

SOLIDARITY MATTERS



SUMMER 2023

KULUGIA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Timor-Leste

UPDATES FROM
OUR PROGRAMS
*Sharing stories from
Asia and the Pacific*

NEWS FROM OUR
SCHOOL SUPPORTERS

Student at Kulugia Primary School, Timor-Leste



WHO WE ARE

Australian Marist Solidarity (AMS) believes in a world where young people have hope and the opportunity to access education. Our vision is a world that reflects Marists' desire that vulnerable young people are brought towards the centre, from the margins through access to education. Our mission is to empower people by enhancing their human dignity and developing their capacity to transform their lives and communities.

We partner with communities in the Asia-Pacific region to facilitate access to education for young people in need. We assist grassroots movements run by local people by supporting them to make a change in their community. Our programs focus on providing access to education for vulnerable young people, building facilities for the future to ensure safe spaces for learning, and investing in resilience and readiness to help young people who need a little extra support to thrive in learning environments. Together, we transform the lives of young people by raising awareness of the power of education and the funds that make it possible. Together, we bring hope.



2023 CHRISTMAS APPEAL

WE URGENTLY NEED TO RAISE \$700,000 TO BUILD A SAFER SCHOOL IN KULUGIA, TIMOR-LESTE.

CONTENTS

From the CEO	3
Building Safer Schools in Timor-Leste	4
AMS Updates	6
Program Updates	
LaValla Project, Cambodia	7
Marist Champagnat Institute, Fiji	8
Solomon Islands	9
Around the Schools	10
Cambodian Cuisine - Beef Lok Lak	12
Board and Operations Update	13
Mark Elliott, AMS Board Member	14
Support the 2023 Christmas Appeal	15

Got a story? We'd love to share it with our supporters! Please send it to us at ams@marists.net.au

You can find our Winter 2023 issue on our website! Stay tuned for further publications.

FROM THE CEO

Dear friends of AMS, This time of year often holds the simultaneous sense that the year has flown by and yet there is still so much to do. I'm sure many of you will be able to empathise! As we prepare to take some time to rest and reflect, we focus on the hope and depth of this Christmas season, spending time with loved ones, sharing with those in need and being kind to each other as we all work to balance the demands of this time of year.

The latter part of the year is filled with joy for our team as we connect with many of our supporters directly through our annual gatherings and are inspired by the opportunity to connect with student leaders from across our school network. This brings with it a strong sense of the wonderful broader community we are part of and that our future is in good hands! You'll also find wonderful examples of the activities these schools and students are undertaking to advocated for and send practical support for our partner communities. Of particular interest is that some immersion programs have recommenced this year, with many more to follow in 2024 after the long break imposed by COBID-19.

Likewise our partners are busy closing out the year. By mid December most programming has paused for the Christmas period, partner communities are busy writing up their reports for 2023 and preparing for a break. I hope you enjoy the stories shared in the following pages from some of our wonderful partners in Cambodia,



Bec pictured with Dr Sothun Nop, Director of Marist Solidarity Cambodia

Solomon Islands and Fiji.

In particular we share stories from Kulugia Primary School in Timor-Leste, the focus for our Christmas Appeal. You'll hear of the dire conditions the children are forced to learn in and the determination of their parents and teachers to provide a space where they are not only safe but can thrive. I encourage you to consider whether you can help us make their dream a reality.

Please also take a moment to say a prayer for all the people living in places of conflict at this time. May they find strength and hope in our Lord and in the communities around them and who support them.

Wishing you a blessed and joy-filled Christmas and a safe and happy new year.

Bec

STAFF PROFILE



This issue, we'd like to introduce you to Luci Sitanggang, who has come on board with AMS as our International Programs Manager.

Luci's role is to make sure all projects and programs are implemented as planned and budgeted in order to bring their great impacts on children and youth through education. Luci also works with partners to jointly identify needs and explore comprehensive and locally led solutions through the proposal development. Building and strengthening relationships with all partners and stakeholders is pivotal for this role, particularly in this virtual and digitalised era.

