



The Mission Vietnam



Montfort Missionaries





The mission - Vietnam

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NGŨI KHEN CHÚA GIÊSU KITÔ - VUA TÌNH YÊU

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Final report of the first visit to Vietnam.
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The mission - Vietnam



The exploratory mission to Vietnam started on September 3, 2018. Arriving in Ho Chi Minh City to a warm welcome by the seminarians of scalabrinian congregation who accompanied us to their house.



In the afternoon the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the Vietnamese martyrs presided by Cardinal Aviz. The program was divided into two, first an hour talk on consecrated life followed by question answer session, which followed the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Second part of the program was dinner and cultural program with traditional dances.

Cardinal Aviz in his talk highlighted the importance of Consecrated life in the Church. Speaking on the present reality he said, the religious congregations have lost taste for mission since they have got taste of the money. According to the director of the Vatican bank, most of the money in the vatican bank belongs to the religious orders. He reminded the gathering the words of Jesus that we cannot worship both God and money.

Religious Congregations bring with them the charism of their founders, which is the light given by God to them. Bishops should not block them from coming and spreading their charisms in their dioceses.

Church in Vietnam is blessed with the vocations, he reminded the church in Vietnam not to be selfish but be generous to share the riches with the universal church by preparing the missionaries and sending them to other parts of the world where there are no vocations.

Tuesday September 4, 2018

Meeting with Father Vincent Dinh, CS:

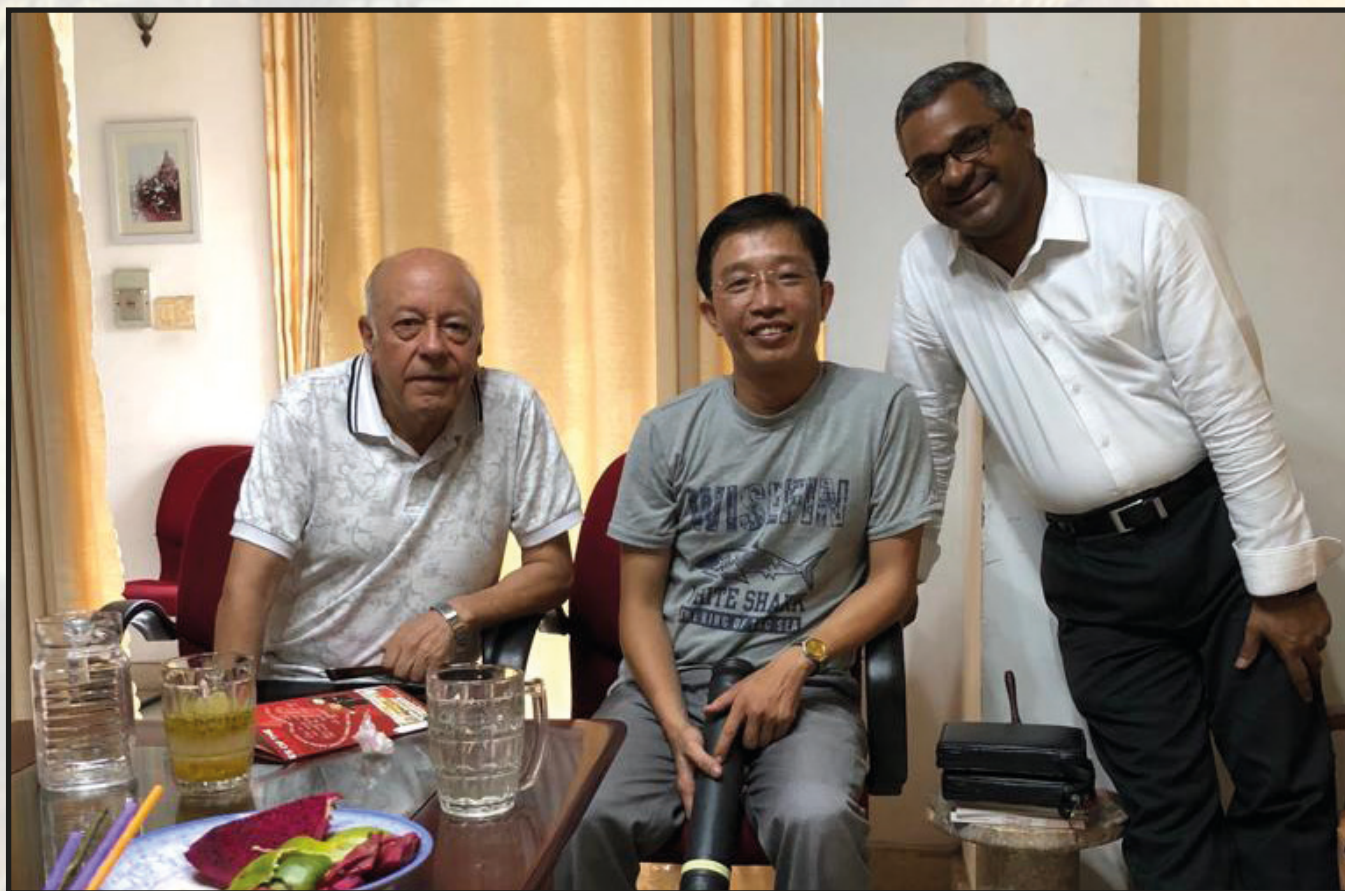
speaking about the difficulties dealing with the government, even though there are restrictions it depends upon each individual congregations and superiors how they deal with the local government officials. E.g. there is a rule not to accommodate the foreigners in their houses, but since he knows the local police and local authorities they are bit lenient on him and do not question him when he invites guest's specially foreign religious who come and stay in their house.

