

## ► School Project caring for Timorese Children

My name is Mia Schlicht, I am fifteen years old and am a student in Year 9 at Genazzano College. In 2015 all students were asked to undertake a personal project. Students were expected to research a topic that interests them, for example cooking, dance or a current news issue. I chose to research the educational needs of children in East Timor. When I was reading about this issue I saw your website and was very interested in Timor Children's Foundation. As part of my project I am hoping to raise awareness within my school and local community about the needs of children in East Timor. As part of this I collected donations and created dental kits and stationary packages for the children. I made sure they were colourful and fun, hoping that they would be useful and offer a little bit of support.



Members of the Bridge The Gap team took Mia's kits in their luggage and had a delightful experience distributing them to the children.

## ► 2016 Updates

» It is with deep sadness that we report Rusti da Silva's death on 30 November 2015. The Executive Committee was well informed by Catharina Williams - van Klinken who represented TCF at the funeral. Those of us who were privileged to meet her remember her as full of life and laughter, a hospitable lady and a good cook. She leaves behind three children who are currently studying in Indonesia.



» Moises will be completing his term as Moderator of the Protestant Church in Timor in July 2016. Please pray for him as he completes this role and as he supports his family through their grief.

» Filomena, who cares for the children at Samaria, was sent by the Timorese government to Singapore for an operation, after being seen by a doctor at the International Clinic. The operation took place in late January and returned two weeks later. She was very impressed with

the treatment and was told that the long-term prognosis is good. Praise God that she received good medical care and continue to pray for her continued improvement in health as she cares for the children.

## ► Thanks

- » The Godfrey children were guest speakers at JAFFA Club in 2015, sharing their Timor experiences with the Primary School children at Wellers Hill Uniting Church.
- » Manon Jones spoke to the Youth Group at Wellers Hill Uniting Church after she returned from her trip in September.
- » Liz Jones addressed those gathered for the World Community Day in October 2015.
- » Malcolm Campbell reported back to The Gap Uniting Church on his successful trip in September.
- » Robyn Pugh spoke to UCA Fellowship guests in Beerwah during 2015.
- » Dick Copland spoke to attendees at the Uniting Church Adult Fellowship service in Redcliffe in February and receive a generous donation which they raised during 2015.
- » Dick was welcomed by the congregations when he spoke at Oakey and Jondaryan Uniting Churches in February.

## ► Date Claimer

The Annual Timor Children's Foundation Fundraising Luncheon will be held on Saturday 14 May at 12noon at Indooroopilly Uniting Church.



## ► Newsletters via Post or Email

Australia Post has increased the cost of stamps to \$1. For this reason the Timor Children's Foundation has decided to limit the number of newsletters to two per year. We would like to encourage anyone with an email address to provide their details so that we can correspond electronically, thus reducing our administration expenses.

Please email [admin@timorchildren.com](mailto:admin@timorchildren.com) to change to the emailing list. You will then be sent a link to the newsletter on the website, not the actual newsletter, i.e. not a large file to open.

*Timor Children's Foundation complies with the World Relief Australia Code of Conduct which is a voluntary code that sets minimum acceptable standards for smaller Non-Government Organisations that work in the international relief and development sector.*



# Easter 2016 News



# EASTER 2016 NEWS

## ► Easter TCF News 2016

Between 29 August and 7 September 2015 Rev John Ruhle, Minister at The Gap Uniting Church, led 14 Australians on a tour of the projects TCF is involved in as well as a 3 day hike up Mount Ramelau. Once more, the Bacon family offered their home as the group's accommodation and Rob Williams and Catharina Williams-van Klinken were invaluable as tour guides and interpreters. The following are stories from two of the participants.

## ► Timor Children's Foundation Dental Project

Dr Malcolm Campbell sends his sincere thanks to everyone who helped over the past two years to make the first Dental Project trip to East Timor a success. People assisted not only financially but in their willingness to share the vision for the project and make it become a reality.

