



Manten Kontaktu

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Seniors Inspire Juniors

On Monday 7th August 40 primary students from Christ the King, St Robert's, St Margaret's, St Mary's and St Francis Xavier schools attended a student day about Timor-Leste, in particular our region of Viqueque. This day was hosted by Christ the King School in Newcomb. The workshops were run by senior students from Christian College and St Ignatius College, who have visited Viqueque this year.

Many students learnt a Timorese song accompanied by the guitar. They did not imagine they could sing a song in another language in half an hour!! "The Boy and the Crocodile" story was also very popular. The students could see the shape of the country really did resemble the shape of a crocodile. The crocodile finger puppets were a big hit. The students were also very interested in the experiences of the senior students who have recently visited the country. They were amazed at some of the living and school conditions in Viqueque and the differences to our lifestyles. Some students were able to write a postcard to a student in Viqueque. They told of their school and family. Students were also able to make a collage of pictures from Christian College calendars depicting the life and people in Viqueque.

Overall, it was a very interesting day for the Primary students who mixed well with their fellow students from schools with an interest in supporting the less fortunate students in our sister schools of Viqueque. We need to keep the interest of these young people as they progress to secondary schools.

Chris Hansen, Deputy Principal Christ the King (pictured)



Impressions of the day from Christian College students and reflections by Deb Singleton

Jack and Grace: "We are all really eager to go to East Timor in the future, based on today's activities, where we learnt about the culture of Timor-Leste. We found out that we can go to East Timor in Year 11 in the 'Our World' subject." That's only seven years away for Jack and Grace. They are already counting down!

Madison said: "I am motivated to be a Prefect so I can go to East Timor in Year 12 and do work over there".



Georgia reflected: "I thought about how much we have compared to Timorese. But perhaps compared to us, they have gratitude and happiness inside them that we sometimes forget to



show in our everyday lives." **Ella:** "I liked learning about different parts of the Timorese culture, especially the differences and

similarities about the animals".

Evelyn observed: "I liked seeing the happy faces of the other Geelong students while we



were learning to sing and write letters in another language (Tetum) in just one afternoon!".

Chloe: "The letter writing was great and it was amazing to see, that in the photos, the Timorese people can be happy with so little and we can be unhappy with so much."

Max: "It was great mixing with the Senior School students and seeing something real that they had done

Jack: "It was so real and it convinced me that I would love to go over one day. It was great to see so many other schools who can help spread the influence. It inspired you to want to make a difference."

At the end of the session, when students were asked if they would like to visit our friends in East Timor one day, every hand in the room shot up. So it is with gratitude in our hearts that we thank

Michael Little, Brydon Barnett, AJ Wight, Georgia Gordon, Casey Reid and Cathy De Rosso for preparing their sessions and giving up their time to share the unfolding story of Viqueque with the 'next generation'.

Making Connections

Olivia Hurley and Nikita Bone wrote the following article after Clonard College's recent trip. Whilst in Viqueque they visited their partner school Uamori.

When we exited the plane our bodies were overwhelmed by the blazing heat and never-ending humidity. We saw many startling images as we walked along the streets of Dili, Bacau, Venilale and Viqueque. There were markets, dogs, chickens, microlets, monkeys, ruins and religious icons, and always children ready to say hello. The drive from Dili to Beloi was a beautiful, coastal drive along a treacherous, dirt road that we called "The Great Ocean Track". Overall, despite our undeniable shock and the overwhelming effects of heat and the unfamiliarity of the environment, the girls all grew a definite connection to and appreciation for the diverse and unique physical environment that we will never forget.

We learnt that amidst prevalent poverty in the aftermath of wartime, culture stands out in Timor-Leste as something vibrant and precious. Timor-Leste has been colonised by the Portuguese and invaded by the Indonesians. The presence of these nations on the island led to new and diverse concepts being introduced into Timorese culture

We also learnt the Timorese take pride in learning, always wanting to further their education and knowledge. This thirst to learn is obvious everywhere we visited but particularly in the smaller districts such as Viqueque and Licecia. As obvious 'malays' we would be stopped in some of the most random places such as churches and restaurants by locals wanting to broaden their horizons through speaking English. The values the Timorese have embedded in their people regarding education and learning will forever impact upon the way we view school, and the opportunities we receive as a result of western privilege. The many bonds between Australia and Timor Leste will continue to be strengthened as



games of basketball, soccer and cards that carried on well into the evening.

As our closest neighbour, the students were consistently surprised at how little they knew about the history of the country; particularly our shared history.

students such as ourselves have the wonderful opportunity to visit this amazing country.

