



MISSIOCOM

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The Missionary Community of Corpus Christi

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For more news, articles and information on how to join MCCC and share in her work and mission, please go to www.mc-corporuschristi.org

Welcome

Since the last issue of missiocom two months ago, MCCC has been consolidating its position as a missionary community through her efforts both in China and Cambodia. However we must not gloss over the efforts of the support base in Brunei which has given much impetus to the work of MCCC. The formation of the Executive Committee signals the coming of age for MCCC and takes her to a different level of operation. The formation of a second unit in Kuala Belait will give added support to the work of our overseas missionaries. We need all your prayers.

Fr. Ivan Fang MHM

MCCC's Cambodian unit is helping Sr. Maria Soldelicia Lara of the Daughters of Charity with her projects among the displaced people working in the Industrial Zone of Phnom Penh. Gabby, the unit leader is working out the various aspects of this involvement.



Serving the Poor

MCCC is committed to serving the poor in society. Wherever MCCC is present, the needs of those considered poor will always be the priority of our members.



Executive Council

The MCCC Executive Council has been elected.

Members of MCCC came together for a business meeting on Sunday 14 October to formally establish the leadership structure of MCCC.

They also discussed the various programmes and projects that were pending and looked into ways to raise the necessary funds to carry out the work of MCCC.

The following were elected to form the Executive Council which would remain in office for a term of three years.
Chairman: Wilson Chong
Secretary: Marilyn Newn
Treasurer: Dennis Tagulinao
Project Coordinator:

Vincent Ng

RBCS Director:

Marjory Toidy

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Visit to Pailin

Frances spent a week in Battambang on an English Teaching Programme

While Gabby and Theresa went back for a week's break in Singapore on 11th September, Frances set off for a week in Battambang to work with Sovin and Thida on an English programme for the Parish children ages 4-6 and 8-12.

Frances spent the first morning on information gathering and discussion regarding the elementary education system especially for the target age groups. Sovin and Thida had to work on materials from the library for the 4-6 and 8-12 respectively. In the afternoon, Frances had an opportunity to travel to Pailin, 70 km for Battambang with Fr. Totet and his catechists. The road is heavily used and in bad condition as it is the main road that the trucks use to carry goods to and from Thailand. Their first stop is at Sneng village, a newly discovered community of three baptised Catholics. The matriarch is a 91 year old woman who is partially blind and deaf. After her return from the States after the Pol Pot regime, this woman gathered her family and rela-

tives regularly at her house to pray and spread the faith. Once a week, Kam Thong the catechist would visit this new community for prayer and catechism lessons. One of the priests would go along if available and mass would be celebrated. On weekends, one has to get in early to get a place. During this visit, before the mass service began, Fr. Totet taught the assembly how to make the sign of the cross,

the correct gestures before the proclamation of the Word and the meaning and significance of the different parts of the mass. It took 3 hours to get to Pailin, travelling along the muddy and bumpy dirt road. Pailin was the stronghold of Pol Pot during his regime. It was a dangerous place then as it is now with land mines all over the place. The main road is dusty with shop houses on either side. Prices of properties have escalated many folds. There are plans to build



a 4-lane highway to replace the current dirt road.

The Church is situated along the main road. It is actually a rented house. The lease was supposed to end at the end of September. The Church had been looking urgently for an alternative place. Currently there are 25 Catholics. The youth soon gathered to select and practise the hymns for Mass. Frances was surprised to see that the males outnumbered the females by three to one. After an overnight stay, the group returned to Battambang. It was back to the English Programme for Frances. Sovin and Thida were very conscientious students. They did their homework well and were able to complete the first draft of the English Programme for the target age groups. Frances spent the weekend visiting Tabung village again to join in their end of year graduation ceremony. She also had an opportunity to witness a Khymer engagement ceremony. Read more about it in the MCCC website.



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Takeo Eye Hospital

Theresa gives an account of her work as a teacher to the staff of Takeo Eye Hospital

1st October 2007 was a significant day for me. The driver from the Daughters of Charity, Chann Sophal, fetched me at 6.00 am and we proceeded to The Takeo Eye Hospital (TEH). The car journey from Phnom Penh to TEH was one and a half hours. I had to hold on to my car seat



tightly as the trip was bumpy. Despite the bumpy ride, I was looking forward to meeting my students. Upon arrival I was introduced by Mr Bonn, the administrator of TEH to some of the staff who would be attending the English lessons. The staff was happy to see me. I had my first lesson from 5.00 - 6.00 pm. There were 8 students, 6 trainee nurses, a receptionist and a security guard.

Mondays are usually busy days with many patients. The students were tired but in good spirit. The students introduced themselves and expressed that learning English would help them in many ways. They could go for further training locally or overseas and to communicate with foreigners.