The fundraising for the project was launched in January 2015. Dr Campbell was able to purchase the materials and equipment required to provide the service for the children through \$16,000 in cash donations and an estimated \$4000 worth of direct donations of materials, equipment and services.

A full detailed report is available on the TCF website however in summary it's pleasing to report that the aims of the project were met. The team was able to examine and treat 45 people. All of the children presently living at Samaria were seen and treated as well as some from the neighbourhood. The priority was to treat any pain and discomfort and secondly to treat definitively all adult teeth and that meant placing permanent restorations or extracting un-restorable teeth. A child presented saying that he hadn't slept for the last few nights because of pain. Unfortunately he had two adult teeth that needed extracting. I'm not sure how he would have coped if we had not been there. Quite a number of other children required very deep fillings. If we had not been able to treat these children they too would have been experiencing pain and infection in the coming weeks and months.



The children were great in the chair. They were very co-operative and generally happy to have us working on them, which is a credit to how Filomena is raising them. The team spent the first day we were there playing games, colouring in and singing which built rapport.

Where to from here? The equipment is being stored in Dili ready for another team to continue the dental care of the children – but that's not all. Since this mode of delivery of dental treatment has had its initial success the hope is that the team can extend the service to meet the needs of more people. There are many hurdles in extending the service but Malcolm is confident the challenge will be worth it. Please keep the development of this project in your prayers.

## ► Executive Committee member, Liz Jones, Reports on the Projects

### *The Scholarship Project*

During our Bridge the Gap trip we had the opportunity to meet with Moises de Silva and 20 of the scholarship students supported by Timor Children's Foundation. The team shared our stories about the many different ways we had raised funds for TCF. Then each scholarship student told us about where they were from in Timor Leste and what they are studying. They are studying a range of qualifications including Public Health, Computing, Education, Agriculture and a range of trade qualifications including car mechanic, bricklaying, electrician and carpentry.

This is Marchel Monteiro. He is now working at the Hosanna church training centre in Dili. Marchel spoke about the difficulties he was having when his parents couldn't send any more money for him to study. Marchel said that when he was offered the scholarship he didn't have to worry any more and he could now think about what to do next. He had no idea how he would have continued to study without a TCF scholarship. Marchel said he was very pleased to meet friends from Australia and thanked us for sharing our stories about raising money. Marchel would be very interested in building links between Hosanna church and churches in Australia.

Another student asked why we couldn't support students to study in Australia. We had to explain how expensive it is to study here compared to Timor (\$150-300 per semester vs \$15,000 approx).



The students asked how we could do more things together and were very keen to see a Scholarship Facebook page. We then shared gifts and afternoon tea of coffee and cake. The parting words were "thank you, we can't give you anything but we can pray for you".

### *Visit to Samaria Children's home*

The Bridge the Gap team also visited the Samaria Children's home. The purpose of our visit was three-fold. The visit was a chance for the dental team to prepare for their dental clinic later in the week, an opportunity for the team to meet Filomena de Vasconcelos and the children, and time for John and Liz to talk with Filomena about how the renovations were progressing and any other needs the Home has.

Our visit began with play time with some of the children where they completed colouring sheets that the dental team used later in the week to both identify the children and communicate with them about dental care.

The children then gathered and sang a series of songs for us that they had recently sung at a choral event. Their choir leader is Maria Theresa (aged 14).



Then it was time for games. The Bridge the Gap team introduced a range of new games to the kids. It was good to see all the kids and many of the team joining in.

We also had the opportunity to see the renovations that have been completed. Filomena is very pleased with the new covered outdoor area for the kids, which is almost completed. The next challenge is the lack of a consistent water supply in the dry season, which most likely means a new pump for the well. We were also very impressed with how clean and tidy Samaria was looking, and how happy and healthy the children were. Filomena very clearly cares deeply for the children. Our visit ended with a sumptuous afternoon tea.



- Written by Dr Liz Jones