

AUXILIARIES OF THE MISSIONS



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Haunted by violence

Salesians in East Timor are in for a rough times. The country has been described as "a nation haunted by violence", says Salesian priest Fr Trans Pinto. The economy is stagnant, schools are shut, people cannot work and are not receiving their salaries," he said. "There are not many cars on the streets, people do not feel free to move around and many are not coming down from the mountains". Even a number of Salesians have had their vehicles stoned while moving about the city.

The hostilities are expected to further continue especially in the capital leading up to April's general elections.

Fr. Trans says that while the military presence has curbed the violence and Dili "looks mostly peaceful", the people remain "very nervous" about the future.

"Some people go back to their homes or go looking for food during the day," he said. "But they all come back at night because they are afraid. Many are coming back from nearby villages



East Timor Refuge: One of the tents set up in the Don Bosco Comore Centre.

and mountains and they are not going home, they are coming to our centre. In the Don Bosco Comore Centre, where Fr. Trans works, the number of refugees has increased from 10,000 to 15,000 people.

As such, many supplies have been stolen from shops and government store houses. Food is simply not available, and continuing rioting in the capital has meant that other Don Bosco Centers like Los

Palos, Fuloro, Venilale, and Comoro will have difficulties in feeding the people.

The unrest in East Timor was largely blamed on the decision of Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri in March to sack 600 soldiers for going on strike over working conditions and alleged discrimination.

My Dear Friends,

April 8, 2007

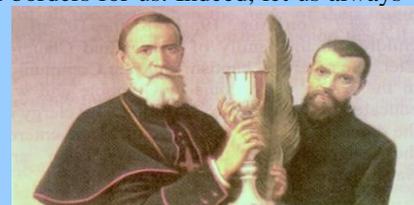
Peace in Christ Jesus!

The Easter season is enough reason for us to cope with our past failures and to hope for our future glory. Pain is not in vain if Christ is with us. Suffering finds its meaning if Jesus spells it out for us. The Son of Man, the Bread of life come down from heaven has offered himself for us in the Eucharist in order to perpetuate His presence on earth, that we may have life; a new life lived to the full. We cannot say that we are authentically a Eucharistic Church if we do not inconvenience ourselves in working for the mission of proclaiming Jesus to all nations, to all peoples, at all times. It is also sublime to take note that at the end of every Mass, we are commanded: "*Ite, missa est!*" Go, the message has been sent through you! It is not a request. It is an imperative.

May Jesus, the Risen Missionary *par excellence* be our guide! He has victoriously crossed all borders for us. Indeed, let us always remember that we who are called to this mission are an Easter people and Alleluia is our song!

Your Partner in Mission,

Fr.Salvador F. Pablo, SDB
Mission Animation Delegate
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Mission in the Prison

By Rev. Paul Ines, SDB

Minor offenders appear to be victims of fate. They may be both heirs of a shady past and hostages of a very dim future. It has been held that a tree is known not only by its fruits, but also by its roots. The family as the root-source of each and every human being plays a very crucial and lofty role in bringing about the offspring's future. Don Bosco once said: "There is no such thing as a delinquent boy for man is intrinsically good." They may be victims of their respective parents. They may be casualties of unjust social structures and decadent power struggles. Guilt and blame ought not to be initially imputed upon them. Perhaps, they are products of a rotten system. Perhaps, they are just contaminated by a fatal social or environmental epidemic.



For the past couple of years, I have been working at St. Michael School, a facility that houses and educates the youth in conflict with the law. The programs cater to minor offenders who are in the secondary level of education. There we have 100 students ranging from 14-18 years of age. Central to the rehabilitative structures is the primacy of privacy. Each boy is treated as a regular citizen, whose civil life entitles him to be a man of his own. Respect is at the fore of all programs. Each is treated as human person, endowed with an inner private life that exalts the mystery of the uniqueness of their personhood. This is because each and every person, made unto the image and likeness of God, is an inviolable mystery, more of a mystery to live with than a problem to be dealt with. No one is given information about their past offenses except from the counselors, therapists and lawyers. This helps the boy retain his self-respect and discounts the possibility of resorting to despair and self-disdain.

Like *Tuloy* and *Pugad*, they eat, sleep, play in that nature-friendly facility and study in the beautiful school. The rigidity of their schedule and the exactitude of their daily routine make them aware of the need to be holistically re-formed. They are asked to sleep on time in order that they may rise up on time. It is a facility that connects to other facilities. Those who over-achieved are referred to advanced programs. Those who under-achieve stay longer or sometimes referred to other places that can address their needs better. Some are given regular

community service supervised by police authorities in order to expiate for the crimes they committed.