Scalabrinian foundation in Vietnam.

Fr. Vincent was a priest belonging to the Focolare movement working in the diocese in the north of the country, he showed interest to help the Scalabrinian missionaries to establish their presence in Vietnam and later had the interest and felt that he had the vocation to religious life, he did his novitiate and final vows and became a religious. He is in charge of their seminary, a well established formation house, even though he has not received the permission from the government for the house which is already built, he says we need to wait patiently. They have 30 minor seminarians, who do philosophy with the Redemptorist fathers, about 13 KM from the house. The students use the motorbikes to go to the school every day.

He is fully supportive of our intention to start the formation and later think about spreading our spirituality with the help of the local priests.

They send their students to do novitiate and theology to different countries where they are present, especially Philippines, USA, Colombia.



Wednesday September 5, 2018

Visit to Sr. Elmie FDZ (Coordinator of the English speaking Congregations)

Her advice: The diocese is happy to welcome us but does not take any responsibility if something happens to us, we are on our own.

The Bishops are not too pleased with the religious congregations who come only to get vocations but do not contribute anything in return to the local church.

Young men who join the seminaries are very genuine; in some cases there are 90% success rate, but need to discern well. Visit the family, now the motivation, background, always good to contact the parish priests.

Visa: It is possible to get long term visa, provided we enroll as students in the university or have some kind of professional training, degrees, we can get even part time job or even do volunteer work.

As a student/professional we can rent a house, but possible as a tourist. Advisable to stay in a hotel. We can only stay with the Congregations which are registered under government. We are taking a risk by staying with the Scalabrinians as they are not yet registered but they have applied for the registration and waiting for the reply from the government.

It is possible to meet the bishops if we go through the proper channel, Bishops don't want to see the religious, as there are too many of them, and they do not have anything to offer them.

We might need to get a letter of recognition so that when we visit the parishes the parish priest can be certain that the diocesan authorities are aware of our presence in the archdiocese, it is also good to have this letter as it will be useful later if we are starting a house to present it to the government.

Sister shared her story of adopting some of the members of religious orders as she is legally recognized by the government as she is the resident and holds a work permit. It will be easier for a Filipino to get a long-term visa provided he submits relevant documents. One of the ways could be to do a course in teaching English in other countries, this course could be done in Philippines, duration could be for a month or less.

