

# NEWS

**from our Partner-Parish: Mary Immaculate, Viqueque, East Timor.**

*“A little for some is a lot for others.”*

The following summary was published by Micah Australia ([www.micahaustralia.org/](http://www.micahaustralia.org/)) in the week following the major flood (4th April 2021) in Dili:

## *OVERVIEW OF SITUATION:*

Catastrophic storms and flooding have hit Timor-Leste, with these severe weather conditions coming to a peak last weekend with the arrival of tropical cyclone Seroja. Unfortunately, the extreme weather conditions from the cyclone are expected to continue in throughout the next few days. At least 27 lives have been lost and thousands of homes have been destroyed, leaving thousands of citizens displaced and currently residing in shelters. Important infrastructure including hospitals, bridges and communication centres have been ruined. This leaving people vulnerable to waterborne diseases as well as lacking access to food and clean water. Development Coordination Officer with the UN, Alex Tilman has stated “We are facing a twin crisis I would say: health crisis as well as humanitarian crisis”, with those evacuees further at risk of contracting Covid-19 due to the influx of household members due to loss of housing, and large groups within shelters.



**What about Viqueque? How was our partner-parish, Mary Immaculate, affected by the flood and cyclonic winds?** Fr Evaristo Antonio Da Costa (Parish Priest in Viqueque) reports that although the “seasonal” rain has been severe in recent weeks, the people in the Viqueque district are safe. Many families have relatives in Dili affected by the flood. He reports that even if they were free to travel (they are currently in lockdown), the condition of the roads throughout East Timor following the rain would make this dangerous. Schools, churches and daily business operations ceased in East Timor over a month ago in response to a new outbreak of Covid-19.

**What can we here in Geelong do to help?** First, try to stay informed. There have been many references to the recent weather events in Indonesia and East Timor in the media. The Australian Embassy in Dili is working with the Timorese Government to provide emergency support to the people in Dili directly affected by the disaster, with a focus on providing clean water.

Through its Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Australian Government has said that it will provide further assistance, if called upon by the Timorese Government.

### PRAYER POINTS:

- Pray for the rain, storms and flooding to subside.
- Pray for the families of those who have lost loved ones and whose homes and livelihoods have been devastated.
- Pray for those agencies and churches working on the ground: for wisdom, protection and strength as they assist local communities.
- Pray for assistance and aid to get quickly to where it is needed most.



Roads, bridges and buildings were destroyed in the flood waters around Dili. Thousands of people lost their homes.



Former Prime Minister and Timorese hero, Mr Xanana Gusmao, joins in helping the people affected by the flood.

**How St Mary's Parish Geelong can help:** Donations can be left at the Parish Office and will be transferred to Fr Evaristo Antonio Da Costa (Parish Priest) via our "Viqueque Parish Account." ***Thank you so much for your prayers and support.***