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BACK TO VIETNAM 2013

For 20 years, every time I flew back to VietNam, I usually landed at Noi Bai Airport around 11pm, but this year I landed at “Ha Noi, 36 district” in the morning. Friendly smiles welcomed me from Đức Mẹ Hiệp Nhất Nuns and warmed my heart, plus beautiful sunshine and good weather. I was told it was very cold before the Lunar New Year. Maybe God wanted to go easy on the poor and those with kind hearts....

When the S.A.R.A. goes to rural areas to examine and treat the poor, they discover that there aren't houses big enough for hundreds of patients, so we had to make do with spaces big enough for the Nuns to check blood pressures, a few tables for doctors to do the examinations, and improvise on a drug distribution table. All of the patients had to wait outside in the cold or the under the hot sun for their turn to be examined. S.A.R.A. was moved by the majority of the poor who weren't able to afford to go to see doctors for treatments, nor go to the hospital. They had to count the days until they passed away.



More than 1,000 patients from the villages got free examinations, treatments, and medications. It costs from 2 to 3 dollars per person, and about 4 dollars per person when the Nuns distributed both Western Medicines and Oriental Medicines. The Nuns said Oriental Medicines are more expensive and have fewer side effects than Western Medicines. To treat something like tuberculosis,



Western Medicines might cure it, but there might be side effects to the Gastric system or the Liver after the treatments. If it only costs 4 to 5 dollars for each patient to get well, then that small gift will be their biggest joy for the unfortunate.

The dream of helping the unfortunate was started on New Year's Day. The 5th day of the New Year, S.A.R.A. began to visit Nhà Lộng Catholic communities. What compassion I felt when I saw the elders using their walking sticks to find their steps in the drizzling rain. Once we finished the examinations at Nhà Lộng, we hurried to get back before darkness fell, so we would have enough time to get ready to go in the morning. Our next destination was the rural province Thái Nguyên, where villagers grow tea leaves along the roads leading to the village. It was very dangerous climbing up and down the hills, along with slippery dirt roads. Everyone held their breath during the harrowing trip. But I closed my eyes and prayed that God would protect the whole crew, because if the car slipped off the road even a little bit, we might overturn down the hills. When we got to our destination, our driver was soaking wet due to sweat. He worried about how we would get back in the evening, and the Nuns were wondering: "How would the sick walk on those roads? And if they'd fall along the way?" What can we do in that situation? Let's just have faith in our God!

It was raining and very wet, but a lot of patients came, because it was a rare chance to get examined and get treatments for free. Nobody wanted to miss this opportunity, even though the weather was bad. When they left after their treatments, everyone was happy, because they not only received the right medications for their illness, but above all, it was because all of their questions about their health were listened and answered with care, and they also received sincere encouragement that they don't always get.

A lot of people confided in us: "If we go to the hospital, we might likely die.". I asked them: "Why didn't you get treatment earlier instead of waiting for it to get this bad? And if you know it's untreatable by then, why bother to go to the hospital at the last minute? They answered: "We know all that, but what could we do when we've got no money?" What a pain I felt seeing those skinny patients with a distant looks in their eyes!

Parting with those honest farmers, we went on to another, poorer rural area. The only road leading to the village was windy and slippery, like a snake. There were times that we thought the driver would have taken us straight into the lake, because the turns were very sharp, and the lakes were on both sides of the very narrow road. The car couldn't get to the examination station, so we had to walk for a little bit. It was a short distance, but the trip still caused great stress because of its slippery road. The 80 to 90 year old elders also walk to the station like us, we really admired this...

Today felt like a festival. Everyone was examined. It was funny when a child asked: "Do you doctors have medicines to treat my lisp?" Maybe that child thought we were the fairies, because never before had anyone come for those "little angels." With bags filled with medicine in hands, their eyes filled with tears, they thanked us. We gave them warm hugs, holding their hands tightly, telling them that we were only the volunteers from S.A.R.A, bringing help and spreading love to the needy. May your prayers bring us more opportunities to help the poor.