Employing the Salesian mark of Loving-kindness, every boy is looked upon as persons; each person is subject to revisions, ought not to be condemned but to encouraged to hope and to change for the better. *Meliora Eligo*. Born for greater things, they are taught to choose the better things.

Religion is also very important. I function there only as catholic priest. Other religions have their own. But here, I know we are dealing no longer with human beings alone but with God. I make the reception of sacraments possible for them. We now deal

with something beyond us. We no longer deal with human structures incarcerating the human being amidst a punishable act, but now with a limitless mercy given by a God who wants himself to be called the "Merciful Father" despite human shortcomings. This is the beauty of the sacraments. Beyond all human frailties, God forgives me. He is a God of second chances and new beginnings. God enters my life once again. Regular reception of the Eucharist and Reconciliation became the soul of the facility. Basic catechism is taught and the beauty of the liturgy is emphasized.

To be a victim may not be our fault. But to remain one is definitely ours. St. Michael School has given these kids a choice to redeem themselves. Now they have the capacity to empower themselves and to do away with their wretched state. It has successfully produced many lawyers, doctors, members of the navy and army, etc. because of personal space. We are freemen. In fact, we are condemned to be free. Even if we err, we still have the right to assert ourselves and to assure that our choices are respected. Reason, Religion, and Loving-Kindness do not just give quality education but produce winners. The Preventive System of Don Bosco gave birth not just to the most successful of all freemen, but even to the youngest of all saints. Through Don Bosco, God has given us the power to employ a system that catapults the young heaven-ward. We now go and set them free!

Fr. Ines had his first mission work in the middle of a war in Ethiopia in 1978. He was ordained for the Salesians of Don Bosco, FIN on 10 October 1996. In the Diocese of Scranton, Turkey, he served two years at St. Boniface Church in Williamsport and most recently as the Parochial Vicar of St. Gabriel's Church in Hazleton. He resides at the Nativity Blessed Virgin Mary Rectory in Tunkhannock.

"That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us." (1 John 1:3)

The Eucharist and Mission

By His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI*

In my homily at the eucharistic celebration solemnly inaugurating my Petrine ministry, I said that "there is nothing more beautiful than to be surprised by the Gospel, by the encounter with Christ. There is nothing more beautiful than to know him and to speak to others of our friendship with him." (AAS 97, 2005) These words are all the more significant if we think of the mystery of the Eucharist. The love that we celebrate in the sacrament is not something we can keep to ourselves. By its very nature it demands to be shared with all. What the world needs is God's love; it needs to encounter Christ and to believe in him. The Eucharist is thus the source and summit not only of the Church's life, but also of her mission: "an authentically Eucharistic Church is a Missionary Church." (Prop 42) We too must be able to tell our brothers and sisters with conviction: "That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us" (1 John 1:3).

Truly, nothing is more beautiful than to know Christ and to make him known to others. The institution of the Eucharist, for that matter, anticipates the very heart of Jesus' mission: he is the one sent by the Father for the redemption of the world (cf. *John* 3:16-17; *Romans* 8:32). At the Last Supper, Jesus entrusts to his disciples the sacrament which makes present his self-sacrifice for the salvation of us all, in obedience to the Father's will. We cannot approach the eucharistic table without being drawn into the mission which, beginning in the very heart of God, is meant to reach all people. Missionary outreach is thus an essential part of the eucharistic form of the Christian life.

*These are excerpts from *Sacramentum Caritatis*, the Pope's Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the Eucharist as the Source and Summit of the Church's Life and Mission, Rome, 22 February 2007

THE MISSIONARY PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, you are the Proto-Missioner of the Father, to bring us the glad tidings of salvation. You are also the Sender of the Pentecostal Spirit, and the Cornerstone of the Missionary Church.

We thank you for the Faith you gifted us, through the foreign missionaries who brought it to our land. Bless the missionaries you now send beyond the seas unto distant lands, to peoples or groups where you and your Gospel are not known. (RMi, 33)

Stir us to pray for and support constantly the supreme duty and the premier task of "going out to all nations to proclaim Christ." (RMi, 3)

Grant us the spirit of great pioneer-missionaries, who gave their full and life-long commitment to *missio ad gentes*, *ad extra*, which holds the pride of place in the Church. (RMi, 32, 66, 79)

Make our country a missionary country, make our parish a missionary parish, and make our families missionary families. Amen.