Sr. Emilie also shared the experiences of others who were in Vietnam and had gotten into trouble and had to leave the country, so advised us not to get involved in suspicious activities nor create a situation of doubt or suspicion. To watch out where we go and what we do because there are always people who observe us and follow as well as spy on us.

There are possibilities for ministry in the country side provided we meet the bishops and explore different possibilities.

Most of the congregations send their students to Philippines for formation study, since there is no restriction to enter Philippines and easier to get a student visa from the universities.

There is a general feeling of togetherness among different religious congregations and readiness to help each other.

Story of Camillian priest: who are looking after the HIV patients'... priests and students are involved in caring for the patients.... Do what we are doing and put us in the jail... they are recognized by the government... land registered in the name of the one priests (vietnamian)

Thursday September 6, 2018

Visit to the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart.



They started their congregation with the help of a Vietnamese priest who was an Australian citizen. His family moved to Australia when he was young and he joined the MSC's in Australia and after his ordination he was asked to go back to his own country of origin to start the foundation. Since he knew the language and the culture well he was able to start the foundation without much difficulty.

They have a dormitory for the students, the students who study in Ho Chi Minh city (about 15) stay with them paying minimum hostel fees, most of them join their order after finishing their studies, this is one of the means of their vocation promotion.

They also collaborate with MSC sisters who work in the hospitals and social service centers. The sisters also help the priests find vocations.



Their houses are registered in the name of their own priests.

He suggests that we do not take vocations from the north, because they cannot be trusted, some times they work as spy's for the government.

Having good relationship with other congregations and the parish priests is very vital, they can help us find vocations as well as support us if we are in trouble.

The parishes are registered under the government, it is vital that we keep good relationship with the parish priest, because if the police have doubts about our operation they first ask the parish priest, if he admits that he knows about us the police do not disturb us.

Their formation house is a rented, they pay around \$250 a month, which is very meager for a big house.

They send their students to Philippines for novitiate; rest of the formation is done in Vietnam. They already have 4 groups of lay associates who help them in the vocation promotion, they also support them with materials things.

Publicity is done through the distribution of brochures in the parishes, they also have a face book page, but they say we have to be cautious with the web sites as the government monitors the websites to follow our activities, they can easily trap us.



Friday 7, September 2018

visit to the Comboni missionaries (Fr. Rocco Bettoli)

They are new in Vietnam; they have 5 candidates in Philippines doing their novitiate and 4 postulants in Vietnam. They are not looking at number but quality of the candidates; they do not take those who are above 25.

Candidates prefer to work in Vietnam, if they come to know that we are preparing them to go on mission to other countries they don't join.

The families see the security of their children, so for them congregation having a permanent house in Vietnam, congregation having Vietnamese priests is important to send their children.

Marian Congregations have more advantage than the other congregation because of the Marian spirituality is spread throughout the country. If we make the brochure for vocation promotion it is advisable to stress on the Marian aspect of our Congregation.

We need to be realistic, not to be in a hurry, but go slow, study the situation and talk to as many new Congregations as possible to get their side of the experience.

If we are buying a house, look for a house in the catholic area, because if we are not good with the neighbors for silly reasons they can complain to the authorities and we will be in trouble.

Their house is registered under two salesian priests, salesian Congregation is well known in the country because of their ministry among the young and education institutions. Even if the house belongs to them they tell others that they are renting the house from the Salesians.

They are three priests in Vietnam (Fr. Rocco- Italian, Fr. Moses – Philippine and brother from Peru)

They got two years visa from a travel agent who is catholic, by paying \$1000 they are in the country as part time working for the travel agent as managers and sales manager. They also tell the students to tell that they are learning English by staying in the house as boarders.

They are not getting too many vocations because they have to stress the missionary dimension of thier Congregation. They say it is difficult but worth taking the risk because of the availability of vocations and young people when they join they have genuine desire to become priests,



their first preference is always to be a diocesan, when they are not accepted they look for religious Congregation, which are well known and new congregations are the last ones to be sought after.