Four days of examining, treating, and handing out gifts to the poor patients ended. This trip left us with remarkable impressions. Our organization gave free treatments to about 200 patients at "Sara Đạo Ngạn" Station, 573 patients at Dòng Mân Côi Bùi Chu from the Nuns, 200 patients at Dòng Khánh Station. And at Huế, the monastery had all the Nuns helping us out.



It was so touching during the examinations. All of the Nuns took each of the patients to their seats and gave them their medications. It was well organized, and there were many Nuns to help out, so everything went smoothly.

Because the cost of living was higher in the city, everyone that came to be examined received \$100,000 worth of rice in red envelopes. This year, beside the Nuns, the Doctor crews from SARA and I, Ms. Phuong and Ms. Xuyên also came to VN with their

hearts filled with love to help from the beginning. We visited 16 destinations in 9 days, and gave examinations and medications to about 2000 patients. Expenses reached an unaccounted number of dollars.

In all, about a hundred of Nuns wholeheartedly helped out S.A.R.A. bring the donors contributions from oversea to the needy. S.A.R.A., the Non-Profit Organization, and the Nuns and all the donors needed each other in this act of humaneness. We need your generosity in this effort.

Next, we visited the leprosy barracks. Because we didn't have enough time to visit each barrack we skipped 6 barracks, but we did send gifts nevertheless. But for the Lai Châu and Son La Barracks, we promised that next year we would personally come and bring gifts to make up for not visiting them this year. Many barracks were happy, because they got more attentive care from the Nuns every day, so their living conditions became better. They voiced their appreciation to S.A.R.A. for the clothes, the blankets, the food,

the money from the donors that they have received thru S.A.R.A. for the last 20 years. The love from the donors to their home country relieved tremendous pains that they have been suffering.

This year, what moved me the most was Ms. Phụng's heart. When she saw a leprosy patient's pain, she forgot herself and held them in her arms hoping to give a little warm to their hearts and ease their self-pity. Were you surprised of why Ms. Phụng and I dared to do that? It's just that those who have loving hearts would have the same heartbeats.

On February 2nd, 2013, after giving out gifts at Chi Linh Barrack to Quả Cảm Barracks, Ms. Phụng and I came to the intensive care area, so Ms. Phụng could give a little extra money to console and cheer them up. We came to this couples' room, and after seeing Mr. Tran sitting on his bed moping, Ms.



Phuong and Nun An asked him how he was doing. He said when he was better. He used to take the Nuns and the volunteers to visit the disable elders, now he became one himself. He covered his face with his hands and sobbed, and became louder when everyone tried to console him. Maybe that was because of his suppressed pain and a shattering soul? I didn't know what to say to ease his pain, so I cried with him. Hearing my cries, he eventually stopped crying. The pain lessened when it was shared. We then visited another disabled elder. He also had the same desperation cry. What could compare to the suffering of leprosy? What was worse than the sobbing sound of the heart of the misery?

After leaving each rural area, we kept hoping their pains were lessened, that flames of love were kindled and will keep burning. And hoping S.A.R.A. will have many more trips like this one in the future to spread happiness among the unfortunate.

On behalf of the patients, the leprosy, and the disabled who receive your love and your help I would like to thank you very sincerely, wishing you a new year filled with good health and happiness.

KIM DUNG, President of S.A.R.A

Expense Report For Vietnam Trip 2013

This is the detail report for all the expenses from the Vietnam trip at Tết Quý Ty

Total expense was \$72,125.

\$30,000 on materials for 3,540 presents.

