



**CARMEL**  
*Impact*

# 2024

ANNUAL REPORT



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**2024**  
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# OUR STORY

Carmel Impact is a faith-based non-profit organisation dedicated to transforming lives and empowering communities in Timor-Leste, one of the world's least developed nations.

Established by the Carmelites of Australia and Timor-Leste, our mission is to be the catalyst for lasting, positive change through a holistic approach centred on education.

Since 2001, the Carmelites have been a steadfast presence in Timor-Leste, establishing a deep-rooted legacy and wealth of local knowledge. Building on this, Carmel Impact's enduring commitment has fostered strong bonds with Timorese communities, allowing us to tailor our community building programs to their unique contexts and aspirations.

# Our Vision

Building a future in which the people of Timor-Leste have pathways to quality education and more opportunities..

# Our Mission

Carmel Impact is a Christian, Catholic and Carmelite charity working with communities in Timor-Leste to help them transform their lives through education and youth engagement. Together we build grass roots relationships so we can better serve the people who need it most. We are committed to creating lasting positive change in Timor-Leste.

# Our Values

Our patron Mary, our Mother and Sister, guides us in our service to all of God's people. Through her wisdom we embrace these values:

## Humanity

We are a people of mercy and compassion, strong in justice and in our care for all people.

## Service

We share our gifts for ministry, and service with our community.

## Communication

We engage with people openly fostering a relationship of mutual enrichment, understanding, solidarity, respect and participation.

## Integrity

We receive with humility resources entrusted to us and work with communities conscientiously and responsibly.



*Transforming Lives,  
Building Communities,  
Together*

# From our Chair

I am very pleased to once again be reporting back to our supporters about the great work that we are achieving together in Timor-Leste.

Service is a central element of the Carmelite life, and Carmel Impact has been a wonderful agency for our service in many locations throughout Timor-Leste. As our Carmelite numbers in Timor-Leste continue to grow, so does our capacity for service. Your prayers and financial support provide further magnification of this capacity, and of our ability to affect meaningful change.

One of the ongoing strengths of Carmel Impact is that most of our programs are directly operated by the Carmelite friars or Carmelite sisters. This “in-house” leadership provides us with excellent insight, value and quality control. We look forward to continuing to expand this capacity through further partnerships with the Carmelite Sisters, and new projects of our own.

Our key achievements for 2024 are well-documented in the pages ahead.

My highlights included:

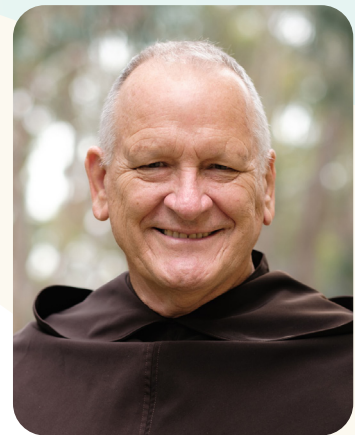
- **The completion of a new covered outdoor eating area to support the government’s School Lunches program.**
- **The reconfiguration and expansion of the boarding house to allow extra enrolments.**
- **Our significant contribution to the intellectual and social capital of Timor-Leste’s young people, through our two scholarship programs.**
- **The absence of floods this year, allowing our rural agricultural communities to continue their recovery.**

Finally, I would like to add my thanks for the work of Mayra Walsh, who concluded her time with us in December 2024 after six and a half years. Mayra has helped shape and modernise our charitable works in Timor-Leste, and she has been a conduit for deeper understanding between Australia and Timor-Leste. We owe her a great debt and we wish her all the best for the future.

Yours in Carmel,



Fr Bruce Clark, O.Carm.  
Board Chair  
Prior Provincial



# From our Community Development Coordinator

As I conclude my time with the Carmelites, I wanted to share some of my personal highlights of my time with the Carmelites.

- I've seen really positive changes in the program over the years, particularly the focus on defining Education and Youth as key priority areas for the Carmelites and, of course, the establishment of Carmel Impact as a tax-deductible charity.
- The growth of the Community Scholarships program has been great (from 26 students in 2018 to nearly 40 students in 2024) and the prioritisation of vocational training in the scholarships program has been really effective. I've also appreciated the greater sense of community that has developed among the scholarship recipients through our regular workshop and retreat days.
- Branching out to support the Carmelite Sisters in Zumalai has really strengthened Carmel Impact's presence and impact in the community there, as well as making us more "comprehensively Carmelite".
- A major highlight was seeing the Carmelite family (donors in Australia and brothers and students in Timor-Leste) rally around and respond to natural disasters, including the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the flood responses in 2021 and 2023.

