

# VSO Friends of Vinh Son Montagnard Orphanage

## March Newsletter 2020 Volume 17 Issue 3

### Contact & Donation Information

**FVSO: P.O. Box 9322, Auburn, CA 95604-9322**

**Email: [FriendsOfVSO@gmail.com](mailto:FriendsOfVSO@gmail.com)**

**Web: [www.FriendsOfVSO.org](http://www.FriendsOfVSO.org)**

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There's nothing like on-site observations and feedback from the Nuns. Dave and his fellow travelers gathered valuable information from each orphanage that has helped guide FVSO in their decisions. Page 3 of the newsletter lists some of the Special Projects that have been approved. Without the face-to-face annual meetings with Dave's team, these improvements might never be realized. Below are the requests from Vinh Son 5, as reported by Dave.

"Sister Marie has now been at VS-5 for just about 1 year and the improvements were evident everywhere we looked. She asked for funding for a bio-storage system (this will be an interesting one to watch develop) and first aid supplies. We were able to leave funds to cover these requests. They would also like to upgrade their meeting room and add a chicken coop for 1,000 chickens."



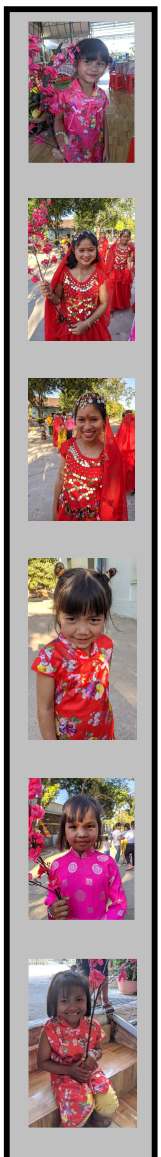
## Pictures worth a thousand words - Photos from Kon Tum & Pleiku



Connecting with the children - from prior visits and for the first time – they make the effort worthwhile



At right, everyone enjoyed the dance and song performances by the children





## Coronavirus – Special Projects – Student Profile

### Coronavirus in Vietnam

**UPDATED: March 3rd, 2020**

Since the start of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, Vietnam has closely monitored the situation and installed a series of proactive, comprehensive measures to combat the spread of the virus within the country and prepare its public health services. Past experience with other epidemics places Vietnam in a strong position to protect its population as well as visitors passing through.

**Vietnam is sharply divided** on how long to close schools because of the coronavirus, which has prevented parents from going to work and threatens further economic damage. Supporters want to keep students at home until April, while opponents say the panic is overblown.



**At Vinh Son, the children find ways to stay busy and keep up with their education. However, school classes remain cancelled. Foreign visitors are not allowed entry into the orphanages.**

### Projects planned after the 2020 on-site review: \$78,875 expected cost

- VS-1: Bedrooms, classrooms, stilt house replacement (\$13,700)
- VS-2: Diapers, repair and upgrade of the boy's dorm (\$17,475)
- VS-4: Well drilling (\$4,700) and fertilizer for farming (\$2,200)
- VS-6: Girl's bathroom (\$5,300)
- VS-5: Chicken Farm, new hall (\$35,500)
- VS-3: Funds already delivered for new bedrooms and toilets

**There is a lot of work to be done**



### Ro Cham Profile

**We first learned of Ro Cham (above) in the FVSO Nov 2017 Newsletter. Since then, he has been attending school and adapting very well. We will continue to follow scholarship students, collecting profiles when possible, and will share them.**

### Student Profile

Ro Cham was born in a small Jarai village and has 4 brothers. They were very poor and many times, when there was no rice to eat, his mother had to beg for food for the children. At some point, Sister Khiet welcomed him into the Sao Mai orphanage. Ro Cham's dream was always to go to school, and because he never gave up on that dream, he was able to complete high school in 2017. Sister Khiet recommended him for a scholarship and upon our approval, many wonderful contributors assured that he was able to attend the Community Service program at Gai Lai (Pleiku) Vocational College.

The first day he entered the Gia Lai College, he was very shy and did not dare to talk to anyone. But after awhile, he became accustomed to the new environment and made friends, realizing that all these new people were gifts as well. Because of them, he learned many things and became much more confident.

Ro Cham really found happiness when he began participating in the required field trips to visit and interact with people in the villages. Although the people did not know who this group of students were, they were welcomed enthusiastically, which made the students very happy. On many field trips, teachers led them to small villages to visit the poor, and they had especially great times with the children. The boys and girls in the villages had slightly darker skin with thin bodies and appeared to be very poor. The images of these children caused Ro Cham to think about the gifts he has received in his life.

The FVSO Board recently announced that they have increased the quarterly contributions to the 6 Vinh Son orphanages by 15%. The new rate goes into effect for the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, and represents an annual increase of \$11,620 which will be spent on Basic Needs. News of this increase was sent to Sr Myriam, asking that she confirm her understanding of this change.

**Below, she thanks FVSO...and we thank YOU!**

Dear Patrick Leary,

First of all, I would like to thank you for your help and support the children. Specially, increase the amount of money every quarter. Your generosity, kindness and love inspires me so deep which means it encourages us to be stronger to take care of the children who have no parents. I believe that you always and continue to take care of this work as we are serving God through the children.

Once again thank you all. Wish you have good health, peace and happiness. May God bless you.

Sr. Myriam Y Ai, Superior General

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## We can help you enlist new benefactors

- Board Members are available to speak at military reunions or to local civilian groups.
- Distribute copies of the monthly FVSO newsletter to your friends and interested groups. Forward the on-line versions and website information via e-mail.
- A Power Point presentation, detailing the FVSO story, is available for your use.
- Tell your personal story. Why are you a member of this team? What would you tell a potential supporter about FVSO? Your history might prompt others to reach out to the children of FVSO.



## Legacy Fund Update

The goals are:

\$1.0m by Dec 2020

\$2.0m by Dec 2025

**Total Contributions**

**\$649,294**



**Easter Mass is held on the grounds of Vinh Son 1. The children will perform.**

### Orphanage Facts

About 830 Montagnard children live in 7 orphanage facilities in the Kontum/Pleiku areas of Vietnam.

\$12 per month provides each child one nutritious meal every day.

Orphanages are run by the Sisters of Miraculous Medal and St. Paul Chartres.

### Officers & Board Members

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### Donation Information

Checks should be payable to FVSO or Friends of Vinh Son.

FVSO is a humanitarian, non-profit organization approved by IRS code 501©(3). Donations are tax deductible.

Donations are accepted year round and are also available on-line.