

Kimberley Church Opens Arms to Sisters and Brothers from Timor Leste

It was more than fitting that the Sunday Gospel reading evoked the image of the vine and the branches when Our Lady Queen of Peace Cathedral in Broome hosted more than 50 people from Timor Leste. The East Timorese group has moved to Broome in the West Kimberley as part of the Pacific Area Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme. One of the guests of honour, Leo shared that right now the newest parishioners are literally workers in the vineyard, labouring in the harvesting and production of table grapes. "This is now your home, you are most welcome here," stated Fr Liam Ryan, Assistant Priest at the Cathedral. Yawuru Elder and Cathedral Parishioner Uncle Kevin Puertollano spoke of the cultural fusion that is part of Broome history back to the pearling days. After sharing of a morning tea the parishioners enjoyed some of the song and dance of Timor Leste. Dr Anne Jennings, the Diocesan Justice and Ecology Connector is keen to ensure that all of the people that are part of the PALM scheme across the Kimberley region feel fully supported. Anne will be representing the Diocese at the 7th Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Conference in Melbourne in June. The theme is "Welcoming Seasonal Workers in Australia, Gift and Responsibility." "The dignity of work is one of the bedrocks of Catholic Social Teaching," stated Dr Jennings. "We are blessed to have people such as our Timorese sisters and brothers share their labour with us, it is also important we ensure their dignity is always upheld."

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