Being in a position where I could both meet with donors in Australia (including speaking at parishes, speaking with students and staff at the schools in Coorparoo, Wentworthville and Whitefriars, and at the Donor Events in Melbourne) as well as being on the ground in Timor-Leste to spend time with program recipients and implementers was a real privilege.

It gave me a unique perspective of the big picture of the Carmelites work and impact across both countries. I am very grateful for the opportunity, and I wish all associated with Carmel Impact all the best for 2025 and beyond!



Mayra Walsh  
Community Development  
Coordinator Carmel Impact





## Our Commitment to Education

At Carmel Impact, we remain steadfast in our belief that education is the foundation of personal growth and societal transformation. We continue our efforts to ensure that children and youth, especially those from remote and rural communities, have access to the learning opportunities they deserve.

We believe that when children and youth are

given the opportunity to learn, they gain more than just knowledge - they gain hope, chance, confidence, and the ability to build a better future for themselves and their communities. Whether through academic scholarships, technical-vocational training, or early childhood support, our education initiatives are designed to break down barriers and open doors.

Our commitment is not just about providing access to education, but also about creating an environment that nurtures leadership, values and resilience. We firmly believe that investing in education is not only the right thing to do, but also the most powerful investment in shaping Timor-Leste's long-term future.

**Our  
Impact**

## Snapshot



55 scholarships awarded to support student studies at secondary school, vocational college and university



Six unique programs reaching from rural Zumalai to central Dili

*Transforming Lives,  
Building Communities,  
Together*



\$161,573 spent on education and development programs in Timor-Leste



We supported the educational journey of 520 Timorese young people - from kindergarten to university



## Community Scholarships

Sofia grew up in the mountains area of Zumalai. She lost her mother in 2004 and her father in 2011, leaving her and her two siblings orphaned at a young age. While her siblings stayed with their grandparents, Sofia was taken in by her aunty, who supported her through small home businesses. Despite financial hardship, Sofia was a bright and dedicated student. Recognising her potential, the Carmelites offered her a scholarship in 2016 to complete high school in Suai. She later received further support from Carmel Impact to study a nutrition degree at the National University in Dili, proudly graduating in 2024.

The Community Scholarship Program began in 2006 to support volunteer teachers in Zumalai and help local students access high school. Since then, it has expanded to support students from

Zumalai and other rural areas across Timor-Leste, helping them complete high school, pursue technical training, or attend university.

The program aims to break financial barriers, promote access to education, and build future community leaders. In 2024, five students graduated, a proud milestone made possible by your continued generosity.

### 2024 Highlights

- ✓ 23 university students are studying fields that reflect their communities' needs, including Health, Agriculture, Pharmacy, Education, Technology, and General Studies.

The scholarship covers tuition, study materials, tools, uniforms, and accommodation if needed.

- ✓ 11 high school students, many from remote areas, are continuing their studies with support covering school fees, study needs, transport, and accommodation.

This program continues to offer life-changing opportunities for young people, helping them reach their potential and contribute meaningfully to their communities.



## La Bruna Scholarships

The La Bruna Scholarship Program is a long-term initiative of the Carmelite Order that supports the education and development of young Carmelite men and women in Timor-Leste. It offers opportunities to study philosophy in Timor-Leste contributing to national development through knowledge and critical thinking.

Rooted in the Carmelite mission of service and human dignity, the program also provides vocational training and language skills for studies in Timor-Leste, Indonesian and Australia.

### We offer the following scholarship options:

- ✓ A preparation course focusing on language and academic skills

- ✓ A Bachelor of Philosophy degree in Timor-Leste
- ✓ A university degree to enhance professional skills in Timor-Leste or Indonesia

### 2024 Highlights

- ✓ 13 Carmelite brothers received La Bruna Support

to study Philosophy in Dili. The scholarship covered tuition, accommodation, meals, transport, pastoral care, and a study space.

- ✓ 2 Carmelite Sisters received La Bruna Support

to study a Bachelor of Education and a Bachelor of Accounting in West Timor, Indonesia, with full tuition support.

A special congratulations to Aleixo, who graduated in 2024. From a farming family in Ermera and the youngest of ten, he overcame many challenges, including walking hours to school and proudly joined the Carmelite program in 2017.