The new administrator of the archdiocese is not too keen on welcoming new Congregations because there are too many Congregations coming to the country and they don't know what to do with them. In some cases there 5-10 priests in one house just saying mass and doing nothing, since there is no scope of ministry in the parishes. If there are Vietnamese priests they are allowed to say mass in the parishes, it also depends upon the relationship with the parish priest. There is association of religious who call themselves as teachers group (this name is given not to be identified with the authorities) they meet once a month in different places to pray, have mass and also to share their experiences, difficulties, they are a support group and can help in establishing in Vietnam.

Learning language is a must. Send some one at least for two years so that they can at least speak to the locals, which is very important to discern the vocations.

Another way of getting a visa is to do TESOL in Philippines so that we can teach English to Vietnamese with this certificate.

When we apply for visa they check our credentials and degrees, which is very important to obtain the visa. There are others means, which are not very safe and cost lot of money.



September 09, 2018

Meeting with Sr. Virgie (President of the religious leaders group)

Entering Vietnam: there are two ways in which we can enter Vietnam

1. Study visa, enroll as student in the university, either to study language and culture or other studies.
2. Business visa: there are agencies which provide invitation letters to work in their firm, like travel agents (there is a Philippina who is helping the missionaries to obtain this kind of visa) which is very expensive, \$1000 for two years.

Renting a house: we can only rent a house, which is registered for foreigners. When it is registered for foreigners, foreigners can stay with the locals, if not they are not allowed to stay. The registration has to be done by the owner of the house and we only rent it. The rent can go from \$250 to \$ 500 a month depends upon the area. There are also some Catholic families who help the missionaries with the house, we need to ask around specially the parish priests for such families, they live outside the country and can rent the house for missionaries either for short time or long time depending upon the families.

If we want to buy a house it has to be registered in the name of the citizen, foreigners or the Congregation cannot register the house or vehicle in their own name. The house has to be registered with the local authorities, district authorities, and provincial authorities and finally with the national authorities, then only a congregation can function with full permission from the government. There is a procedure to register a Congregation, all the details are asked, the government can even ask the congregation to change the superior of the community if they do not like him. Not complying with the government rules can lead to deportation of the person. For a Congregation to be registered in the diocese we have to have at least two finally professed members.

Vocation promotion: To be in Vietnam especially as formator, one has to know the language and culture of the people, if not it will be very hard and we can make lot of mistakes.

- It is advisable to take the candidates between 18-25 years of age, it is not advisable to take older candidates as it will be very difficult for the to learn.
- We have to know the person who recommends the candidates to join our congregation
- We need to be careful when we take the candidates who are sent out of other congregations or dioceses, always ask the opinion of the formator and the reason why the candidate was sent out.
- It is better to go through the parish priests, because the families always listen to the parish priests advice when it comes to joining the religious orders.
- Distribute the brochures in the parishes and ask the parish priests for help they are happy and ready to help.
- The candidates and the families of the candidates have to be told what they have to say in case the police come to question, especially those who are working underground.
- There are congregations who tell us not to take the candidates from the north of the country because of their experiences of being cheated, but we have to be open and careful about it.
- It is advisable to keep the candidates at least for two years in Vietnam before sending them any where for formation, this time will help us to study their motivation and also get to know the family and their back ground. Usually the vocations are genuine but there are always exceptions.



The activities of the missionary group: they meet every month, they have mass together, and after the mass they share their experience. It is time to learn from each other, sometimes we can learn from the mistakes of others. There are Congregations who have made mistakes and as a result some members have been expelled from the country, this has affected other Congregations as well. Therefore it is very vital that we hear from others and learn and be careful in our dealings.

There is a registration fee of around \$150 a year, this money is used to run the groups activity, like renting the venue, paying remuneration for those who are invited to give talks on special subjects etc. each Congregation brings food and shares with others at the end of the gathering. The gathering is usually on the third Sunday of the Month, each month they rotate the venue.

September 10, 2018

Visit to the community of Rogationists:

The visit which was supposed to be on Saturday 8 September was cancelled fearing that there will be people watching us foreigners entering their premises. The Rogationists have been under the radar of the government since few years, one of their priests was deported for not complying with the government rules and regulations. Since then they have been very careful not to give a chance for the government to accuse them or deport them.

