DIVINE WORD MISSION THAILAND

VOLUME 4
2013 - 2016
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Thai Mission Up-Date

It is time to up-date the history and development of the Thai mission since the original booklet of our first 10 years (1999-2009), then Volume 2, (2009 - 2011) and Volume 3, (2011 - 2013), and now Volume 4, (2013 - 2016).

SVD personnel has grown from 5 to 14 with the arrival of 4 new priests, 2 from Vietnam and 2 from Indonesia. Later another from Vietnam, India, Vietnamese American transfer from PNG, 2 OTP’s from America and 1 Seminarian from Laos.

Mother of Perpetual Help Center & St. Michael’s Church

Mother of Perpetual Help Center was first opened in 1997 and operated out of a rented family house. Once the SVD arrived they began to seek funds which enabled the Center as it is today to be constructed and completed in August of 2002.

At the same time St. Michael the Archangel Church was dedicated and the construction made possible through grants from the USA and local Catholics from Bangkok.
Center Activities

Many of the activities of the Center remain the same with certain adaptations as necessary. The Center continues with the necessary and important “Aids Education and Awareness Program” in schools throughout the Province during the year (normally 20 to 25 schools). New to our Aids Education and Awareness program is the training of teachers from schools to eventually carry on with education of their own students about HIV and AIDS. Staff from Mother of Perpetual Help Center can reach out to only one of the six Districts each year—with teachers being trained to give aids education all students can be reached every year rather than waiting six years for staff from the Center to be available. Center staff will continue to be available as resource persons as well as in an advisory capacity.

“St. Michael the Archangel Church” constructed and completed in 2002 with the Center buildings is now growing in attendance and active participation.

New to our Center and programs is the home for HIV teenagers “Ban Mae Maria” (Mother Mary House) completed in 2010.

Also new for the Center is the transformation of buildings on the farm in 2013 to accommodate long term patients from Villa Marie Hospice. For patients who no longer have a home to return to because of rejection and discrimination.

A further development has been the formation of a Foundation for the SVD, “Perpetual Help Foundation”, the English version as the official title of Divine Word Foundation could not be used (there is an official name in Thai as well). To enable land ownership by the SVD a separate company had to be formed “Wajanat Nukrau Co. Ltd. (SVD)” again the name in English as Divine Word Missionaries could not be used.
In Memoriam

Br. James Wilkins, SVD

1947 - 2010

First to arrive in Thailand with Br. Damien Lunders in March of 1999. Due to health issues Br. James returned to Australia at the end of 2006 and worked as treasurer for the Australian Province until his death in 2010.

Br. Damien Lunders, SVD

Born: April 17, 1942 USA
Entered the SVD in 1960
First Profession May 1, 1963
Final Profession May 1, 1969

First Mission Assignment to Papua New Guinea 1969 - 25 years.

Divine Word Mission Thailand

**Br. Ron Fratzke, SVD**

Born: December 3, 1961, Iowa USA  
Entered the SVD in 1980  
First Profession 1985, Final 1990

First Assignment to Australia for 11 years.  
Arrived in Thailand: January 2002

Ministry: Volunteer teaching English in Government schools, kindergarten schools and staff from various compa-

**Br. Bernd Ruffing, SVD**

Born: March 20, 1974 in Germany  
Worked in Austria, after nurses training went to Australia for an English refresher course in preparation for the OTP program in Thailand - arrived in Nong Bua Lamphu April 2010, returned to Germany for final vows in August 2011. Re-appointed to Thailand and arrived again in February 2013.