Outside of AMS, Luci has been involved in her local church community activities by actively being engaged in church internal ministry and external ministry. She has also been active in North Sumatra community activities here in Brisbane. People who live in Brisbane and originally come from North Sumatra, Indonesia (the 'Batak' people) established this community group to maintain their traditions and cultures and to support each other, including doing fundraising for people affected by disasters in Indonesia in general and North Sumatra in particular.

Luci loves traveling, trying different cuisines and learning new cultures. She also loves singing and playing the guitar in her spare time.

BUILDING SAFER SCHOOLS IN TIMOR-LESTE

KULUGIA

2023 CHRISTMAS APPEAL

As we approach the Christmas season, AMS invites you to support the Kulugia Primary School in rural Timor-Leste.

The Primary School in Kulugia is unsafe and urgently needs to be rebuilt. Maria (pictured above) is one of 162 students at the school. She shares:

"I am sad about the conditions of this damaged school. If it rains and storms we can't go to school. I am asking AMS to help improve our school, so it doesn't hinder the learning process in the future."

The school is situated in the village of Guruça, within the Culugua (Kulugia) region. Typically, the

students live in close proximity to the school, with the longest walking distance being 30 to 40 minutes. The area experiences high levels of rainfall, and the climate is cold. The local population primarily sustains itself through farming.

The school has long been contemplating the need for either repairs to the existing structure or construction of a new one, as the current condition does not adequately support the learning process. Given the current state, a new building is imperative, as the old one is no longer maintainable. Evaresto Moreira, the school's Founder and a Community Leader, says,

"This Kulugia Catholic School is

not in good condition, if it rains it's difficult to teach and learn. The children just sit on the floor, the school is in very bad condition."

The school currently comprises six classrooms. Unfortunately, there are no toilet facilities available. Access to water becomes challenging during the dry season.

School hours are limited to the morning, from 08:00 to 12:00. The school serves a total of 162 students, including 86 boys and 76 girls, aged between 6 and 11 years. There are eight dedicated teachers offering instruction in subjects such as Religion, Mathematics, Portuguese, Sports, and Tetum.

The new school is designed in a U-shape and spans a single floor. The estimated cost of construction amounts to \$700,000. The plans include six new classrooms, staff offices, library, storage space, archive room, and cleaning facilities. Importantly, thirteen toilets will be added to the facilities, ensuring more sanitary conditions for staff and students. In terms of necessary resources, the school will be purchasing new tables and chairs for each child, whiteboards for each classroom, and additional educational materials.

With an improved school environment, it's anticipated that student enrolment will increase, which, in turn, will lead to more students advancing to secondary schools like Santa Teresinha Quelicai Middle School or other similar institutions.

To donate to our Christmas Appeal, please scan the QR code or visit:

<https://ams-christmas-appeal.raisely.com/>



Facilities at Kulugia are in urgent need of restoration and refurbishment to ensure a safe and sanitary learning environment for students.



(Top): the external shot of the classrooms illustrate the need for new buildings; (bottom) the students were visited last year by representatives of Marist Schools Australia, the Marist Brothers and AMS.

EDUCATION IN TIMOR-LESTE

by Margie Beck

During the 550 years of Portuguese colonization in Timor, education of the indigenous people was never a priority. The majority of people were illiterate, relying on their local languages to communicate and developing excellent memory skills in the process.

The Timorese dream of independence was shattered 10 days after achieving this, when Indonesia invaded the country and violently took control of what was to be known as the 27th province of Indonesia. For the next 25 years, Indonesia built small schools across the country, providing education in all things Indonesian, as Tetum, local languages and Portuguese were banned and punished if heard.

It was after the success of the referendum for independence in 1999 that the current state of schools unfolded. As the Indonesian military and Timorese militia left, all infrastructure was destroyed in the wake. For schools this meant that the chairs and tables were broken up, teaching resources were burnt, and finally, the roofs of the schools were pulled off, in order to let the rains of the wet season destroy whatever was left behind. Water pipes were broken so that schools that were lucky enough to have toilets, didn't have water to clean them.