They have communities in other diocese as well. At the moment they have 4 deacons who will be ordained in the month of October in the Philippines, they are the first Vietnamese priests to be ordained for their Congregation. They also have students who have finished their college studies who stay with them in the house for a year to discern their vocation, while they are with them they learn English and prepare for the entrance exam for the philosophical studies.

They take students after they complete their college studies because in case they leave the Congregation they can at least find some job, if not it will be hard for them to find job, as the government does not recognize the religious studies.

They have not been registered as the Congregation under the government system, they have applied and are waiting for the response.

They suggest that those who come to Vietnam must be able to learn the local language and have a lot of patience, at the same time capable of taking risk. We have to be prudent in our dealings; we have to be careful with what we say and to whom we say it.

They shared with us the many cases where the religious were not allowed re-entry, which means we are constantly watched.

If there are complaints about a particular religious, the government appoints spy's to gather information, and later they could end up in trouble or being deported or not allowed re-entry into the country.

There are still lots of vocations, the first preference is always to join the diocese, many dioceses take a limited number of candidates, they are asked to wait for the following years, those who do not like to wait join the religious congregations. We have to be prudent in assessing the candidates, should know the people who propose the candidates.

It is good to tell the bishops that we are taking vocations not only to send them out but also to contribute to the growth of the diocese and the local church. We should also be ready to contribute whatever we can in the diocese, specially teaching English, which is a great need at the moment, to do that we need to have some kind of teaching degree (TESOL).

The support group (Religious leaders group). This group was started by the Rogationists as a support group to help one another. There are Congregations which have one member, who does not know what to do in times of difficulty and problem, therefore this group meets once every month in different locations to share their life experiences, update information as well as to pray and be together at least for few hours, which is described by many leaders as the best option in the given situation.

The new Congregations which come to Vietnam are helped by this group, in many ways, e.g. to find houses, for vocation promotion, for registration etc.

The beginning of Rogationists was very humble, two priests came to Vietnam, one was teaching at the Salesian school at the same time recruiting vocations, later they started boarding/dormitories for the boys who study at the Salesian school, many of their vocations came from these dormitories.

At the moment they are renting one room of the building belonging to the Archdiocese of Hanoi. The building is used by the archdiocese to house the candidates of the archdiocese

who study philosophy and Theology in Saigon. There are other dioceses who have houses in Saigon, usually used by the priests and bishops while transiting in Saigon.

It is easier to get houses for rent the rates depend upon the location and the size of the house, if we are lucky some catholic families who live overseas give the house for free on condition that we maintain it well.

Importance of formation:

Advisable to keep the candidates in Vietnam at least for 2-3 years before sending them out of the country for formation, to know their motivation as well as their interest. Sending them out of the country for formation is good in many ways as they can broaden their mindset. They always want to remain in Vietnam, because of the communist mentality to protect themselves and their country.

There is a tendency to lie, it has come from their childhood and upbringing, parents in order to protect the children lie to the authority, the children also get use to lying, not intentionally but it has come as a tradition. There is lot to pay attention to during the formation time.

The status of a priest is very high in the society, he is not looked as a servant but as a boss, they expect respect from others, expect others to do things for them, these ideals have to be changed during the formation years.



10 September 2018

Visit to the Passionists



Father Thomas an Indian Passionist who came to Vietnam as a brother 13 years ago explained to us how the Passionists came to Vietnam. It was a friend of an Australian Passionist priest who was the general councilor at that time, who introduced Vietnam to the Passionists. Beginning was very humble they stayed in a hotel for three months, than rented an apartment along with another employee from India. Later they were three priests, therefore rented a house along with two initial students whom they met in a gathering with the Salesians.

They have 6 Vietnamese priests and more than 18 candidates in different levels of formation. They have their formation in Vietnam except for novitiate, which is in Australia.

The mission in Vietnam belongs to the Australian province along with PNG, Indonesia, and New Zealand.