*“Growing up helping my parents on the farm taught me discipline and sacrifice. Studying philosophy was never easy, but I never gave up. I believe everything I’ve learned will help me serve others and be a light in my community.”*

Aleixo



## Zumalai Schools

Since 2002, the Carmelite Order has worked closely with local communities in the Zumalai Administrative Region to improve access to quality education for children in rural areas. The central school, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic School, provides education from Grades 1 to 9. It is supported by two branch schools: St Francis Xavier Catholic School in Raimea, Grades 1–9, and Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School in Beco, Grades 1–7.

All three schools are led by Fr Amandio Soares, O.Carm, who collaborates with teachers, students, and families to create a supportive learning environment. Carmel Impact also supports Zumalai Kindergarten, managed by the Carmelite Sisters, offering early childhood education to local preschoolers.

### 2024 Highlights

#### ✓ School Lunches

Carmel Impact supports the government-led school lunch program by constructing a dining hall at the central school, providing over 600 students daily with a clean, dignified space to eat, improving both nutrition and learning outcomes.

#### ✓ Volunteer Teacher Subsidies

Monthly subsidies were provided to 18 volunteer teachers, ensuring that subjects such as biology, civics, geography, and physics are taught consistently across all three schools.

#### ✓ Teaching Resources

Educational materials sourced from Timor-Leste and Australia were provided,

aligned with national curriculum guidelines to enhance teaching quality.

#### ✓ Kindergartens

In 2024, 38 students in Zumalai and 24 in Raimea received learning materials such as crayons and paper. The program also supported trainee teacher subsidies and scholarships for children from low-income families, promoting inclusive early education.





## Titus Brandsma Boarding House

Access to education remains a significant challenge for many students from economically disadvantaged rural families in Timor-Leste. While primary education up to Year 6 is often available in local villages, continuing education beyond that level typically requires relocating to Municipal centres. For families without relatives or support networks nearby, this transition can be especially difficult.

To respond to this need, the Carmelites continue to operate the Beato Tito Brandsma College Boarding House, located in Zumalai. Established in 2015, the boarding house offers safe and supportive accommodation for students who travel from remote villages to continue their education.

Over the years, improvements have been made to enhance the students' living conditions, including the addition of bathrooms, washing facilities, a kitchen, and a dining hall.

The boarding house accommodates 32 students, from primary school to Year 9, and is managed by Fr Silvestre, O.Carm.

Students live in shared dormitories with bunk beds and personal storage and follow a daily routine that includes responsibilities such as cleaning, gardening, cooking, baking bread, washing dishes, and private study time.

### 2024 Highlight

In 2024, the program continues provided essential educational support including school fees, books, uniforms, and shoes. Additional funding was used to expand bathroom facilities, increase the nutritional value of meals, especially protein and grow the boarding house capacity to 32 students.

Beyond academics, the program also promotes student well-being through extracurricular activities like sports, computer literacy training, and participation in the local church choir. The experience of living at the boarding house helps students grow in confidence, discipline, responsibility, develop life skills, and build positive habits that will support their future learning and personal development.





## Connecting with Supporters

We are deeply grateful to the generous supporters of Carmel Impact. Your loyalty and compassion are the driving force behind all our work in Timor-Leste. We cannot achieve any of the great outcomes that we do without your contribution. Because of you, more children, young people, and families are gaining access to quality education and life-changing opportunities.

As one donor beautifully put it:

“It is from a mother’s heart to the mothers of Timor-Leste, for their wish to give their children an education.”

Our heartfelt thanks go to all who contribute — individuals, schools, businesses, parish groups, trusts, foundations, and Carmelite Provinces. Your belief in our mission is creating real and lasting change.

Each year, we seek to acknowledge this support in different ways, sometimes as simply as a message of a receipt. In November 2024, we hosted a Thanksgiving Mass followed by a simple lunch at the Middle Park Parish, attended by Melbourne supporters and friends.

Guest speakers at the lunch were Fr Bruce Clark (Prior Provincial), Mayra Walsh (Community Development Coordinator), and three senior

students from Whitefriars College, Declan, James, and Ash. They shared powerful and empathetic reflections from their connections with the Timorese people they met on their immersion in Timor-Leste. Their stories were a moving reminder of the strong bonds between the Carmelites and our communities of support in Australia and Timor-Leste.

At the event, we also honoured six loyal donors with certificates of appreciation and loyalty pins as a small token of our immense gratitude for helping make Carmel Impact’s development work possible and making a lasting difference in Timor-Leste.