The incoming United Nations began the rehabilitation of schools in order to get children back to their education. Often classes were held in the school grounds while wrought iron roofs were nailed on and parents worked to repair furniture for the teachers and children to use. Children knelt on the floor to do their work. It has taken years to do this, and in many schools there are still rooms with no ceilings, blackboards that are in dire need of replacement or painting, while old doors have become desks for some to work on, waiting for enough chairs and tables for each student to sit. Glass windows are not evident in many schools, with bars across the space for glass keeping out animals and other intruders. Electricity is still a luxury in some rural areas, and resources that are taken for granted in Australia, such as whiteboards, data projectors and library books, are still a scarce commodity.



Margie Beck served as the Vice-Director of ICFP in Timor-Leste for 20 years.

AMS UPDATES

RECENT PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

VIRTUAL PROGRAMS VISIT

AMS hosted a Virtual Programs Visit on Tuesday 22nd August. This online event brought together over 60 participants from across the Marist family, including students and staff from Redbend Catholic College, John Therry Catholic High School, Sacred Heart Catholic College, Marist College Canberra, Marist-Sion College, St Augustine's College, St Frances de Sales Regional College, Marist College Eastwood, Marcellin College Bulleen and Galen Catholic College.

Those gathered listened to the stories of our AMS Project Partners from the Marist Champagnat Institute in Fiji and the KATILOSA project in Timor-Leste. Both these projects do incredible work educating young people who have been excluded due to living with a disability or learning difficulty.

PARTNER'S FORUM

Our Partner's Forum in October gathered representatives from across Asia and Oceania to deepen their learning on the topic of Child Safeguarding.

The Forum centred on input from Br Brendan Geary, who identified safeguarding practices in St Marcellin's earliest writings to the Brothers.

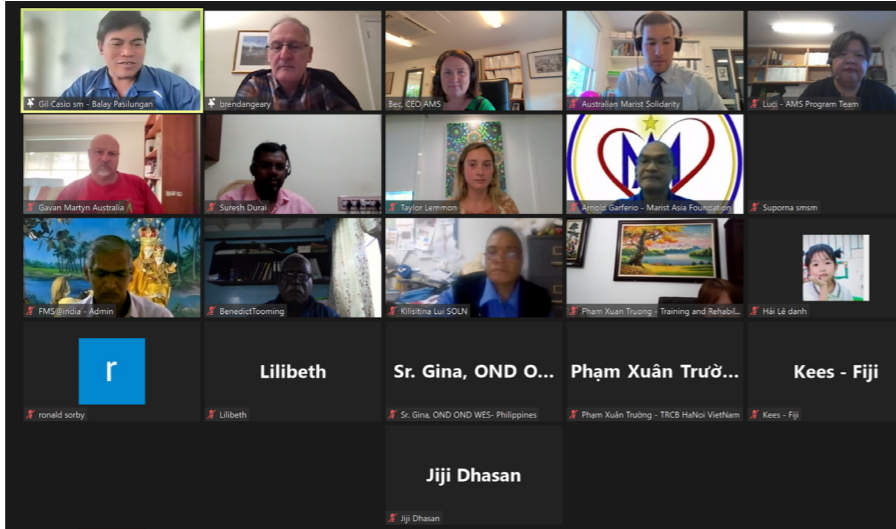
This prompted robust conversation, as partner's shared the challenges presented by diverse cultural contexts.

IMMERSIONS MINI-WORKSHOP

To coincide with our regular AMS Regional Working Group meeting, we offered an Immersions Mini-



Participants from across Marist communities in Australia, Asia and the Pacific gathered to hear the stories of two AMS Project Partners at the Virtual Programs Visit.



Project Partners connected on the topic of Safeguarding at the Partner's Forum.

Workshop. This short session facilitated the exchange of ideas and experiences between schools visiting the same immersion hosts.

A larger-scale version of this workshop will be offered in Brisbane, March 2024.

AUSTRALIAN MARIST DONOR CIRCLE

In October, AMS launched the first Australian Marist Donor Circle through a series of meet-ups in Adelaide, Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. The Donor Circle connects friends and supporters of AMS who make regular, high-value contributions to our work and mission.

These contributions create a sustainable platform that enables our support of our project partners throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

Members of the Donor Circle are invited to connect and visit international projects, receive invitations to exclusive events and receive recognition of their contribution in AMS publications.