They are building a million dolar three-storied building, which will be opened next month for the students. At the moment they are renting 3 house and they have one house of their own. They have been registered as a Congregation in Vietnam.

They suggest that if we are planning to come to Vietnam, we have to come as soon as possible while there are still vocations, because the vocations are slowly on the decline.

He suggests that there be at least three people, who are capable of studying language and adjusting to situations which is not normal, people who are capable of living community life, if not life can be very challenging.

There are many options to rent a house or even to buy a house, but it has to be registered under a local persons name.

We have to be ready to invest money here, as there cannot be local income, formation can be very expensive, for international Congregations it will be a blessing to send missionaries to countries where we do not have vocations.

The positive elements of Religious leaders group (English teachers group) is that they help us in time of need and difficulties, better to be in close collaboration with the group.

They do the vocation promotion by networking, between the religious Congregations as well as the parish priests. They have brochures and other materials to spread the news about their Congregation and many people approach them. They also use Facebook and web site for vocation promotion. But we have to be cautious about what we post on the website as it is monitored.

The ministry in Vietnam can only be done by the local priests as foreigners are not given opportunities, first of all for fear of what they would do, secondly because of the language and proper knowledge of the cultures. There were foreign priests who were capable of learning the language very well, so it is not an impossible task.

Proper policies with regards to the vocation promotion and other relevant documents have to be slowly developed, at them moment each congregation is doing the best they can to do whatever possible. As and when issues arise we need to look into addressing them accordingly. There are problems in the dioceses as well as in the religious communities; they have not surfaced yet, so we need to be watchful. Send missionaries with proper training and experience.

Some congregation did not pay much attention to formation in the beginning, they took large number of candidates and did not monitor them properly as a result they have problems now. As much as possible, pay proper attention to how we form the candidates.

Sending the candidates out of the country for formation could be very good to change their mindset, especially to create a sense of internationality. If not there is a danger that they will be caught in the web of communist's mentality.

September 12, 2018

Meeting with Fr. Thomas SJ (Vicar General for Religious of the Archdiocese of Saigon).

Father was very happy to welcome us to the archdiocese and to the country. He said we should establish our presence, as the people are very much devoted to Mary, we can help them to strengthen their faith and love for Mary.

Being a Marian Congregation people will certainly show interest, there are already few women Congregation named as Sisters of Holy Rosary where young girls show interest to join. If we present ourselves well as a Marian Congregation, certainly there will be lot of vocations.

To be recognized as the apostolic community in the archdiocese we should have at least three members present in the archdiocese, than only we will be considered as part of the archdiocese. For the government to recognize us we should have at least 2-3 Vietnamese members, than the archdiocese could insert us in their directory as a recognized congregation. Then only we can ordain the candidates in Vietnam, if not the government will not give permission to ordain them in Vietnam. Many are ordaining their candidates in other countries and with much difficulty they are given permission to have their thanks giving mass in their parishes.

We should start our presence in Ho Chi Minh city, as other places are not welcoming the religious as Ho Chi Minh would do, many Congregations have tried going to other places but have failed and come back to Ho Chi Minh.

Even though we are bit free in the city, we have to be very careful in what we do and what we say, the government is always watchful of the church personnel.



There are lots of options for the formation of candidates, especially for Philosophy and Theology. There are 4 different congregations who have colleges both for philosophy and Theology; they are Jesuits, Salesians, Dominicans, and Divine word missionaries. Since we are Missionary and international Congregation it is good to have Novitiate out side the country either in Philippines or Indonesia.

The government has no problem as such with the church, they welcomed Cardinal Avez with great enthusiasm, and his talks to the government officials were broadcasted on the public TV. They want to invite Pope Francis but it is china, which is controlling them.

There are still lots of vocations in the country; faith of the people is deep rooted. Vocations are found in the city as the students come here to study and that's where we have to inspire them. We can also go through the parish priests, for which Father Thomas is ready to support by informing the parish priests about our intentions.

About the letter of a deacon showing interest to join the Montfort Missionaries: First of all the letter is genuine and Fr. Thomas is aware of the letter and actually he has been given the responsibility to look after them.