Ministry: HIV/AIDS/Pastoral
Meet Our Members in Parish Ministry

Fr. Anthony Duc Le, SVD

Born: October 28, 1975 in Vietnam
Immigrated to California in 1985
Ordained in 2006—Techny USA
Arrived in Thailand February 2007
Assumed responsibility for St. Michael the Archangel parish in 2008—Nong Bua Lamphu

Fr. Anthony began at Assumption University in Bangkok, specializing in “World Religions” in the Asian context. These studies will facilitate engaging in inter-religious dialogue efforts in the future for the Society and the local church. Towrd the end of 2015 Anthony defended his dissertation. From time to time he has been asked to teach at the seminary in Laos and Cambodia for special courses. He will continue with migrant ministries in the Bangkok area while also

Fr. Truc Quoc Phan, SVD

Born January 2, 1970 in Vietnam
Ordained in Australia 09/12/2006
Arrived in Thailand March 2007
Assumed responsibility for 3 small parishes in the Nong Khai Deanery in the Diocese of Udon Thani

Returned to Australia in 2013 to remain for a period of 4 years in order to receive his Australian citi-
Meet Our SVD Priests

Fr. Blasius Trinold, SVD

Born: September 22, 1983  
Country: Indonesia  
Entered the SVD: August 25, 2002  
First Vows: August 15, 2004  
Final Vows: August 15, 2010  
Ordained: October 28, 2011  
Arrived in Thailand to begin language studies: September 2012  
Ministry: Pastoral Care  
Pastor Phu Wiang and Chumpae parishes in the Diocese of Udon

Fr. Bernardus N. Bella, SVD

Born: November 13, 1975  
Country: Indonesia  
Entered the SVD: August 19, 1995  
First Vows: September 22, 2007  
Final Vows: February 2, 2011  
Ordained: September 14, 2011  
Arrived in Thailand to begin language studies: September 2012  
Ministry: Pastoral Care  
Pastor at the Phuenchalern and outstations in the Dan Dung District,
Fr. Tuan Pham Tuan, SVD

Born: November 15, 1976
Country: Vietnam
Entered the SVD: July 15, 2002
First Vows: July 16, 2003
Final Vows: July 16, 2010
Ordained: June 29, 2011
Arrived in Thailand to begin language studies: September 2012
Ministry: Pastoral Care
Parish priest St. Michael’s in

Fr. Vihn Tran The, SVD

Born: January 6, 1977
Country: Vietnam
Entered the SVD: July 15, 2002
First Vows: July 16, 2003
Final Vows: July 16, 2010
Ordained: June 29, 2011
Arrived in Thailand to begin language studies: September 2012
Ministry: Pastoral Care
Parish priest Kamsida/Tuan
Fr. John Hung Le, SVD

Born: November 20, 1966  
Country: Vietnam  
Entered the SVD:  
First Vows: 15/08/1998  
Final Vows: 15/08/2003  
Ordained: 05/06/2004  
Arrived in Thailand 2014  
(Transferred from PNG)  
2015 Began language study  
Ministry: Pastoral Care

Fr. Duc Linh Nguyen, SVD

Born: January 15, 1976  
Country: Vietnam  
Entered the SVD: 2003  
First Vows: July 16, 2004  
Final Vows: July 16, 2011  
Ordained: August 30, 2012  
Arrived in Thailand: 2014  
To begin language studies until 2015.  
Ministry: Pastoral Care
**Rajasekhar R. Bobba, SVD**

Born: June 15, 1984  
Country: India  
Entered the SVD: 1999  
First Vows: 08/06/2007  
Final Vows: 07/06/2013  
Ordained: 09/01/2014  
Arrived in Thailand 2014  
Began language studies in 2015.  

Ministry: Pastoral Care

**Anisong Chanthavong, SVD**

Born: 04/04/1981  
Country: Laos  
Entered the SVD: 2014  
Novitiate: SVD Philippines  
First Vows:  
Theologate Melbourne 1915  

Before Novitiate “Toub” spent some time with the SVD Community in Nong Bua Lamphu.
Overseas Training Program

Frt. Truong Thong Le, SVD

Born: October 16, 1987
Country: Vietnam
Passport: American Citizen
Entered the SVD: 2010
First Vows: August 11, 2012
Arrived in Thailand: 2014
Studied Thai Language in Bangkok
Arrived in Nong Bua Lamphu for OTP/CTP experience in 2015
Return to America for further

Bro. Binh Thanh Nguyen, SVD

Born: October 11, 1987
Country: Bangkok Thailand (Vietnamese—American)
Entered the SVD: 2012
First Vows: 2013
OTP/CTP: 2015/2017
Arrived in Thailand: 2015
Currently Studying the Thai language

Once completing language study will come to Nong Bua
Five different nationalities in a community of 13, a sure sign of interculturality in the SVD.

