

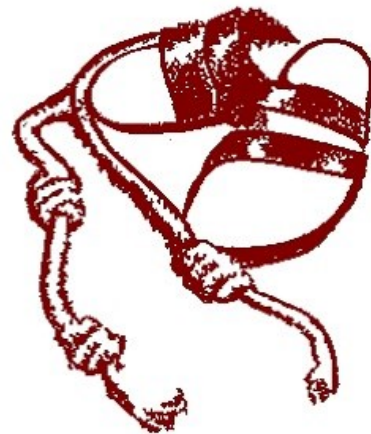
# Sandal Prints

Newsletter of the Capuchin Mission Office

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*Fr Luan Le OFM Cap in the procession of our Lady of Fatima at Tibar, East Timor.*

## Capuchin Friars in East Timor

Fr Luan Le, OFM Cap, a Capuchin friar of our Australian Province, spent some months earlier this year with the friars in Portugal learning the Portuguese language so that he could visit the Capuchin Mission in East Timor. After spending a month in East Timor, Fr Luan returned to Australia, visited his family in Adelaide and attended the Provincial Retreat with the friars. He has now gone to East Timor for three years, to take up the role of post-novitiate formator at Tibar, just outside of Dili the capital of East Timor. He will be preparing our young Capuchin students for Religious life and Priesthood. The Mission Office at Leichhardt gave him two computers to assist with this work.





## *Meet Fr Luan Le OFM Cap*

Fr Luan was born in 1973 in Vietnam and came to Australia with his family. After completing a degree in medical laboratory science and working for a period, he joined the Capuchin friars and made his First Profession of vows in 2003. To complete his studies for the priesthood he was sent to Rome and completed a Licence in Moral Theology at the *Accademia Alfonsiana* University. He was ordained a priest in 2010 and has worked as the assistant priest in Plumpton parish west of Sydney. He has also assisted with the Vietnamese community. This rather amazing friar speaks Vietnamese, English, Spanish and Portuguese and now he is learning some of the local languages of East Timor. Fr Luan was interviewed in 2000 for our Webpage: Please see our new webpage at: <https://www.capuchinfriars.org.au/>

“I grew up in a Catholic family. I made my first Holy Communion and Confirmation and was also an altar boy. I had never thought that I would have a calling to become a priest or a religious. Back then I took my Catholic faith for granted. Going to Mass on Sunday was just another routine that I had to do. I just went to the church passively. I paid no attention to the readings and the Gospel and the homily of the priest was just another long boring talk. I gradually lost interest in going to Mass. However, I still kept going to make my parents happy.

When I graduated from medical laboratory science I took a job in a hospital in Port Lincoln, in South Australia (my family lives in Adelaide).







*Fr Luan and sister going for a walk along the road back towards Laleia East Timor*

In this new town, initially, I felt lonely. But this new place was very beautiful; around port Lincoln there are beaches, sand dunes and national parks. I made the effort to make new friends, to be involved in community groups and play sport; but what attracted me most was the peacefulness and serenity of this place.

One of my friends also invited me to a Bible discussion group. It was just a group of young people of my age, who came together basically to socialise. So as time went by I gradually absorbed the good quality of country life.

I liked to take a long walk in the parks and on the beaches and let my mind be lost in the wonder of nature. I spent more time praying. I went to church and paid more attention to what it was all about.

A turning point in my life occurred one day at work during my conversation with a patient, whom I had gained an acquaintance with for some time. He told me he got up in the morning and saw his wife laying dead next to him. When I finished my work and went home that evening, somehow that morning conversation kept lingering in my mind. I thought: *“One day I am alive and the next day I die, what is the meaning of my life? My life should be something more than this mundane working routine”*.



I took up this question with the Lord in my prayer. I asked Him to show me His light, to guide me and show me my purpose in life. Everyday after work I went to church to pray with that same intention in my mind. One day it happened that I picked up a book that was written about the life of Saint Pio of Pietrelcina (Padre Pio). I read it enthusiastically. I was so fascinated. I admired so much about St. Pio's life: a life of suffering, fervent praying and loving.

Somehow this stirred my heart and awoke my fervour to follow Jesus and to serve His Church. So I talked to my parish priest and I then got to know the Capuchins and joined them."



*Fr Luan Le - Our Lady of Fatima at Tibar, May 2014*