The late archbishop started the congregation in secret, his idea was to train the priests as missionaries and send them to places where they are in need of priests. He would send them to study and at the end of their studies if they want to get incardinated to the diocese they would be encouraged to do so. Later Archbishop wanted to concentrate on the congregation and develop it after his retirement, he would become the superior general.

The Congregation is not officially approved by the Holy See, they were in a process of doing it. They have a constitution and other documents.

No one in the archdiocese is aware of this as it is kept secret partly because of the government regulation.

There are 6 priests who are already ordained, they are incardinated in the archdiocese and at present there are 5 deacons who were ordained by the late archbishop before he left for Rome for the Ad Limina visit where he died.

Fr. Thomas himself does not know much about the candidates, where they studied, who are their formators, where they come from etc. He says the first thing would be to know them personally before we make any decision. He offered to take us to their house, where they live together, at the moment learning French and English in view of looking for a place to send them.

Late Archbishop has already secured some land and a house for the purpose of formation, they all stay together.

There is also one of the deacons who has a house and he is willing to give to the Congregation.

To obtain the documents, it is better to come with the tourist visa for three months and then renew it from here, there are many people like travel agents who can help us to do it.

September 14, 2018

Meeting with the deacons (St. Theresa of Child Jesus) along with Fr. Thomas.

We had an opportunity to meet the 6 deacons and two priests of the Congregation supposedly started by the late Bishop of Saigon. They took us to their houses, in particular two houses of formation where the deacons and priests stay as well as a property around 4 acres vacant land with fish pond, cattle field and fruit trees. They have also some shops rented out, the income used for the upkeep of the community. They also have a house close to the airport at the moment vacant.

The desire of the community is to join the Company of Mary. They are ready to surrender all the property to Montfort Missionaries if we accept to take them in to the Congregation.



After visiting the property we were invited to have dinner at a restaurant where we were served very delicious Vietnamese Noodles, a special preparation and a delicacy of the country. During the dinner was also present a priest of the same congregation who is in France at the moment studying in view of getting incardinated to the diocese. There are also other two priests who are in USA doing the same thing and the third one is preparing to go in November.



After the dinner we went to a coffee place (in Vietnam the custom of drinking coffee is very interesting, where there is a serious discussion it is always done with a cup of coffee) where we had talk with 6 deacons. The late archbishop ordained them in February, before going to Rome for the Ad Limina visit, unfortunately he died while in Rome. The deacons were supposed to be ordained to priesthood in May 2018 but this did not take place due to the untimely death of the Archbishop. At the moment they are under the care of Fr. Thomas SJ, who is also Vicar for Religious in Saigon Archdiocese.

We proposed a plan (which was discussed with Bp. Gilles) to go to Papua New Guinea as missionaries and serve the people of God. We explained a bit about the Mission in PNG, the way of life the challenges and difficulties. After the presentation we asked them if they were interested to be missionaries, everyone was so excited and some even emotional for the offer to be a missionary. They said they were prepared to be missionaries and ready to go to PNG even if they have no idea about the country and the church. They said they will entrust themselves to the care of the Lord and prepare for this task.

One of the challenges is their English, none of them can really speak English well, they are all at a very basic stage, but they are committed to learning English for the sake of the mission.

They were told that this is only a proposal, the Bishop will discuss the issue with Fr. Thomas who is responsible for them, and if things are favorable and agreeable for both parties, then an MOU can be prepared.

The proposal is:

1. They learn English
2. They go to PNG as missionaries
3. They work at least for a year or two as deacons in the parishes where there are Montfort Missionaries
4. Based upon their performance and missionary zeal the bishop will decide if he wants to ordain them to priesthood. They decide if they want to remain incardinated to the archdiocese of Saigon or be incardinated to the diocese of Daru-Kiunga.
5. After the ordination they will work in PNG mission for number of years agreed upon by the Bishop as well as the deacons.
6. After completion of their agreement, if they want to renew the agreement with the diocese they could do so and continue to work for the diocese or if they decide to join the Congregation of the Company of Mary, they make known their desire in writing to the superior General and Superior General with the consent of his council will take a decision and put in place a process (formation, novitiate and vows) for accepting them into the Congregation.