On 2nd October, Tuesday morning lesson was from 6.00 - 7.00. Only one student came at 6.00 and the rest came at 6.20. After discussing with the students, the lesson time was adjusted to 6.15 - 7.15 am. The students and I were delighted that we would not need to get up so early.

I shared a story in print – Bath-

Time. The students could relate their own experiences of being naughty and chased by their parents which drew laughter from the class. They had a good laugh and enjoyed the

lesson. Nurse Chrek Vannak said, "I will always remember today's lesson." October is the raining season. Takeo is prone to flood and blackouts. One

morning the flooding was so bad that only two students, Meas Ratha and Mienh Davy turned up for class. Thus, we had more time for sharing. They shared their struggles, having to work from Mondays to Fridays and studying full-time on weekends too. They have hardly any time for personal life.

Blackouts are quite often, we had two lessons under the light

of the mobile phones. The students took this in their stride. For me, this is truly a new experience. On one occasion, we

had to cancel the class because of total blackout. The students looked disappointed that there was no lesson.

Some of the students were unable to attend both morning and evening lessons due to 'on-call' duties after office hours. Once, Nurse Ngeth Sarun came in his nursing gown as he did not want to be late for class. Despite their heavy workload, studies, and family commitments they continue to attend the lessons. I felt encouraged by their enthusiasm.



Visit to Tapung and Taken

Our MCCC members in Cambodia visited the villages of Tapung and Taken at the end of their project in Battambang.

After the Battambang project, our members in Cambodia accepted the Tapung village students' invitation to visit their village. Fr. Gabriel SJ gave them a lift there on Sunday, 25 August. On arrival, they were greeted by a large group of children who formed the welcoming party. The two students gave a tour of their classes. They have to teach (even though they are Grade 9 students themselves) three hours a day, subjects in Khmer and some English too to the young children of the village. On Sundays, they teach catechism.

The youth of the parish related the history of the village. The "settlers" of the village returned from the refugee camp in Thailand after the Pol Pot regime. At that time, only two families were Catholics and they had to go to Battambang for mass. They requested for a church and the first church was a very simple building. As the village grew, the Catholic population grew as well. There are 82 baptized Catholics today. In 2003 a bigger church was built.

On the way to the old church, which is now used as a classroom for the village kids, our members were invited to visit the home of a woman whose

husband is half-paralysed. Her four grown-up children have all left the village. Their house was in a poor state with a leaking roof with neither windows nor a door. It distressed our



members to see the couple using their kitchen area as their sleeping quarters.

Lunch was at the home of one of the students. The main dish was snake meat (the Cambodians eat snake meat in the wet season and dog meat in the dry season) which was politely declined by our members. The hospitality was overwhelming.



Later, the trio went to Taken for a baptism Mass which only started at 5.00 p.m. with a procession from the home of an 84 year old woman who had

kept her faith during the time of the Pol Pot regime. At mass, there was a brief introduction of the international community present. The Salesian Sister in charge of the International volunteer and the Salesian Council members were visiting Cambodia. The MCCC members were introduced and thanked for their services to the youth leaders. Their students were introduced and also shared about what they have learnt from the workshop. There

was a Youth Synod of Cambodia in Phnom Penh that week, comprising 300 youths from the three dioceses. The t-shirt with its logo was designed by the youth of Battambang. They shared briefly about the Synod and performed a dance item they presented there. Finally, the baptism ceremony took place. The mass ended about eight, which was followed by a lovely Spanish dinner for all the guests. After dinner, five dances depicting the lives of the villages were presented by the Taken community. After every dance, Msgr. Kike interviewed every child/dancer and gave each of them an opportunity to practice his/her English and Spanish. Frances, Theresa and Gabby retired to their hotel room at 11.00 p.m.



RBCS Brunei come up with another \$3000 to make a total contribution of \$7000 from the Brunei side. We welcome any generous offer to help.

(cont'd from page 1)

Unit Coordinator: Julia Lee
The First Unit formed in Kuala Belait will be facilitated by Lulu Santos. Another unit is due to begin the first training module on 1st November. Unit 1 will begin their second module of formation soon. The China unit is still in the process of being formed while the Cambodian group is already a unit. Anyone wishing to join the second unit is most welcome to attend. Please contact Julia Lee.

How to Help

Many people have asked MCCC members how they can help. Other than giving monetary donations to all the various good and worthy causes, why not become a friend of MCCC. A friend is one who prays for the success of the work of MCCC and supports the work of the overseas volunteers. Many people are willing and ready to support projects but unfortunately, our volunteers are often overlooked. Much of the funding for the overseas centres and the volunteers upkeep come from our own members' contribution. Often this is not enough to sustain the work of the overseas volunteer. Units are supposed to be the support base for the volunteers. So really, if anyone wants to help, then the best way is to become part of a unit.

Log into our website for more details on how to help.