To receive more information about joining the Australian Marist Donor Circle, please contact: ams.partnerships@marists.net.au.

PROGRAM UPDATES

LAVALLA PROJECT | CAMBODIA

In September, many members of the LaValla community gathered to celebrate the graduation of fifteen Grade 6 students at LaValla School. It was a wonderful celebration of the achievements of this group of young Cambodians, coinciding with the 25th Anniversary of the opening of the school.

In true Cambodian style, the Graduation was a spirited occasion, featuring colourful decorations, bands and choirs and dramatic performances. Students and staff spent weeks in preparation and hours in setup to ensure a suitable send-off for their Grade 6 students.

It's estimated that more than 86,000 children and young people under the age of twenty are living with a physical disability in Cambodia. Those with a disability are less likely to attend school and more likely to drop out than their peers without disabilities due to inadequate services available.

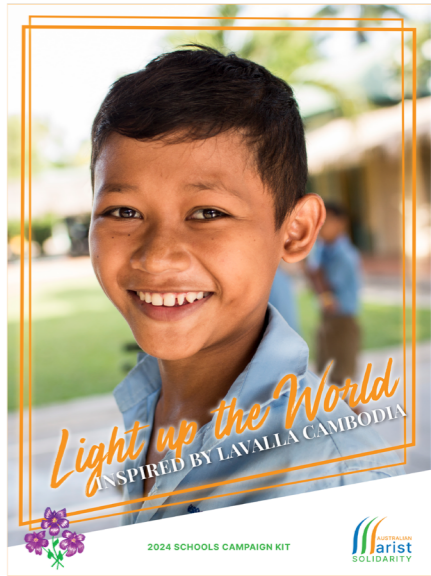
The LaValla School is the only government-approved school providing a full primary education to those with a physical disability. The majority of students enrolled attend from rural provinces and live on site in supported accommodation. The students that attend LaValla School are often years behind in their education due to being neglected in their villages and denied access to education.

The fifteen students who graduated this year, as an outcome of their education at Lavalla, will have more opportunities for further study or

vocational training. Some will remain at Lavalla in the Lavalla Village, a boarding complex for high school students situated on the same property.

The Lavalla School is the focus of our AMS 2024 Schools Campaign. We can't wait to learn more about this incredible community alongside our MSA family.

We send all the graduates our prayers and blessings as they move to the next stage of their education.



Cover of the 2024 Schools Campaign Kit, entitled "Light up the World: Inspired by Lavalla Cambodia"



from L to R: Br Tony Burrows (Assistant to the Director - Marist Solidarity Cambodia), Bec Bromhead (CEO - AMS) and Dr Sothun Nop (Executive Director - Marist Solidarity Cambodia)



AMS Board Member Mark Elliott awards a Year 6 student with their graduation certificate.

PROGRAM UPDATES

MARIST CHAMPAGNAT INSTITUTE | FIJI

In Fiji, mainstream schools are unable to offer additional assistance to students who fall behind the curriculum due to an unrecognized learning difficulty for example, autism or dyslexia. The lack of a personalised learning plan to overcome their learning difficulties means students potentially become ostracized, leading to poor self-esteem and social issues, with many leaving schooling altogether.

The Marist Champagnat Institute (MCI) aims to provide basic literacy and numeracy development that enables either a return to mainstream schooling, a transition into MCI's vocational training program, or access to employment opportunities. Established in 2000, MCI is the only post-primary school in Fiji for those with learning difficulties and special needs.

Br Kees van der Weert is a founding staff member of MCI. The subjects he teaches are Language, Religious Education and Computing. He is the coordinator for incoming funds and visiting Immersion groups. The following story was received from Br Kees in June of this year.

Allow me to introduce you to Sophie (name changed for privacy reasons).

Sophie is currently in her final year at MCI. She began in 2019. She had some literacy skills, but as she herself admitted, she struggled at primary school with reading, spelling, and calculations. She was enrolled by her aunty, with whom she stays and the family lives in Wailekutu. Her primary school was

nearby – Chauhan Memorial Primary School.