Not included in this photo are our latest OTP student, Br. Binh Thanh Nguyen and our first Laotian Candidate who is currently studying at the Theologate in Melbourne.

Two other OTP students from Vietnam whose language study visa ran out in Australia came to Thailand to spend the remaining time in Nong Bua Lamphu. For both Hung and long the time spent here was a worthwhile and beneficial experience for them. They have returned to Vietnam where they will complete their studies for the priesthood.
Mission Sunday 2015

During the Thai District Assembly and Chapter at the end of 2014 it was decided to do something special on Mission Sunday to help bring about an awareness about mission. Poster displays were set up outside the Church, showing the ministries of the SVD, the SSPS and the Missionaries of Charity (as they work closely with the SVD in Nong Bua Lamphu). The days liturgy and extra activities were a success. Other priests from the Diocese joined in and brought some of the youth from their parishes for sports activities. Some of our teenagers from Ban Mae Marie and girls from the Sisters dressed as
During one of Provincial Henry Adlers’ visits with the confreres in Thailand—Upper left and lower left two of our Vietnamese OTP students Long and Hung still with the community. Upon completion of their OTP experience they returned to Vietnam where they continue their studies at the seminary.

Tuan Pham and Truong Thong Le getting some experience harvesting rice.
Almost every week end in the Diocese there is a Church Feast at one or the other parishes. This is the opportunity for the people to meet with the Bishop. Kamsida is one of four outstation churches being looked after by Fr. Vinh. Below is an offering of money presented during the Mass.
St. Michael’s Church Feast celebration in September was well attended and the numbers continue to increase. (Fr. Tuan Pham SVD)
PERSONALITIES
More Personalities

Toward the end of 2014 we were honored with a visit from Father General Heinze Kulueke—it was also the occasion of new arrivals John Hung Le and Rajasekhar Reddy.
An outstation of Chumpae District in the Khon Kaen Province now under the care of Fr. Trinold SVD. Another neglected parish so it will take some time to be brought back again. Not many catholic, but many young children come around for learning and sports.

Chumpae parish, the District headquarters with a small church and few participants. Also being looked after by Fr. Trinold SVD so it will require patience and perseverance to build up the catholic community once again.

Thai Martyrs Church in Tuan Kham (Ban Dung District), a second parish being looked after by Fr. Vinh Tran, SVD. Church before restoration.

Thai Martyrs Church had been neglected for over ten years so Fr. Vinh took the initiative to take care several days during the week. Formerly there were about 60 catholic families. Slowly families are coming back as the church has been restored and the sala also being restored for church meetings and functions. Many children are coming around helping out and playing sports—most are not catholic— the future of the church are the young generation.
St. Michael Archangel Church 2002

Mother of Perpetual Help Center 2002

Mother Mary House (Home for Teenagers) (2010)
Ron Fratzke has been teaching English at the local government school since his arrival in Thailand. He along with Truong Le continue to teach at the school and from time to time he, Trong, and Bernd Ruffing teach special courses to nurses in the hospital and even to the police. It is a good way of having the Center and the Church known to local government personnel.

The many Aids education programs as well are a good influence to the public about the Catholic Church.
Our hospice has become more of a care center rather than a place where people come to die due to the anti-viral medications now available.

Many of those who were patients in the past have become staff members who look after new patients.

Other patients who have returned to good health, but have no place to return to are living and looking after themselves on our farm.

