Masses at St Mary's Cathedral every first Thursday of the month
- * Holy Mass and NSW Branch meetings of members

THE QUEENSLAND BRANCH was privileged to host a Festive Dinner in honour of the Most Rev John Bathersby DD AO, in September 2011. The gala dinner, to mark his retirement as Archbishop of Brisbane, was attended by more than 150 people. His Grace is a Conventual Chaplain ad honorem of the Order and has been a great supporter of the Branch over many years.

On 18 November 2011, a Bio-Ethics Forum organised by the Queensland Branch was addressed by Dr Ray Campbell and Dr David van Gend on the topic "End of Life Debate - The Catholic Perspective". These leading experts articulated clearly and concisely the historical, ethical, philosophical and scientific arguments against euthanasia.

I WANT TO HELP

You can make a donation by completing this donation form and returning it in the **Reply Paid envelope provided.**

I am happy for the Order to allocate my donation to where the need is greatest: **or**

Please accept a gift towards the:

- Timor-Leste Pharmaceuticals project
- Coats for the Homeless programme
- Relief Efforts in Philippines

REMEMBER, GIFTS OF \$2 AND OVER ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE.

Spiritual activities of the Branch in late 2011 included a visit for Sunday Mass to St Paschal's Parish on 20 November and an end-of-year gathering for Mass and supper on 13 December.

THE SOUTH AUSTRALIA BRANCH used their December meeting to plan 2012 activities:

- * Fundraising events are planned to support the work of the Hutt Street Centre for homeless persons and the Adelaide Day Centre, both of whom the Branch have supported for many years.
- * At the time of the feast of St John the Baptist the Branch Members will once again conduct a Saturday morning of reflection, followed by their robed attendance at Sunday Mass at the Cathedral.
- * The Branches annual weekend retreat conducted by the Jesuit community at the picturesque Sevenill vineyards will be held in October this year. Interstate visitors are welcome.

At the initiative of individual Members the works of the Order are progressed in many and varied ways. The challenge as a Branch is to find ways to support its Members in their endeavours, particularly for those most in need in our midst and to provide encouragement to continue to serve and lead others.

IN VICTORIA, Members are making a strong effort to give effect to the Commentaries recently issued by the Grand Master calling on each of us "to devote oneself to the charitable activities of the Order".

As a result, members – and often spouses – are engaged in much charitable work including but not limited to:

- * Visitation work;
- * Taking life stories of the terminally ill;

* Assisting personally the sick and infirm at Lourdes Masses throughout the year;

* Assisting in a hands-on fashion in our new Day Centre partnership at Caritas Christi;

* Distributing Coats directly to the genuinely homeless.

This meets the Commentary advice – "the fullness of participation is achieved when one has direct contact with Our Lords the Sick or the Poor. Where doing so, it is Christ himself whom we recognise and worship in them" p. 48.

Such is the need that the Branch have been recruiting volunteers to assist them.

IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA, Members continue to support the Personal Advocacy Service. Currently the service assists 108 people with intellectual disabilities ('friends') and 140 community volunteers ('advocates'), who gather together regularly in small groups hosted by local Catholic parishes. Through personal friendships, this program enables some of the least supported members of the community, to grow in confidence and to develop a fuller and more valued life.

An Endowment Fund has been established for the Personal Advocacy Service, with the objective of raising \$2 million over three years. A Board of Trustees has been appointed with Confreres Denis Cullity as Chairman of the Endowment Fund Board, and Michael Shanahan as one of the Trustees.

At the end of the first semester Order Members will be awarding prizes, donated by the Order in WA, to medical students of Notre Dame University, Fremantle, in Philosophy and in Ethics.

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