Wailekutu is a small settlement outside of Suva on the main road to Nadi. Sophie has to catch two buses to school each day; the first to the central city bus stand, and then a further bus which takes her to the suburb of Vatuwaqa, where MCI is situated. Sophie travels 2 hours each day to reach school.

At MCI a student will spend the first two years in Numeracy and Literacy development. The second two years will be for a focus on a vocational subject. From a choice of Agriculture, Catering and Tailoring, Woodwork, Engineering and Computer and Office Skills, Sophie elected the Computer and Office Skills classes. She picked up quickly on the various skills associated with this subject and has become both confident and competent in this area. From photocopying, binding, laminating, to answering and taking phone messages, Sophie quietly and confidently takes on the tasks.

She heads the student team which sets up and runs the laptop and data projector for the school Masses and other school assemblies. Of late, she has also assisted in the school office, working with the secretary to undertake photocopying tasks, as well as answering the phone.

These skills that she has acquired will stand her in good stead when she leaves school at the end of the year and looks to either find a secretarial job, or further her education at a tertiary institute.

Brother Kees has been impressed by her entrepreneurial skills. Recently

she baked just over 100 cupcakes, and then went on to sell them at an open market, to raise money to enable her to attend the Secondary Schools' Athletics competition.

She has also resurrected the 7 iPads held in the computer department and now has them all functioning, thanks to her gaining knowledge by having spent time on her friend's iPhone.

And just to show that it's not all technics, she also plays in the defender position for the school's Under 19 netball team.

Brother Kees is proud to see that Sophie has definitely benefitted from her time at MCI.

Sophie's is just one of many stories that speak of the impact of Marist projects throughout the Asia Pacific region. Through the encouragement and donations of AMS supporters, young people like Sophie have access to a brighter future.



Br Kees (far right) teaching a computing class at MCI.

PROGRAM UPDATES

SOLOMON ISLANDS

In September, AMS' International Program Manager, Luci Sitanggang, travelled to the Solomon Islands to visit our program partners. She shares her encounters with these incredible people and places.

ST MARTIN'S RURAL TRAINING CENTRE, TENURU

The Training Centre was established in 1976 by a Marist Father. The Marists are still involved in the Centre today. The Centre serves 116 students (36 females and 80 males) aged between 20-35.

Students receive vocational training in carpentry, mechanics and agriculture while accommodated on-site in boarding facilities. The Centre is funded by school fees and some small government grants. Thus, the Centre depends on additional support to be adequately maintained.

Through AMS funds, the Centre has been able to expand their kitchen and dining facilities, install solar-powered security lighting and build staff housing.

ST JOSEPH'S SECONDARY SCHOOL, TENARU

Established in the late 1940s by the Marist Brothers as a boys' school, St Joseph's became one of the few co-educational Catholic schools in the Solomons in 1972. Built for 520 students, it's current enrolment is close to 800, supported by 33 teaching and non-teaching staff. St Joseph's is rated in the Top-5 schools in the Solomon Islands.

Through AMS funds, the community has been able to future-proof staff houses and build an administration

building. Future plans include an upgrade of the library, refurbishment to the science labs and fencing of the school's perimeter.

OUR LADY OF THE VISITATION DIVIT GIRLS TRAINING CENTRE

The DIVIT Centre is run by the Solomon Islands' only local congregation, the Daughters of Mary Immaculate (DMI), which are an offshoot of the Marist Missionary Sisters. The Centre has been operating for over 50 years.

Serving 60 students aged between 19-25, courses include: agriculture, carpentry, home

economics, business, health, hospitality, computing, clothing and textiles, and financial literacy.

Graduates of the Centre now work in hotels, airports, hospitals, the National University, restaurants and as seasonal workers in Australia and New Zealand.

AMS has supported the purchase of a new vehicle, solar installation and the construction of a women's refuge centre, three classrooms, a library, a computer lab, an assembly hall and an office for teaching staff.



Top photo: St Martin's students participate in vocational training. Bottom photo: The Daughters of Mary Immaculate co-ordinated the recent additions at the DIVIT Training Centre, including the building of new classrooms (pictured in background).