San He Bridge

The final estimates of the bridge have been submitted

The San He villagers have submitted the plan of the proposed bridge. They intend to build it during winter when it is dry. The total construction cost is estimated to be RMB 83,337.00 (BND 16700) The Bridge will be 15m long, 4m wide and 3m high. Donations have been received for

the bridge from generous donors from Brunei amounting to BND 4000 so far. Anna, our member in Ziyun, Guizhou suggested that the cost of the construction of the bridge be shared by another group of potential donors. She is working on this at the moment. She proposed that

Workers' Christmas Party

Since meeting up with Sr. Maria Soldelicia Lara of the Daughters of Charity, our members in Cambodia have been finalising various projects for the workers within the Industrial Zone who have migrated from the rural areas to find work in Phnom Penh. One of the suggested projects is a Christmas Party for the residents in the Industrial Zone who frequent

the Centre run by Sr. Sol. A party for 50 children will take place on Friday 21 December from 9:30am till lunch. A party for 40 adults will take place on Sunday, 23 December from 9:30am to lunch time. Gifts will be given to those attending the party. If you wish to help defray the cost of organising this Christmas Party, please contact Marilyn.

Starting a Creche

Our members in Cambodia are seriously looking into the possibility of opening a creche with the assistant of Sr. Sol for the children of the market vendors and construction workers in the Industrial Zone. It is estimated to cost around USD 400 per month to run the Centre which includes the rent, salary for the staff and food for ten toddlers aged between one and

three years. In order to fund this project it was suggested that we find a sponsor for each of the toddlers. There are ten and so it works out to be USD 40 per child (approx \$70) per month. If you can sponsor a child, please let us know so that the project can proceed as soon as possible. Further details can be found in the website.

New Year's Eve Party

RBCS Brunei is planning a New Year's Eve Charity event to raise funds for the Sang He Bridge Project in China. De-

tails for this event will be found at a later date in the MCCC website.

If all our readers (more than a hundred) were to donate just \$10.00 per month, we will have enough to run one of our overseas centres comfortably. Think about this seriously. Contact Marilyn for more details on how to give.

Living a Purposeful Life

The Executive Council of MCCC is organising a training course for all those interested in finding a deeper meaning in their lives through greater involvement in their church community. The course will introduce participants to various aspects of church life and ministries through an understanding of discipleship and mission and equip them with the necessary skills and tools to embark on their personal

mission within community. This programme is especially geared towards those needing guidance to formulate their response to their faith. This five-day course is tentatively scheduled between 26 and 30 January 2008 and will most likely take place in Sabah. Further details will be available in the next issue. If you need more information in the meantime, contact Fr. Ivan at navifang@hotmail.com

Working from England

Fr Ivan has been steering MCCC from his residence in Maidenhead, Berkshire since last year.

Some of our readers may not have been aware of this but Fr Ivan has been directing MCCC from a distance and not from Brunei as some might have thought. Since August 2006, Fr Ivan has been living and working in the UK. He went there to take up his new appointment as the web designer for the Mill Hill Missionary Society to which he belongs. The website of the Mill Hill Missionaries was launched in February 2007 after Fr Ivan acquired some know-how on how to design websites. His knowledge on designing websites came in handy when he also set up the website for MCCC. Since June 2007, Fr Ivan has taken up a new appointment as the Secretary General of the Mill Hill Society. As Secretary, not only has he to do some clerical and office duties, he also has to keep up to date the details of all the Mill Hill members scattered throughout the world. Fr Ivan also works part-time occasionally as an APF-Mill Hill applier. This means that he has to spend weekends at various parishes in the Archdiocese

of Westminster, London and preach at all masses with the purpose of promoting mission and getting parishioners to take home a red box to put in their contributions for the mission countries and the training of Mill Hill missionaries. He has signed up to do ten appeals next year. Lately, he has been involved in the local parish of St. Joseph in Maidenhead, not only singing in the choir occasionally but also conducting a workshop for the training and formation of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion for the local Pastoral Area consisting of three parishes in the Diocese of Portsmouth. In his spare time, Fr Ivan struggles to update the various websites he has undertaken upon himself, unfortunately hampered by his limited knowledge and skills of the web. To add to that, his major headache is the difficulty of getting good stories and materials for the websites but he is quite optimistic that given time, he will have things under his belt before he completes his appointment, hopefully, in three years' time.

An Invitation to Help

There are a number of ways in which you can make a difference to the lives of others less fortunate than you are. We invite you to help out through any of the following ways:

- a) become a donor either by giving a donation or making a pledge
- b) become a friend of RBCS by supporting and assisting in fund raising events and by inviting your friends to help

c) become a member of RBCS and help out in its organisational work

d) join MCCC and become a serious member to deepen your spiritual and community life

e) form a MCCC unit to prepare members for mission work at home or abroad

f) become a friend of MCCC by praying for her members

g) tell others about the work of RBCS and MCCC

All general enquiries: please contact the secretary

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