

Team East Timor Mission Update August 31, 2020

Psalm 2:11 – Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.



East Timor and Covid-19

East Timor is in the state of emergency for the fourth time this month of August and a fifth time this coming September. A few of the locals who came home from other countries have been found positive of Covid-19, hence the declaration. But there is no total lockdown in the city, schools, private and public offices and churches. Services from private and government sectors remain normal but have observed the “new normal” set up like labor and service rotation in the workplace and usual protocols. The land borders are open once a week for the importation of goods and the airport caters arrival for special flights only. Timor authorities have been efficient and successful in fighting against Covid-19 with the help of foreign aid. In this country, locals are faithful with rituals and prayers from the different cultures of many tribes as their means of fighting against the pandemic.

Immigration and Visas

We recently got our extension of tourist visas for July. The Immigration office released the approved visa with passports two weeks after the date of approval, giving us just ten working days to complete the bulk of attachments required for the working visa, which is impossible to accomplish. Also, our one-time submission of applications for working visas does not guarantee approval of said visa within 10 days. Considering the high penalty charges of expired tourist visas when the working visa cannot be guaranteed, we deemed it necessary to extend all our tourist visas for another month. Securing other required documents for working visas requires at least 15 working days; thus, we were running short of time.

We made inquiries and sought information from foreigners regarding visa processing here. All of them revealed to us that this has been so far the toughest, most complicated and expensive season of getting visas.

Children Sunday School and Sunday Worship Service

Our Sunday activities are still on-going but after the state of emergency was declared again, there are only a few of them left who faithfully attended our Sunday school and Worship service every Sunday.



English Learning Centre

Our learning center successfully celebrated Nutrition month on August 2nd. Sharing physical and spiritual health education for the locals was the primary goal during the event. In that celebration, we prepared nutritious foods for everyone and shared goods with the volunteers and members. We praise the Lord that while we are in the midst of hardships, the TCM CARES Project showered us with overflowing care, helping make that event successful. After the celebration, we temporarily closed the English learning center following the advice from Immigration Authority. It is noteworthy to recall that we had opened the classes for just a month in July after the 3-month lockdown. Students were sad hearing the temporary closure of English classes. However, we assured our students that we are still open for visits anytime in case they need tutorial help, and telling them not to be discouraged but, instead help us pray that our visas be approved for the continuity of their studies. Also, we emphasized to them the urgency to follow government rules and laws since we are known as foreigners, and they are students of government schools.



Bible studies in this time of pandemic are not being hindered. We thank the Lord for allowing us to spiritually minister to the families / few students through growing Bible studies with in-house English classes of two families. Truly by God's grace, Theology class has been on-going every Friday afternoon, attended by an average of six students at the learning center. Tetun language is our medium of communication during the Bible studies and using Catholic Bibles which is very acceptable to them. There still is no complete Tetun Bible translation, but praise God for Ptr. Aaron's efficient Tetun communication skills connecting the lessons / study to their mother tongue. Noemi and Ciony are conducting in-house children's classes with Bible lessons.



Prayer requests:

1. For the working and student visas, extension of tourist visas and the financial needs for these processing of papers.
2. For more contacts for Bible studies.
3. For Outreach ministry expenses.
4. For English class students waiting for resumption of the learning center until we can get working visas.
5. For Discipleship and theology students who are interested to study bible class.
6. For Ptr. Aaron's health, lower back and hip pain due to an accidental fall while carrying Jack, bumped his buttocks on the floor.

Thanksgiving:

- Approval of the renewal of permit of our learning center.
- For the supporters and prayer partners.
- The successful celebration of nutrition month and giving of goods from TCM-USA Cares Project.
- The Bible study contacts to the locals.
- Good health, safety and protection.
- Sunday activities / Sunday School / Worship Service.
- Continuing Bible studies and in-house English classes thru Bible lessons.
- Our couple sponsors for helping us all throughout the requirements and processing of our visas (Mr. and Mrs. Vicente Soares and Family).

For some questions and suggestions, please feel free to contact us at:

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