AROUND THE SCHOOLS

VISITS, IMMERSIONS & FUNDRAISING

JOHN TERRY CATHOLIC COLLEGE, ROSEMEADOW

At the end of October, John Terry held their 3rd Annual Spring Plant sale and BBQ. The campaign raised over \$2,500 for Australian Marist Solidarity.

Each day for a week, students from the Year 9 Marist Youth Ministry Team and 2024 College Captains sold plants to staff, student and parents at the front of the College. This was punctuated with a BBQ lunch on Friday - a fun and yummy way to finish a fundraising campaign.

We acknowledge the work of Mr Gavan Martyn and all staff who donated plants for the sale. Very special mention goes to the Year 7-10 Garden club for their work caring for these plants.

CARDIJN COLLEGE, NOARLUNGA

In Term 3 at Cardijn College (Galilee Campus), Year 8 students engaged in an elective subject called "Steps to Success". As part of this subject, students participated in The City to Bay Fun Run to fundraise for Australian Marist Solidarity.

Students also coordinated a weekly second hand book stall and a popcorn stall for eight weeks. They held a bake sale of sausage rolls, spinach and ricotta rolls, caramel slice, cookies and a range of cupcakes - all prepped by students in Home Economics classes. And they ran a raffle, using products from local businesses. Through their efforts, this determined group of Year 8 students raised a total of \$2150.65 for AMS!

At the end of October, our CEO,

Bec Bromhead, visited the Cardijn community and met with the Steps to Success Students and incoming Year 12-student Leaders to encourage their continued efforts to promote AMS.

ASSUMPTION COLLEGE, KILMORE

In September, 17 students and 6 staff members journeyed from Kilmore to Timor-Leste on a ten-day immersion experience. The group visited communities in Dili, Baucau and Kulugia. Significantly, the group visited several projects towards which the College has fundraised for: the Baucau Teacher's College, the Katilosa school for inclusive education of children with disabilities, St Terezinha Primary School in Quelicai, and Kulugia primary school.

The group reported that "the immersion was a poignant reminder of the power of Marist values, our capacity to make a difference in the lives of others and the priceless nature of joy and compassion."

MARYMEDE CATHOLIC COLLEGE, SOUTH MORANG

We were thrilled to receive an invitation from Marymede Catholic College to speak with the Year 6 students of Marcellin House. At Marymede, each House is engaged with a charity - and Marcellin House supports AMS!

AMS was represented on the day by one of our friends and Ambassadors - and Marist legend - Br Doug Walsh. Speaking from his wealth of knowledge and experience, Br Doug detailed how people are continuing to carry out St. Marcellin's legacy across the world. Br Doug reported that

the students were very enthusiastic about engaging with AMS' partner projects.

ST AUGUSTINE'S COLLEGE, CAIRNS

In March, St Augustine's College conducted a Lenten Drive, which raised \$13,500 for AMS. The fundraising efforts included a fairy floss stall, thong throwing competitions, car wash, footy kicking competition, basketball shootouts and the sale of ice blocks, baked goods, pizza, soft drink, hot dogs, lollies, ice cream cones, spiders, iced coffee, thick shakes and chocolates.

PARRAMATTA MARIST HIGH SCHOOL

Through a range of fundraising activities, students at Parramatta Marist have raised over \$13,000 for projects throughout the Province. Each year group had a specific focus, including Bougainville, Timor-Leste, the Solomon Islands and Fiji.

ELVINO VISITS VIC SCHOOLS

We were fortunate in August to welcome a friend of AMS, Elvino Aparicio De Oliveira, to Australia. Besides joining us in Brisbane for Board and Committee meetings, Elvino embarked on a whirlwind tour of Victorian schools, sharing his story and the work of AMS. This was a rare opportunity for Marist students to hear directly from one of our project partners.

Elvino's tour included stops at Catholic College Sale, Galen Catholic College Wangaratta, Assumption College Kilmore and Lavalla Catholic College Traralgon. Our thanks to all these communities for welcoming Elvino, and our special thanks to Br Frank McIntosh and the Marist House Community in Fitzroy for hosting Elvino.