\$21,340 on rice (rice bought or gave cash to the receivers to buy rice themselves)

\$6,370 on medicines for 1,824 examined patients

\$15,000 on oriental medicines making machines to the Nuns, **Dòng Đức Mẹ Hiệp Nhất**

\$2000 on medicines for Phòng Khám Đa Khoa Đạo Ngạn

\$3,415 on transportation fares, food and prayer masses for the donors

Date	Name of Village	No. of Handicaps + Leprosy	No. of presents	\$ in Rice bought	No of patients examined	Comment
2/14/13	Nhà lộng Phú Bình Phú Bình Leprosy Barrack	60 100	60 100	300 500	165	\$3250 on medicines for 4 days of examined
2/15/13	Yên Thủy Thái Nguyên Tân Bình Thái Nguyên	30 30	30 30	150 150	120 150	
2/16/13	Thái Nguyên Nam Sơn Thái Nguyên	30 30	30 30	150 150	150 120	
2/17/13	Đại Từ Thái Nguyên Yên Lãng	41 30	41 30	220 150	120 100	
2/18/13	Chí Linh + Quảng Yên Leprosy Barrack Quả Cầm Leprosy Barrack	151 102	151 102	780 520		
2/19/13	Ba Sao Leprosy Barrack Xuân Mai Leprosy Barrack	87 88	87 88	450 460		
20/20/13	Hương La Handicap House	31	31	160		
2/21/13	Thánh An Orphanage Trung Linh + Phú An Bùi Chu BX Mãn Côi Trung Linh	50	50	250	274	\$1250 on medicines
2/22/13	Định Hải + Hà Cát Bùi Chu	40	40	200	243	\$830 on medicines
2/23/13	Thanh Hóa Cầm Thủy Leprosy Barrack	510 39	510 39	2600 200		
2/24/13	Quỳnh Lập N.An Leprosy Barrack	231	231	1200		
2/25/13	Nghệ An, Hà Tĩnh	600	600	3000		
2/26/13	Thánh gia Orphanage Handicaps, Nuns MTG Hương Phương Q.B Handicaps, Orphanage	30 40 90		200 200 200		
2/27/13	Huế PK Đa Khoa			1000	200	\$500 on medicines
2/28/13	Handicaps và 3 villages by Hồng River	500	500	2500		
3/1/13	2 Leprosy Barrack và 8 Leprosy Village 4 Kounum Orphanages	400 300	400 100	2100 800		
3/2/13	BV Tình Thương + Orphanage, kinh 7	200	100	500		
3/3/13	Mỹ Lâm Hòn đất Kiên Giang Handicaps	100	50	250		
	Sóc Sơn Đồng Lệnh Sơn La Leprosy Barrack at Temple and Handicaps did not have time to come, left w the Nuns to help distributing		550	2000		
	2 days at Sara Đạo Ngạn hospital,				182	\$540 on medicines
	Medicines for SARA Dao Ngạn 2013					\$2000 on medicines
	Oriental medicines making machines to the Nuns, Đ Mẹ, Hiệp Nhất					\$15000
	Present bought: warm clothes, blankets, sugar, laundry detergents, MSg, etc... for 4,000 presents.					\$30000
	Prayer Masses for Donors					\$300
	Transportation fares					\$2515
	Food					\$600
	Tổng Cộng:	4,000	3540	\$21340	1824	\$56785

THANK YOU LETTER

Ngo Van Vien DaMinh Priest
Dinh Hai Church, Bui Chu Church Community
Phone: 0917 395 752
Email: vanvien01@yahoo.com

To SARA Non-Profit Organization, USA,

I, Ngo Van Vien, DaMinh Priest, DINH HAI Chief Church, together with Priest Giuse Tran Van Thang, HA CAT Chief Church, in Bui Chu Church Community-VIETNAM, writing this letter to express our gratitude to your Organization and the Donors.

Today, February 22nd, 2013, the members from your Organization together with the Nuns from Dong Man Coi Trung Linh, Bui Chu, came to visit and examine our people. 243 people got examined and medicine. Beside that, your Organization gave out 40 presents to the elders and the ones in needs. This action showed us your humanity.

Ladies and Gentlemen our 2 Churches are located in rural areas, with only more than 4000 worshipers. Our living conditions were very poor A large number of the sick were not in any conditions to go to the hospital for treatments. Therefore, the fact that your Organization came giving us examinations touched our hearts. We sincerely thank you.

We appreciate and will remember your act of kindness. We will keep you in our prayers. May God bless your Organization and all the Donors.

Dinh Hai, February 22nd, 2013

Church Priest

DaMinh Ngo Van Vien