For the complete article, please follow us on www.geelong-viqueque.com.au

Cherished Memories

The boys of St Joseph's College returned from their immersion trip to Viqueque with a powerful experience. They have been touched by the lives of the people that they met and they have found that the experience has continued to resonate with them. Their eyes have been opened to the needs of their neighbours and they have returned committed to wanting to make a difference. When they embarked on their adventure, they could never have predicted how much the experience would give them.

The boys enjoyed the opportunity of working with their peers in 01 Viqueque School. Challenged with language barriers, they found ways to develop engaging and appropriate lessons which were characterised by good humour, a willingness to get involved and a preparedness to learn Tetum.

The boys had the privilege of staying in the local orphanage and this provided them with further insights and experiences. They loved the opportunity to assist the student with their homework, but they particularly loved the endless



Their understandings of Australia's involvement in World War 2 and the suffering of the Timorese after the withdrawal of Australian soldiers was eye



opening. Similarly, their new awareness of the impact of the Indonesian occupation was made manifest through the opportunity to visit the Resistance Museum in Dili and to learn about the atrocities committed at Chega Prison and Santa Cruz cemetery. These learnings will stay with them forever and will help ensure that these sacrifices and losses are never forgotten.

The Joey's boys have been touched by their experience. Whilst they will cherish memories of visiting Cristo Rei, of walking the streets of Dili and Viqueque and of absorbing all that was new to them what will stay with them for ever are the memories of the people they met, the friends they made and the way the Timorese people touched their lives. In forging stronger links with our neighbours, we should never underestimate what young people can do. For it is students like Nathan Mifsud, Ben Paulden, Harry Yates, Ethan Gray, Ned De Grandi and Tyler Bryan who will continue to help make the world a fairer, more equitable place.



Mark Stracey St Joseph's College

Making Poverty History, Another Triumph!



The 6,000 plus students and staff from Geelong's four Catholic Colleges had a memorable day at Clonard College on Sept 13. This was the fourth fundraiser for Timor-Leste with \$60,000 raised, a staggering total of \$240,000 over the period. The funds will support Caritas Australia Protection Program, which aims to promote the protection and resilience of vulnerable groups in Timor Leste, particularly the reduction of gender-based violence for women and children. (More information refer to Caritas Australia web site).

Congratulations to Simon Chair, staff and senior students for being such wonderful supporters of Timor-Leste.



2017-2018 Committee

President	Peter Cannon
Vice President	David Whelan
Secretary	Julie Whelan
Treasurer	Tricia Blane
Committee	Janet Taylor, Chris Clark, Will Birkett, Patrice Hall, Tricia Blane, Jonathan Chapman, Chris Hansen, Michael Wright and new members Deb Singleton and Olivia Jackson-Corbeil

Special thanks to the strong support from outgoing members Rachel Roche and James Palmer. Also special thanks to Michael Wright for his four years as Treasurer. After the AGM on 5th September presentations were made by two Geelong teachers who are highly committed to supporting the Timorese. Deb Singleton spoke of the quite extraordinary contribution by Christian College over 15 years and Chris Hansen described the exciting program of the Timor Leste Student Day held at Christ the King.

Inspiring Presentation by SHC Student

The Deakin Timor Global Citizen Forum was held in August. Presentations were made by

Professor John Toumbourou

Afonso Soares and Simao do Rosario Timor Leste Ministry of Education Masters Fellows

Margaret Burke (Business Manager Geelong Kindergarten Association)

Teresa Hall (Research Fellow / Phd student, Centre for Mental Health & the Nossal Institute)

Sharon Gillett and Elsa Lannen (Sacred Heart College)

Jonathan Chapman (Kardinia College)

Deb Singleton (Christian College).

Co-coordinator Chris Loughnan made the following comments:

All the presentations were most informative and it was particularly inspiring to see the passion students experience from trips to Timor as expressed by Ms Elsa Lannen, a Year 11 student - terrific presentation Elsa, well done.

Deakin hopes to offer students such as Elsa the opportunity to continue their connection with Timor through new opportunities for Deakin students such as New Colombo Plan scholarships described in Professor John Toumbourou's presentation.

The Forum aimed to share our project achievements and celebrate friendships with the people and communities of Timor. The presentations also highlighted the strengths of a strong Geelong Timor network, which focuses on individual projects but also supports each other when required. Deakin's Timor Fellows experiences in Geelong have all been strongly enhanced by the friendship and support offered by Geelong Friends of Viqueque members and school communities.