

Asia Mission Ad Gentes News Brief

The Year of Faith

Dear Brothers, Lay Missionaries and Friends of AMAG,

Warm and fraternal greetings!

I am writing this message from Mothbary, not far from Dhaka, the capital city of this beautiful country of Bangladesh. There are 13 of us gathered here for the annual retreat: four from West Bengal, seven from Bangladesh and Max Meier (Cambodia) who is facilitating the retreat with me.

As in the two previous retreats in Hong Kong and Bangkok, this one centres on the theme of “Developing the right attitudes for a group discernment about the AMAG Mission and ministries”. In yesterday’s group sharing, more than one described some of the purifying processes they had been going through in their life that had made them more open to group discernment. At the heart of this purifying fire of growth experiences lies the gift of faith.

Benedict XVI has called for a Year of Faith in the Church. It began on

11 October this year and will conclude on 24 November 2013, on the last Sunday of the liturgical year. The 11th of October was chosen because it was on such a day and month that the Vatican II Ecumenical Council was solemnly formed 50 years ago: a time of grace to renew our faith in the Risen Lord at a time of deep cultural and social transformations in the history of humanity.

Benedict XVI invites every one of us, with the grace of the Spirit, to make this year a year of a personal and community experience of deep Christian joy and of ardent Christian enthusiasm (Porta Fidei 15). He ties the experience of joy to the renewal of our believing and the experience of enthusiasm to the renewal of our communicating the gift of faith.

One of you shared with me how in the recent months he had gone through the experience of accompanying and, at times, guiding a young man to the discovery of Christian faith.

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Companions on the journey of faith.

Our Brother was also the one who led this young person all through his time as a catechumen. The young man had grown in a climate where religious sentiment and practice are made difficult. The discovery of faith came to him as a wonderful revelation of a new world and life vision. The profession of faith brought to him a deep sense of liberation and inner freedom. The

prevalent feeling was one of great and lasting joy. Our Brother definitely had a sense of exhilarating enthusiasm and fulfillment: he had been given the grace of helping someone to become a new person in more than one way.

The AMAG Spirituality Commission will develop some suggestions and practical ways for each AMAG Community to use the Community Life Project as a way to make this Year of Faith our own. Guidelines to this effect will be mailed to every Community at the beginning of December this year.

I pray that this Year of Faith becomes for all of us a time of grace where the gift of faith is deepened and celebrated with joy and enthusiasm.

Your Brother,

Luis.



Bangkok

The brothers working in formation for the three Administrative Unities in Asia got together in Thailand from 23 to 25 September to attend a workshop on accompaniment. Br Alfredo Herrera from South Korea was invited to present some guidelines to the brothers working in formation at the early stages (Aspirancy, Postulants, Novitiate and Post – Novitiate). It was very encouraging to see that the workshop responded to the needs of the brothers.

15 brothers from different countries and two sisters who have been helping in the accompaniment process of our aspirants in VN participated in the course. We were an international group as 11 countries were involved – There were brothers from New Zealand, Colombia, Guatemala, Pakistan, India, Mexico, Sri Lanka, Fiji, Spain, Argentina and two sisters from VN. They are missionaries in 11 countries:

Formation Course

By Juan Castro

Bangladesh, VN, Cambodia, Thailand, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, India, South Korea and CN.

The workshop was divided into two parts. In the morning we had a theoretical part and in the afternoon we had the practical part. The participants tried to apply the skills learned during the morning sessions. On the last evening, each participant shared his experience in accompanying the vocation process of the young men interested to discover their call.

We are happy to see that many young people are discovering the call of the Lord in their lives and are trying to answer those calls with generosity. The Formation Commission thanks all the brothers involved in the preparation of this workshop. We hope to conduct a similar workshop next year.



India (West Bengal)

Vocation Promotion in West Bengal

By the Talit Community

Jose Maria and Malangmei did the promotion of vocations around the diocese and they were able to meet some young men in the mission centre.

Nine young men were invited to the community on 26 August but due to their earlier work commitments, only four responded: two are siblings, one is finishing his class 12 and the other one is completing class 11. In attendance was also their sister who accompanied them for the session. They were joined by Michael who is doing his second year degree course, and Mongol, a first year college student.

Apart from the hostel ministry, our brothers in West Bengal are now actively involved in the vocation promotion activities in the Diocese. Brs

Br Jose prepared the programme of activities for half a day duration that began with breakfast at 9am and was followed by a prayer session, relevant input, sharing of life stories and time of acquaintance with the Brothers in the community. The sharing of our Brothers' vocation story was meaningful for the attendees. A Marial prayer and fellowship meal concluded the activities.

This is the first step the community undertook in their vocation ministry with the leadership of Br Jose. A plan of convening these young boys once in three months will allow opportunities of contacts and nurturing their interests for their possible participation in the candidate programme. With trust in God and Mary, the community of Talit continues the vocation promotion ministry with the hope of expanding their reach beyond the boundaries of the Asansol Diocese.