## Meet Carmel Hetherington

Few people can attribute their successful birth to nuns at a nearby convent reciting the Novena of Our Lady of Mt Carmel, but this was Carmel Hetherington's first connection with the Carmelites. A powerful beginning to a connection that is life long - as a teacher and parishioner at Our Lady of Mt Carmel at Wentworthville, as a Lay Carmelite, and for over 30 years a loyal supporter of the Carmelites, especially Carmel Impact.

Carmel grew up near Brisbane and was educated by the Josephite nuns at St Brendan's, then the Mercy Sisters at All Hallows. Living in the same suburb, just two

doors up, was her future husband Brian, and they were eventually married at their local parish of St Brendan's.

Following a subsequent move to Sydney, they found their home and their church with the Carmelites at Our Lady of Mt Carmel, Wentworthville. The family that Carmel and Brian created has grown from three children to 12 grandchildren, 16 great grandchildren and two great great grandchildren! When Brian became seriously ill 16 years ago, the Carmelites supported them through that difficult time. After his passing, Carmel found strength and community with the Lay Carmelites.

Carmel says she is glad to support the people of Timor-Leste, who have faced great hardship and continue to rebuild.

As a former primary school teacher of 23 years, Carmel understands the power of education to transform lives, families, and communities.

'I am very grateful and humbled to be able to contribute to this wonderful work of the Carmelites'.

Carmel's faith, family, and commitment to helping others remain at the heart of everything she does. Truly, a life of faith, family and giving back!

# Financial Overview

I am pleased to present to you this summary of our financial statements for the year ending 31 December 2024. Independent accounting firm Saward Dawson has audited the financial statements, which were prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards.

In its fifth year of operations, Carmel Impact approved \$160,000 in funding for local development projects in Timor-Leste. This was approximately half of what we spent in 2023, a year that included flood relief, significant capital equipment purchases and a much larger cohort of students in our La Bruna scholarships.

Our donors this year provided almost \$325,000 in funding, which included a major multi-year program donation from one donor. This generous income, together with lower than expected expenditure, saw Carmel Impact generate an unusually high surplus in 2024. This surplus will provide us with a firm foundation to undertake new project commitments in future years.

The Carmelite Province was able to continue its subsidy of Carmel Impact's operating expenses (including salaries), allowing our administration and fundraising costs to be capped at 10% of income (\$32,000). This low overhead,

and our direct program delivery via local Carmelites in Timor-Leste, continues to ensure that Carmel Impact is a highly efficient charity.

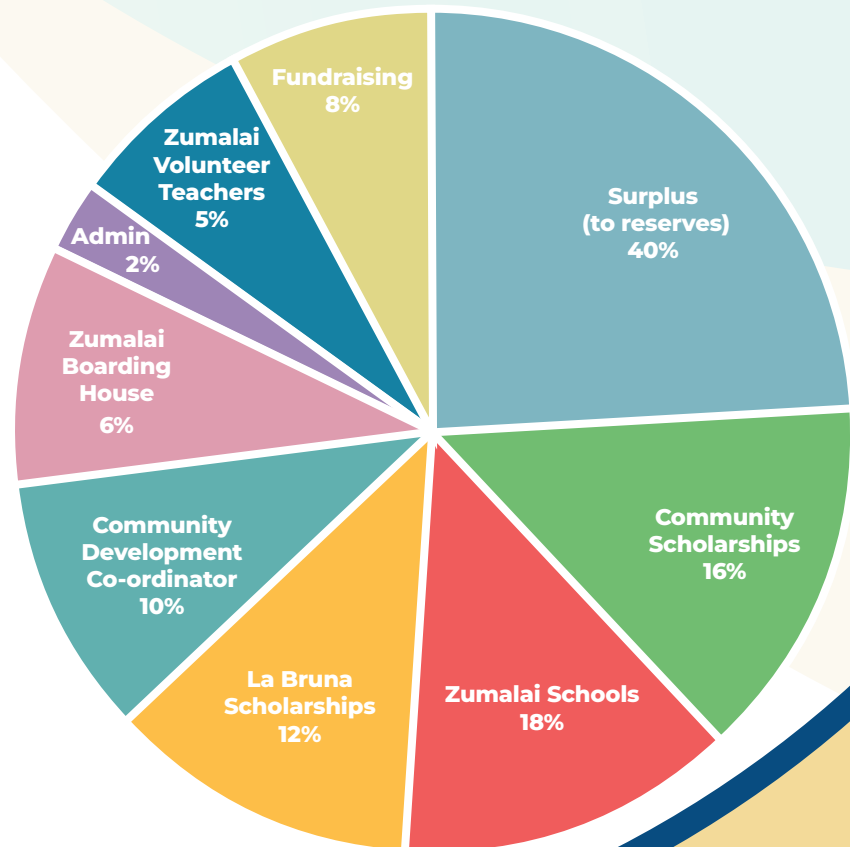
I thank you for your partnership which enables this important work.



