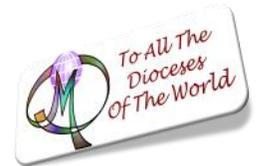


ASIA MISSION AD GENTES NEWS BRIEF



No. 24, October - November 2012

GIVE HISTORY A CHANCE!

At the very beginning of Christianity, disciples of Christ like Paul of Tarsus were waiting for the imminent, glorious and somewhat frightening return of Jesus.

It took a good theologian like Luke to begin developing the vision of "kairos": time of salvation that provides enough space for individuals and groups to create

opportunities and to take responsibility for a time in the long history of salvation.

Two reasons moved Luke to move into this growing conviction and understanding that the Lord of history did not reduce the time of salvation to the life span of one generation.

First, the God and Father of Jesus is a God of merciful patience: the father in the parable of the prodigal son who waits patiently for his beloved son to return home and to begin a new and



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lasting relationship of loyal and tender love.

Second, human beings are responsible for the making of history itself: they are actors, not simply spectators. They are the ones creating or destroying opportunities for a meaningful life and history for individuals and for humanity as a whole.

Today, a growing ecological consciousness is warning all of us of the danger of shortening the life span of this universe. As the book of Deuteronomy reminds us, in every day decisions and actions of society and individuals, we are choosing between life and death. We are deciding on the nature of the second coming of Jesus in our midst: a coming in the glory of a united and compassionate society that helps to bring about the fullness of time through an evolution of the actual goodness, beauty

and abundance of life and nature; or the opposite, a second coming that arrives in the midst of destruction and the confusion of division, hatred and selfishness.

Christian Advent, as a time of preparation for the celebration of Christmas invites us exactly to that: to prepare our hearts, our communities and society to make a step further in the right direction. We are invited to once again, give a chance to those values and attitudes so beautifully symbolised by the little boy Jesus being taken care of by Mary and Joseph.

A Blessed Christmas Season and Good Reading to All!



Your Brother,

Luis.



Vietnam

The Purpose of Life is to Discover Your Gift

By Hoan Castro

The purpose of life is to discover your gift. The meaning of life is giving your gift away" ~ David Viscott

It is my first time visiting Hanoi. I find it different from Saigon. Although I've only been there for a few days and spent most of the time at home, an unexpected visit to the house where the young people who want to be Marist live provided me with some parameters to make this comparison

between the two cities... The gates of the houses and the walls are different, here there are open spaces through which you





can discover the inner life of families, the dining rooms, the motorbikes awaiting a new day, bicycles, shoes, kitchens and many people just sitting along the streets sharing the freshness of the night with neighbours over a cup of coffee or tea.

I admire the life of the two brothers in this community, a Spanish and an Italian who enthusiastically share the Marist charism. Their house is an open space where young people come and go and is also home to a core group of four young people have undertaken the mission to discover the meaning of their lives and at the same time, improve their English proficiency. Five other boys live in a house within the same neighborhood and they share community life experiences and study English daily.

Aged between 19 and 20 years old, these young men have completed high school and



desire to look for something else in their lives. Coming from different rural environments, they have left family, friends and familiar surroundings of their hometown to begin a journey that no one knows where it

will end. Three years ago, some of their older colleagues began this adventure and now some of them are already moving to another place. Their decision have led them to foreign lands, some of them are now at the novitiate, others are postulant thousands of miles away from their homeland and this is only the beginning of this unparalleled adventure.

Juan Gustavo, the Spanish brother tells me, "I admire the capacity for adaptation of these young adults who for the first time find themselves in a big city, living with a group of strange people and sharing their ideals with a community of foreigners who invite them to speak in a language that is not their own". How true, you need to be young to take these risks and be happy with the simplicity of their lives. One of the boys said to me, "We are



poor but happy", and that is what I can see through my contacts with them during prayers, meals, lectures and manual work. Tomorrow they will be officially accepted for this new stage of search and formation - seven young men will make this vocational experience.

For Pietro, the Italian brother, this will be the fourth group that he has prepared for the formative stage. Gustavo is responsible for their vocational guidance and both of them frequently visit the parishes in the rural areas. There are other young people who at first only come to learn English but discover that there is more to life thanks to the warm welcome of this group of youth. I am grateful to be able to witness the blossoming of the Marist here. Our ordinary resource becomes tangible in the life and work of the Brothers in Vietnam.





Birthday Greetings!

December

<i>Maximilliano Meier</i>	<i>3/12</i>
<i>Michael Potter</i>	<i>20/12</i>
<i>Miguel Santos</i>	<i>23/12</i>

January

<i>Alice Lee</i>	<i>2/1</i>
<i>Diego Zawadzky</i>	<i>4/1</i>
<i>Agnes Reyes</i>	<i>13/1</i>
<i>Roberto Mendez</i>	<i>14/1</i>
<i>Francis Amoako Attah</i>	<i>26/1</i>

February

<i>Antonio Sanchez</i>	<i>1/2</i>
<i>Canisio Willrich</i>	<i>17/2</i>
<i>George Valle</i>	<i>22/2</i>
<i>Alex Arokiasamy</i>	<i>26/2</i>

Looking Forward

By Quy and Sytha

It has been six months since we joined the novitiate in the East Asia Province. There are currently 16 novices from different countries in this 'pilgrimage' of faith. Although there are differences in languages, cultures, faith practices and family backgrounds, we share the same faith, the charism of one founder and are all under the protection of our Good Mother.

In the community, we have activities such as prayers, formation, manual work, sharing and silent time. Those activities help us to understand the mystery of life and the work of the Holy Spirit. Besides that, we also join the Marian Hills religious community for seminars and holy hour. This month, we began our solidarity



Quy and Sytha

experience in the Bahay Maria (home for the ages) and have started to teach catechism to students in the public school near our novitiate. All of these activities help us to growth in faith and maturity in our vocational journey.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! May God bless you and may Mary our Good Mother be with you always.



Visit of Brs Cesar Rojas and Chris Wills





What one sees is not necessarily a reflection of reality

By Eugenio Sanz



This little girl is a rewarding sight.

Four years old, smiling, lovely, vivacious and intelligent. It is a pleasure to see her running to greet me, joining her little hands the way her mother had taught her. With her baby language, she tells me "Jisuna rasong", which means "Praise be Jesus Christ". She is really charming.

But when one goes to her house and sees that it is a small hut with four walls, a hard old bed for the parents and another one for their three children, a ramshackle table and no chairs at all, one's heart

sinks. They have no land to cultivate and the parents have to work as day labourers, earning a mere total of 60 dollars a month. Nevertheless, like their daughter, they are friendly, always smiling and cheerful despite living in poverty that borders on destitution.

Sometimes, what one sees is not necessarily a reflection of reality, don't you think? I have seen many rich people incapable of smiling like this family. The smile is the best image of God, and this little girl and her parents are angels whom He sends to direct me on the path of happiness.



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**Sector Coordinator /
Publication Director:**
Br Luis G. Sobrado, FMS

Production:
Evelyn Kow

Contributors:
Ad Gentes Brothers, Lay Marists and Volunteers

Administration Address:

58/54 Soi Pichai 2, St. Louis 3
Southern Sathorn Road
Yannawa, Sathorn, Bangkok 10120,
THAILAND

Tel.: (Mobile) +66(0)904214382
E-mail: gar45sobrado@hotmail.com

