

NEWS from

the Jesuits in Timor-Leste

February 2017



Breaking ground for the campus of Instituto São João de Brito

Although Instituto São João de Brito (ISJB), the Jesuit teacher training institute in Timor-Leste opened last year with 23 students, it operated out of temporary premises in the Jesuit Pre-novitiate, Perumnas, Dili. This year, it has moved to Kasait and taken a second intake of 27 students, but it is still operating out of borrowed rooms, this time a whole block of Colégio Santo Inácio de Loiola (CSIL). The lack of permanent campus limits the student number but the small intake means that the lecturers can more easily accompany the students in their studies.

On February 4, the Jesuits of the East Timor region and the ISJB students and staff were delighted to mark a new milestone for the teacher training institute. In fact, a traditional Timorese ceremony was held the day before to pay respect to the land as a sacred space.



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The Jesuits in Timor-Leste rely on the generous support of our friends, donors and collaborators to carry out our work in the service of faith and promotion of justice. Through this newsletter we share with you news and updates of our many projects and activities, particularly those for which continued support is needed in various ways. If you wish to know more about our work or donate to a project, please email: etr.development@gmail.com or visit <https://timor-lesite-jesuits.org>.

The groundbreaking ceremony was a big event that the students, staff, rector and vice rector enthusiastically prepared for. The preparations took about three weeks. Scholastic Marito Carlos Monteiro SJ set up 10 committees to work on various aspects of the ceremony. This was a good opportunity for the students to learn leadership skills by working in their assigned committees. The team also had the help of the CSIL student council, under the guidance of Gil Lay. The collaboration between the two schools has begun well and will hopefully continue.



The presider of the ceremony of the laying of the first stone of the foundation was Fr Lucio Nolberto de Deus, Vicar General of the Bishop of Maliana. The Bishop of Maliana had agreed to preside but was not able to come in the end because he was sick. The other important guests included the Minister of Education, the parish priest of Liquiça Church, a representative of the Philippines embassy and the head of the village of Ulmera.



It was an honour to have the Minister of Education, António da Conceição, with us. In his speech delivered in Portuguese, he spoke of the importance of having a teacher training institute to form young men and women into ethical and qualified teachers to meet the needs and demands of the country.



A few days after the ceremony, Instituto São João de Brito was officially recognised, licenced and registered to operate as Higher Education Institute by the Ministry of Education. Now we pray that the Ministry of Education will accredit ISJB quickly.



The contract with the construction company was signed on February 10, and construction will begin on February 21.

