Vietnam – Inauguration of a new dormitory in Dakmil

Br. Simon Thien



In Vietnam, the numbers of cases of coronavirus infection are steadily increasing. As a result, the Lasallian school of Truong Vinh Ky in Dakmil opened on the 3rd of August with only 30 people present for the ceremony. They included Brother Joseph Le Van Phuong, Visitor, some members of his Council, the Secretary, the members of the Brothers' community of Vinh An and a few other Brothers, the school leadership team and representatives of the teachers, parents and maintenance staff. […]



It started with a short liturgical prayer in which the local parish priest blessed the new building. […] The Brother Visitor then gave a message of thanks to all participants […] for the gifts they had made […], mentioning all those who had

contributed to the realisation and financing of the entire Dakmil school project. In particular, he made special mention of Brother Amilcare Boccuccia and his staff in the Secretariat for Solidarity and Development in Rome. It was through them that the Brothers in Vietnam had received additional aid from generous organisations such as *Conferenza Episcopale Italiana* (CEI), *The Lasallian Foundation* (Australia), *Porticus, Misean Cara, Noel* and the *Carmel O'Brien Family Foundation*, not forgetting other anonymous donors who had supported the school project from the beginning.

[…] To conclude the proceedings, Brother Visitor urged the school leadership and the entire educational community to be wise and responsible administrators for the benefit of all the students, especially by providing a good service to the poor and to minority groups.

In January 1866, six French Brothers arrived in Vietnam to initiate a Lasallian mission in the country. Three days later, they started running the first school in Sai Gon on the 9th of January. The story of the Lasallian family in Vietnam saw its greatest challenge at the end of the Vietnam War in 1975, when all the Lasallian schools were taken over by the government. The numbers of Brothers gradually increased thanks to their active presence in the service of the poor. Currently, there are 88 Brothers in the District, of whom almost forty are under 40 years old. The Brothers are teaching in 4 schools, in two of which the instruction is gratuitous for all students. In places where they have communities, the Brothers help the students by providing boarding facilities in addition to teaching. Around 110 lay teachers share in the Lasallian mission, in addition to the Sisters from three Congregations who contribute to the teaching activities. Today, there are 2,100 students in the schools and boarding establishments. Some 600 of them receive gratuitous teaching.

South Sudan – A new residence for Teachers



Among our new schools, we can also mention the *La Salle School-Rumbek* in South Sudan, where work is continuing to complete the construction.

In spite of the shutdown due to the spread of the coronavirus, it has been possibile to continue working on the construction of the school dining area, which is being done through the aid from *Caritas Pro Vitae Gradu*. In addition, produce from the land within the school property is being used to supply the kitchen, especially through the cultivation of cereal crops and fruit trees.

In order to be able to increase the number of teachers, new accommodation is being constructed, which will, when added to the existing facilities, provide housing for 18 teachers.

The Lasallian mission has existed in South Sudan since 2008, as a result of the foundation of an inter-Congregational community of religious as part of the programme “Solidarity with South Sudan”. The first independent community was formed in 2018, with the construction of La Salle School – Rumbek, which today has 153 pupils on the register.