



IMMERSION TEAM MEET AND GREET

For the past nine years in June, Damascus College Ballarat has travelled to Timor Leste for an Immersion program. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this program was cancelled. Instead the College welcomed Rob Gray from Ballarat Grammar who has a long history of interest in Timor Leste and is a contact for Teachers 4 Timor and Lucy from Ainaro in Timor Leste to acknowledge the mid-part of the immersion journey.

Lucy explained her upbringing in a subsistence farming community in the mountains of Timor Leste. Alongside her other education, Lucy chose to attend a pop-up school for learning English language set up by the Ballarat Teachers 4 Timor network and doors began to open for her. She has had two stints at gap year projects as a support person in the primary school at Ballarat Grammar.

The birth of her first child Topher was in the middle of these trips and he attended with Lucy where he certainly entertained the gathering.

Students also heard from Fr Armino, the Parish Priest of Ainaro via a WhatsApp phone call and from Sr Mary Anne Dwyer, a Sister of Mercy from Ailue on a video recording, as part of the meeting. Sr Mary Anne received the proceeds of the highly successful pie drive held by the Immersion Team recently, to be spent on mercy works in Timor Leste.

The students enjoyed one year old Topher's play and learning more about Timor Leste and some possibilities for later, post COVID-19, venturing across the Timor Sea.

Not Timor, but a positive experience for all concerned.

Enquiries – Sarah Boswell - Leader of School Development

