

## April Newsletter 2020 Volume 17 Issue 4

### 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)

### The Coronavirus Issue

- Hidden smiles, the new normal
- Life at Vinh Son, an overview
- Easter Mass won't be the same
- Scholarship Students Stay Busy



### Where have all the smiles gone?

This newsletter is dedicated to all the children at Vinh Son and Sao Mai who are dealing with the Coronavirus every day. Despite the many unknowns, they take care of each other, clinging onto to their Faith to keep them strong. Hopefully, one day their smiles will re-emerge even bigger!

## Y Le Hang (below) shares her feelings about daily life under the cloud of the Coronavirus

(Special thanks to Martha Phanh and John Ho for their help in translating this essay)



Covid or Corona is a nice name but it is very evil and very dangerous to give its disease from people to people. And now, it has spread and is spreading very fast in all the world to be the worst pandemic of this century. Until now it has killed many lives every day and its disease made all the people in our planet very puzzled and fearful because we don't have any medicines to cure the disease. There are not any vaccines to prevent it. We only know the Coronavirus came from a big city VU HAN of China and may be it came from an animal market of Vu Han from the virus of the bats but we are not sure of this information.

Now the Coronavirus epidemic made most of schools closed for a longtime and most of the students have to stop their study at school to avoid the epidemic. It caused many damages in the students' study: obstructing the advance of students' knowledge on the useless long vacation that nobody likes. I am in grade 12 of the senior high school now and I am very puzzled and I wonder myself if I will be continue to go to university next year. If the Coronavirus continues devastating for more longtime, how will our study at school happen?

While thinking of it, we feel very bored and very sad and moved to tears. We are very worried, fearful and disappointed and all of us expect to come back to school as soon as possible to meet our classmates and our teachers to get more knowledge for our lives in the future. We only pray God Who can stamp out the evil pandemic.

At the moment, all of us still stay at our Vinh Son orphanages (I live at VS-2). We are very lucky to be cared well by the Sisters who always remind us to wake up the threat of the Corona virus and the sense of our common responsibility in our orphanages. The Sisters also remind us not to go to the crowd but we can get out of our orphanage when we have something in needs. We have to wear a mask and always wash our hands with antiseptic dry gel or with clean water and special soap. While talking with someone, we have to keep the minimum distance of 2 meters and it is impossible for us to shake hands with someone. The most important thing is staying home as much as possible.

During our long vacation because of Corona virus, the Sisters organized for us to review our lessons and to do exercises of the main subjects like English, math, and literature in our extra classes at the orphanage.

Because we are mature, we tried to help the younger kids of the primary school as their tutors. From early morning, we tried to get up a bit early to do morning exercises and then we are divided into the small groups to clean and tidy the rooms, to sweep the yard, to cook or to work in the vegetable garden.

There are many questions in our mind and our spirit which make us wonder when this Corona virus pandemic will stop and how about the medicines and vaccine for the treatment and the prevention of the disease. The fear and the agony is always in our head now. But, we are hopeful we can roll back the disease with our solidarity and love for each other. Most important for us is to pray God to stop quickly the epidemic.

We thank all the Board members and donors of FVSO for your love and your help, your support during the past time until now. We pray God grant a lot of grace for you.





## No smiles in the old Wooden Church

Before attending Mass, we must wash our hands and wear a mask. The children from 1 to until 15 years old are not allowed to attend Mass. Especially old people too, they must stay at home.

### March 29:

We just received information from our Diocese. We will not have Sunday Mass and Daily Mass. Easter will be not celebrated outside like every other year. The priest will say Mass privately, & live stream the Mass on Facebook or you-tube. Everyone can participate, but how can the family who do not use smart phone? They must pray together at home. I would not believe this could happen in Kontum. **So sad!**

## FVSO Scholarship Students tell their Coronavirus Stories

### Y Uen Vinh Son 6

We are not currently attending school because of the Covid-19 pandemic. So I'm still in Vinh Son 6 to teach and look after the children there. We keep the minimum out and most of us won't leave Vinh Son. My study, which should have been 3 more subjects after the internship is over, will end the course and receive a diploma. But with the current situation, we will probably graduate later than expected. The school plans to hold an online lesson in the remaining subjects to keep up the graduation process, but our class does not agree with this because the online learning ability will be limited and there are questions, hard to understand.

### Y Rem Vinh Son 6

I also help with the kitchen, because the season is difficult to travel, so in addition to making banana bread, we also make extra cakes and dried bananas to earn more income. Every day I read the news about the epidemic. The number of infected and dying people is too much, now increasing in big countries like Italy and America. I love them so much, so I can only pray to God, I offer prayers for all my family, for all my benefactors, I pray that God will keep everyone in the world alive.

### Y Chan. Vinh Son 2

I spend the whole day working at the diner, and I spend some time reviewing my knowledge or homework assigned by my teachers. If I miss school long, I will forget all my knowledge! I really want to go back to school because my teachers are teaching online but it is not as effective as listening directly to teachers in the classroom. I'm really sad about that.

### A Tuan Vinh Son 4

So now, I'm in Vinh Son 4. During the break time, I was assigned to take charge of 20 high school students at Vinh Son 4. I feel very happy. I organize teaching for them about my specialization in Psychology. Organize for life skills. And when I have free time, I help in the kitchen with the children.

### Y Luin Vinh Son 1

In Kon Tum, from today, cafes and restaurants will have to close to prevent the disease, they can only sell takeout similar to where they are. The current situation is quite difficult, but in Kon Tum it is better than in big cities in the country like Ho Chi Minh City.



Practice washing their hands

Smiles like this one will return as soon as life as usual returns to Vietnam, Kontum, and the Vinh Son orphanages. Top on the list will be the Dental Program that had to be postponed. Just look at those healthy teeth!!



**amazon**smile

You shop. Amazon gives.

## 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**  
**\$657,065**



### 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

Pat Leary  
Nga Wynne  
Ken Tokutomi  
Gene Mapa  
Bart Ruud  
Clyde Lewandowski  
Michael Little  
Pat McKee  
Dave Chaix  
Hank Gonzales

President  
Secretary  
Treasurer  
Asst. Treasurer  
Senior VP  
1<sup>st</sup> VP  
2<sup>nd</sup> VP  
3<sup>rd</sup> VP  
Board Member  
Board Member

### 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.