Villa Marie Hospice Care Facility
One of the priorities of Mother of Perpetual Help Center is our Aids Education and Awareness program with the youth in all schools in the Province of Nong Bua Lamphu. During the past three years a new program was started for training teachers in the schools for giving Aids Education with the youth. The teachers go through camps much the same as their students, but with more intensive workshops as well and later assist staff from the Center with follow-up work in the schools as further training.

In the Province of Nong Bua Lamaphu, one of the Provinces in the Diocese of Udon Thani, there are six Districts. Each year the Center has had Aids Education and Awareness with the youth in one of the six Districts for 20 schools. Schools initially with a 3 day camp with a two day follow-up in each of the schools.
Mother Mary House

Mother Mary House (Ban Mae Marie) is a home for HIV infected teenagers; however, in recent months we have accepted non infected teenagers as well. While at Mother Mary house all are given the opportunity to continue their education whether at normal schools or vocational schools to learn a trade which will help them in the future.
Aid for Needy Children

Our program helping needy children with school supplies, clothing and transport to school continues thanks to the Holy Childhood in Rome support. Holy Childhood has been giving support for many years now and we are most grateful to them as without their support this project would not be able to be continued.

We continue to give some support to 400 children throughout the Province of Nong Bua Lamphu—HIV group leaders inform MPH C of those children in most need; thus, distributions are made normally in April/May just before the new school year opens.
Thai District with 12 members join together to prepare for the local District Assembly and Chapter in 2014. The local Assembly was attended by Fr. Heinz Kulueke during his short visit to Thailand before Christmas.
**MSM Camp**

Beside Aids Education and Awareness with the youth in schools, a special camp is held each year for the *MSM Group* to bring about an awareness of the dangers of aids being transmitted through multi-partner sexual relations.

With a large number of gay/lesbian men and women in Thailand, giving education about AIDS is important and will hopefully will help to bring about a decrease in the spread of aids.
May the darkness of sin and the night of unbelief vanish before the light of the WORD and the Spirit of grace, and may the heart of Jesus live in the hearts of all.

AMEN
Acknowledgements

+Marie Quinlan USA
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Sankt Gabriel’s Austria
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Propaganda Fidei Rome
Misean Cara Ireland
Dreikonissingen/Kindermissionswerk Germany
Ehrbacher Foundation Germany
Missio Austria
Missio Munchen
Missio Aachen
Misereor Aachen
SVD Switzerland
Ludwig Weiss Stiftung Germany
Trapp-Dries Familien-Stiftung Germany
Koch Foundation Florida
Raskob Foundation America
Loyola Foundation America
Miva Holland
Porticus Asia—Hong Kong
San Bernardino Diocese Social Concerns
Holy Childhood San Francisco
Mary Immaculate & St. Anthanasius Parish Australia
St. Vincent DePaul Australia
Arnold Janssen Foundation Germany
Benedictus Dominus Foundation Germany
Little Way Association England
Catholics Holy Redeemer Church Bangkok
+Mary Tan Bangkok
Herz Und Mehr—Germany
Marlene and Richard Pietranek America
The Harris Family Australia
Wilma Baumgartner America
Homer Butler Foundation New York
Social Welfare Nong Bua Lamphu Thailand

Vision Statement

Following the example of the Divine Word, our mission in Thailand is to incarnate ourselves into the lives of the Thai people and thereby be of true missionary service to them.

Just as Christ, the Word Incarnate, was born and grew up within a specific culture before he revealed His Father’s plan, so we, an international community, through openness and respect for the local culture are committed to immerse ourselves into the lives of the people of Thailand, so we may grow in our understanding in order to serve them.

In union with the Divine Word and expressing our SVD charism, we grow and co-operate with the local church, seeking peripheral and neglected areas of Thai society which the Church has not been able to reach or where the gospel has not been preached sufficiently. Our work will include special care for the poor, the promotion of justice and peace and dialogue with other faiths.

Through this work and through our witnessing as a prayerful international missionary-religious community, we support the Catholic Church in Thailand and its endeavor to understand and accomplish its local mission and to develop a wider vision of its universal calling.