From top:
Assumption College students and staff on Immersion in Timor-Leste, St Augustine's students serve up ice cream to fundraise for AMS, Parramatta Marist students raise money through a mufti day for St Joseph's Mabiri, John Terry students conduct the Annual Plant Sale and Cardijn students celebrate the "Steps to Success" program.

Background: Elvino speak with students at Galen Catholic College.



CAMBODIAN CUISINE

BEEF LOK LAK

INGREDIENTS

- 300g beef steaks, sliced
- 1/4 cup light soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon oyster sauce
- 1 tablespoon tomato sauce
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon fish sauce
- 2 garlic cloves, finely sliced
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil

TO SERVE

- 2 small tomatoes, sliced
- 1 cucumber, peeled and finely sliced
- 1/2 small red onion, finely sliced
- iceberg lettuce leaves

DIPPING SAUCE

- juice of a lime
- 2 teaspoons fresh ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon salt
- or 1 teaspoon fish sauce
- 1 tablespoon water

METHOD

1. In a large bowl, mix beef with soy sauce, oyster sauce, tomato sauce, sugar, fish sauce and ground black pepper and garlic. Marinate at least 20 minutes or up to one hour.
2. Combine dipping sauce ingredients in a small bowl and set aside.
3. Decorate two dinner plates with sliced tomatoes, cucumber and onion and set aside. Place the lettuce leaves on a separate platter.
4. Heat oil in a wok over a high heat and stir-fry beef until cooked. Divide between the two dinner plates.
5. To eat, wrap beef, tomatoes, cucumber and onion in a lettuce leaf and dip in the sauce.



GOVERNANCE OPERATIONS UPDATE

Adam Burns joined us as the Communications and Engagement Officer following Milika's move to the Solomon Islands. Adam has been a wonderful addition to our team, contributing his talents and strong Marist knowledge and ethos.

Anna has started the establishment of our new Marist Solidarity Donor Circle, for those able to make a significant donation each year to AMS. This is an important part of our financial sustainability for the organisation.

Milika remains part of the AMS team as a casual Partner Mentor, working with our partner communities in Melanesia to support their applications and reports when they'd like some extra assistance in person.

Bec spent time in Cambodia with our partners in Pailin and at the La Valla Project primary school graduation. Adam also visited Cambodia to prepare for the 2024 School Campaign Kit.

Our International Programs Manager, Luci, visited many of our Marist programs in Solomon Islands. She was accompanied by local team member, Milika, and also by Fr Paul O'Sullivan from the Marist Mission Centre, a longtime partner and friend.

Luci and her fellow programs team member, Taylor, are about to implement our new program

management system, which has been a long journey but will be a significant step forward in our management of funds and analysis of outcomes and impact for our partners. One of our past volunteers, Finn, has done a wonderful job in building the platform for us.

In the business office Donna and Chris are bringing a number of new strategies and efficiencies to the organisation, including the next steps in maturity for our risk and financial management.

Bec has just returned from two weeks overseas, contributing to Marist Solidarity in her role as a member of the FMSI Board, but also visiting our partners at Chetana Hostel for Boys from Ethnic Minorities and one of our funding partners in Germany.

AMS also has a number of international visitors. Br Angel Diego visited from the Marist Solidarity Secretariat in Rome and we were also pleased to host Brothers Josep-Maria and Ben from the Marist Brothers Council General.

Bec and Adam also joined three of the MYM Senior Leaders Gatherings in Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney and the team (led by Jodie and Lisa) hosted wonderful gatherings with AMS supporters in Brisbane and Melbourne. It's always a highlight of the year to come together with our broader community.

BOARD UPDATE

At our Brisbane Gathering in November, the Board gave thanks for the significant contribution of our Company Secretary, Mr Michael Sinclair, who has served AMS generously for over 10 years.

The Board was very pleased with the outcome of our recent call for Expressions of Interest for volunteers to join our various governance bodies. We were overwhelmed with the interest and hope to finalise some new officers by the end of the year.

AMS Directors are satisfied with the year to date financial performance for the organisation. While public appeals have dropped significantly this year, the organisation has managed to stay on track with the projected budget.

The Board has passed the 2024 Budget recommendation from the team.