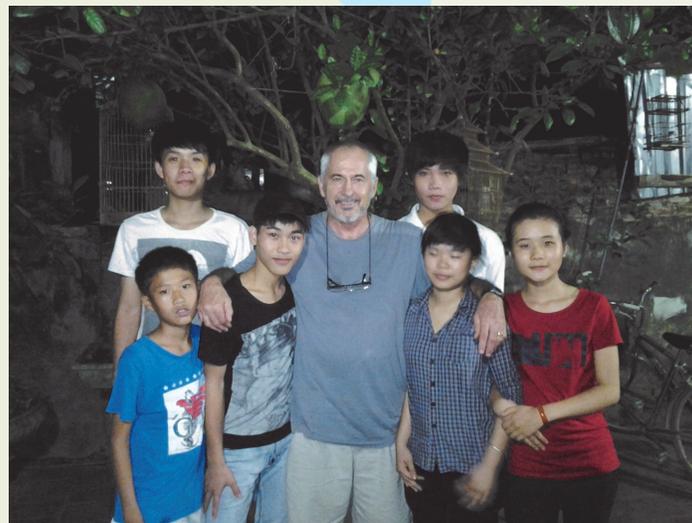
Vietnam

Volunteering in Vietnam

By Peter Pichler

I support Geoff Kelly, the Director of FMSI for New Horizons, by helping with the setting up and teaching of English to local students from nine schools in the area as well as supporting the English teachers.

The first classes were held at our house simply because there was such a demand for it and the Centre was not yet authorised to begin operations. These classes were promoted through word of mouth and we had up to four classes per day, with 8 - 12 students who were mainly girls between



year 9 and 12. Therefore, we taught about 200 students in a week!

Classes began at the Centre on Friday (10 August), with two groups of primary school children in the 3rd, 4th and 5th classes, with 17 in each. We now have four such primary classes, which offer one lesson per week. The other nine classes are made up of six upper secondary classes, (Year 10,11 and 12) and three lower secondary classes (Year 7, 8 and 9) each with a maximum of 17 students. Students attend one class per week, which are at 9am and 3pm most



days of the week, with 5pm classes for the primary school children. Classes go for one hour. We believe there is a waiting list of about 150 students.

Geoff has provided a whole range of materials sourced from the internet. CSDS provided a text and workbook for the primary classes, which the parents paid for. I brought with me a data projector, which is constantly used with the computer supplied by Geoff. There are also a number of alpha and number flash cards, verb game, which I was also able to bring with me. It would be a good if future volunteers could bring teaching aids, colour pens, stickers, English books for any age groups (from five years of age to adults) as they would be of great help to the Centre. The two classrooms at the Centre are well set up, and are suitable for groups of up to 17.

The people and students of Quoc Oai have been most welcoming and friendly. They have accepted us strangers in their midst with great hospitality. The students are extremely keen to learn, are very hardworking and appreciate whatever we do for them. The senior students in particular use these lessons to gain confidence in the use of the English language, as it is a major subject for their final year at school, which will help them to gain university entrance and future employment.

I have been most fortunate to be a part of this worthy project, and will be a strong advocate for its long term sustainability once the inevitable teething problems are overcome. My best wishes to the management and staff.



Birthday Greetings!

Brothers and lay Marists celebrating their birthdays in October and November:



Geoff Kelly	5/10	Cristina Kim	31/10
Paco Garcia	7/10	Miguel Vielva	13/11
Brian Kinsella	24/10	Marcos Serena	23/11
Neiva Hoffelder	30/10	Philip Ninfasse	29/11

Peacemakers 2012 Medical Camp

By Francis Atta

A 28-member medical team from a Catholic education foundation in South Korea called "Peacemakers"

visited us from 28 August until 1 September. Comprising doctors, nurses, pharmacists, technicians and logistics support team, they offered free medical consultation and treatment to the people of Pailin and its environs. They brought along 10 local translators to facilitate communication with the locals in their quest to cater to the locals' health and medical needs. The group also came with lots of medication and medical equipment.



This same group of different membership was in Pailin last year and attended to over 2000 patients within five days. The Peacemakers' satisfaction of last year's experience compelled them to choose Pailin again over other possible places in Cambodia. As the quality of health delivery and the professionalism that accompany the work of the Peacemakers have built confidence in the locals, it was therefore not a surprise to see many more patients in attending this year's medical camp.





Reflections from Pailin

By Patrick Rodgers

very happy to accept the offer. Currently, I have been with the Marist Mission in Pailin for two and a half months.

I teach English to children and adults, visit families and help coordinate clinics for doctors visiting our centre. I channel donations from home to local families, helping them to improve their situations. It has been a profound lesson in living the Gospel, witnessing the generosity and selflessness of the Brothers who believe so strongly in direct assistance to all. Working in Pailin has taught me that compassion does not take sides.

Pailin has renewed my enthusiasm, allowing me to encounter a group, which is dedicated to bring Christ's love to the people. The Marist Mission in Cambodia has great potential and is one that I am excited to follow throughout its development.



Sok Ann is eight. Both he and his 18-year-old brother suffer from muscular dystrophy. A donation of \$50 was presented to his mother who had to stop working in order to take care of her children.

I am an 18-year-old Australian volunteer who has been in Cambodia for six months as part of a gap year. Three months into my time with the Jesuit Service, I was invited by Br Francis to work with him. As his enthusiasm excited me a great deal, I was

ASIA MISSION AD GENTES NEWS BRIEF

No. 23, August - September 2012

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