Documents relating to the candidates:

The documents relating to each deacon will be sent to Fr. Rozario Menezes who will then share it with the Bishop of the diocese of Daru- Kiunga.

They have also accepted to share with us the photos and the documents related to the properties that they have in Saigon.

They have been repeatedly told that these are initial discussions; they are not decisions as nothing has been discussed with the relevant authorities yet. We are gathering information so that we can share with the Congregational leaders and relevant Bishops.

Hence forward the communication will be between the Bishop of Daru- Kiunga or Superior General and Fr. Thomas who is responsible for the Congregation of St. Teresa of Child Jesus.

Fr. Thomas has accepted to write an official letter regarding the situation as well as a proposal of different options for Montfort Missionaries to consider as well as for the Congregation to discern.

The deacons are requested to put it in writing their desire to be missionaries in PNG, they will do so by sending an email to Fr. Rozario before September 25, 2018 so that he could present it to Bishop Gilles during the meeting in Kiunga in the first week of October 2018.

It is proposed that if Bishop Gilles decides to invite the deacons to his diocese, he could make a visit to Vietnam and meet the deacons personally and talk to Fr. Thomas about the proposal and make necessary arrangements as well as come up with agreements.

This Congregation (St. Teresa of Child Jesus) is not official recognized by the Church (local or Universal) it is a Congregation in the making. The idea of the late Archbishop was that when he retires from being an Archbishop he would start working on the documents and make it official. However they have already prepared a constitution and statutes for the “to be” Congregation.



SUGGESTIONS FOR DISCERNMENT

Those of us who went to the Vietnamese to see the possibilities of a Montfortian foundation - here are some observations and our proposal:

1. Despite having prepared the visit we have great surprises. A very positive one was the reception of the Scalabrinian Fathers. We did not have to go to any hotel and they did not receive any money for the lodging and full food. The reception of them gives us to understand the welcome of the Vietnamese people.
2. It was a blessing because we were with people from the country, because in this community trainers and students are all from Vietnam.
3. There are very big challenges: For the political system and for the language.
4. But also great possibilities: to live our strictly missionary vocation. There you cannot aspire to be parish priests.
5. Evangelizing by dedicating ourselves to the specifically Montfortian.
6. A difficult mission, it is true, but very hopeful, future vocations, would guarantee us the permanence in that country. We would be enriched with a new culture.
7. The difficult part of the mission is what guarantees success: What a Cross does not have a Cross- Also Fr. de Montfort tells us that "he does not risk anything for the Gospel, he will not do anything worthy of it.
8. History shows us that when the missionaries went out to evangelize, the Congregation had its best moments.
9. Difficult was the mission in India, and in other countries, but they have been a blessing for the SMM
10. It would be the closest entity to the Philippines, three hours by plane. They would support each other.

11. Although the culture is not known, Vietnamese religious, such as Salesian Jesuits, Dominican Vincentians and the Scandinavian themselves would help us a lot to make a good discernment. The political system makes religious among them more supportive.
12. All the new congregations that we visit have seminarians and many of them, if not all, already have deacons and priests.
13. If we go that, be as fast as possible, the situation is now favorable, as it was in their time in France, Germany. The Brothers of San Gabriel arrived in time in India and even in Thailand. When I went to Thailand in the year 90, they had 70 professed in a country with less than one percent of Christians of all denominations, with a very difficult language - several French and Spanish Brothers died in the attempt.

Our charism is one of God for the local Churches and for the world, the limits reach the infinite
For the commission of the visit,

Father José Luis Sandoval, SMM

Colombia



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Prayer

Our Lady of La Vang

Mother Mary, Our Lady, present us to Jesus, Our Saviour.

Mother Mary, lead all souls to Jesus, our Dear Lord who alone redeems and saves.

Dear Jesus, free us from the bondage of sin and govern us with Your Love.

Amen