Our Directors have also maintained the normal risk management and policy development activities and spent extra time this year building knowledge and engagement with the organisation's fundraising strategy.



AMS Chair Allison White (left), talks with Board Member Mark Elliott at the AMS End of Year Gathering in Brisbane.

60 SECONDS WITH Mark Elliott, AMS Board



How did you come to be a Board Member of AMS?

I was asked by Br Peter Carroll if I would be interested in joining the Board given my current role as Regional Director with Marist Schools Australia.

Being based in Brisbane I am able to work more closely with the AMS staff who are also based at the Marist Centre Brisbane.

Are there any projects or countries that AMS partners with that most intrigue you?

I have a special affection for the Marist projects in Cambodia. I've had a long association with the country having visited there many times.

The partnerships in Timor-Leste are also a particular interest following a recent visit there with AMS and school staff.

How do Marist schools build solidarity with our partners in the Asia-Pacific region?

It's really a heads, heart and hands approach. Learning about our place in the Asia-Pacific region and Australia's contribution is important. This is where the education kits produced by AMS are great.

Participating in formation that focuses on solidarity and justice issues is essential and hearing the stories of people on the

ground as well.

The efforts of AMS to connect Australia students with kids from other places is a fantastic initiative.

From what you've seen in the project partners you've visited, how would you describe the difference Australian Marists are making through AMS?

It's practical and comes from a faith orientation that is grounded in what people on the ground ask for rather than what we think they need.

A recent visit to LaValla in Cambodia demonstrated what an extraordinary difference Australian Marists are making in the lives of these young people.



SUPPORT AMS

Together, we can make a difference. Our work is only possible because of our generous donors and supporters. You can help us in whatever way is best for you.

Make a monthly donation

Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible. Call 07 3354 0600 or donate securely at www.australianmaristsolidarity.net.au

Get your school involved

Head to www.australianmaristsolidarity.net.au/learn to see how your school can help.

Keep up-to-date

Sign up to the AMS newsletter www.australianmaristsolidarity.net.au/sign-up-for-the-latest-news

Leave a gift in your will

If you are able, we encourage you to consider leaving a legacy that will live on. www.australianmaristsolidarity.net.au/partnerships/gifts-in-your-will

Workplace giving

One of the most cost effective and simple ways of making a donation. Head to www.australianmaristsolidarity.net.au/partnerships/workplace-giving for more.

Get active

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and Youtube, and read our updates at www.australianmaristsolidarity.net.au/news-2



WE URGENTLY NEED TO RAISE \$700,000 TO BUILD A SAFER SCHOOL IN KULUGIA, TIMOR-LESTE.

Name (firstname/surname): _____ Address: _____

Suburb: _____ State: _____ Postcode: _____ Email: _____

Give once: ☐ Give Monthly*: ☐ *Monthly giving helps AMS and our program partners plan for the future.

I wish to donate: ☐ \$59 ☐ \$110 ☐ \$260 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$1000

Credit Card Number:

Expiry Date: /

Name on Card: _____

*All donations over \$2 are tax deductible. Post: Send this coupon using the reply paid envelop included (no stamp required).

A gift in your will can leave a legacy to transform the education of future generations of young children. Once you have remembered your loved ones, would you please consider leaving a gift in your will?

☐ Tick this box if you would like information about leaving a gift in your will to AMS.

HOW YOUR DONATION HELPS



DONATE NOW



ONLINE:

Scan QR code or visit: www.australianmaristsolidarity.net.au

BANK TRANSFER:

Bank: Commonwealth Bank of Australia
Account Name: Australian Marist Solidarity Limited
BSB: 062 000
Account Number: 1628 5262
Reference: [insert surname] XMas Appeal

POST:

Please mail to PO Box 273
Ashgrove West, QLD 4060

OVER THE PHONE:

(07) 3354 0600





Kulugia Primary School, Timor-Leste



CONNECT WITH US TO FIND OUT MORE

PO BOX 273 Ashgrove QLD 4060 | ams@marists.org.au | (07) 3364 0600

 australianmaristsolidarity.net.au

 @MaristSolidarity

 @australianmaristsolidarity

 Australian Marist Solidarity