Joe Konyneburg  
Company Secretary  
Carmel Impact Limited



## Where your funds went in 2024



# Carmel Impact Ltd

## Profit & Loss for the year ended 31 December 2024

Actual 31 DEC 2024

<b>Income</b>	<b>\$</b>
Donations - General	186,521
Donations - Schools	15,726
Donations - Organisations	10,754
Donations - Major Gifts	105,000
Interest	6,773
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>324,775</b>
<b>Direct Development Expenses</b>	
La Bruna Scholarships	37,237
Community Scholarships	52,886
Zumalai - Boarding House	18,385
Zumalai - School Programs	7,702
Zumalai - Volunteer Teachers	16,768
Zumalai - Capital Support	18,737
Community Development Co-ordinator	27,656
Program Management Costs (inc Travel)	937
<b>Total Direct Development Expenses</b>	<b>161,573</b>
<b>Fundraising &amp; Administrative Costs</b>	
Audit	3,900
Annual Report	1,100
Bank Charges	268
General Administration	607
Website & Communications	1,408
Fundraising - Direct Costs	25,000
<b>Total Fundraising &amp; Administration</b>	<b>32,283</b>
<b>Surplus</b>	<b>130,919</b>

The full set of 2024 financial statements are available on our website and upon request.

# Governance

## Board Members



Bruce Clark  
Director &  
Prior Provincial



Wayne Stanhope  
Director



David Hofman  
Director



Januario Pinto  
Director



Carlito da Costa  
Araujo  
Director

## Executive Committee Members

The board is supported in its governance role by the Executive Committee, which meets monthly to oversee program implementation and manage budget planning.



Mayra Walsh  
Chair



Bruce Clark  
Board  
Director



Helen Cridland  
Philanthropy  
Coordinator



Narcizio Da Costa  
Vilanova  
Committee  
Member



Joe Konyneburg  
Business  
Manager



Silvestre Alves  
Committee  
Member



*Carmel Impact Limited is a charity registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).*

*Carmel Impact Limited is an incorporated company limited by guarantee.*



# How You Can Help

## Give a Donation

Individuals, schools, businesses and trusts and foundations all contribute to the vital work of Carmel Impact through making financial contributions. These donations transform the lives of children and young adults in Timor-Leste, giving them hope for a better future through education.

[www.carmelimpact.org.au/donate/](http://www.carmelimpact.org.au/donate/)

## Become a Regular Giver

A regular donation is your way of taking action every day to help transform lives in Timor-Leste. Regular giving via credit card or direct debit can be a convenient option and also enables us to reduce our administrative costs. This means that we can direct more funds to individuals and communities in Timor-Leste. **Call us on (03) 9690 8822 or email [together@carmelimpact.org.au](mailto:together@carmelimpact.org.au).**

## Build your impact

Giving a major donation as a gift to Carmel Impact will transform lives by guaranteeing the sustainability of our existing projects and commitments, particularly our schools, supporting the expansion of current projects such as enabling us to offer more education scholarships; or providing the seed funding for any new initiatives. If you are interested in discussing Major Gift opportunities please **contact us on (03) 9690 8822 or email [philanthropy@carmelimpact.org.au](mailto:philanthropy@carmelimpact.org.au)**

## Leave a Lasting Legacy

By remembering Carmel Impact in your Will your legacy can create a future of possibilities, hope and new opportunities. Whether it is providing young Timorese people with hope for a better future through training or supporting quality education at rural schools, your gift will sustain our work and transform lives.

**If you would like to support our work with a financial contribution, or talk to us about other ways to be involved, please call us on (03) 9690 8822 or email [philanthropy@carmelimpact.org.au](mailto:philanthropy@carmelimpact.org.au).**





**CARMEL**  
*Impact*



## CONTACT US

75 Wright Street  
Middle Park VIC 3206 Australia  
+61 (03) 9690 8822  
[together@carmelimpact.org.au](mailto:together@carmelimpact.org.au)  
[carmelimpact.org.au](http://carmelimpact.org.au)

ABN: 72 626 911 377