

# Making a Difference IN THE LIFE OF A CHILD

## MERCY INTERNATIONAL



NEWSLETTER  
DECEMBER 2008

## Celebrate Jesus - The Saviour of the World

### WHAT AN AMAZING YEAR IT'S BEEN!

**For us here in Thailand it's been a year where we have seen great blessings, challenges and disappointments! Thailand as a nation has been in turmoil and the world has looked on in amazement – whoever chose that tourism slogan – Amazing Thailand**

The hopes and dreams of many who planned to visit Mercy International / House of Mercy in November and December to spend time with our children were horribly destroyed. Approximately 70 visitors had to cancel because of the closure of the International Airports here in Thailand.

Nambour Christian College (Queensland) Student team were the Big Attraction for a planned Christmas Event in Phrae – plus many school programs – All crushed! Our thoughts and prayers go out to these young people many of whom were eager and excited by the prospect of their first overseas adventure.

Riverview Christian Church (Perth) music & drama team were to be the special guests at the annual Phetchabun Christmas program which draws more than 2000 local Thais each year – but they were forced to cancel!

Other family and individual overseas visitors missed the life-changing and enriching time they had eagerly planned for so long!

In the big picture - this disappointment is but a hiccup! The blessings continue – along with some real challenges.

Thailand saw an outbreak of mumps – which resulted in many of our Khon Kaen and Phetchabun children plus staff with faces much fatter than usual!

The latest challenge came with the screech of brakes when a car struck Peter Hooper on his motor bike three days before planning to fly home to Australia for Christmas. Peter has a fractured hip and has had a pin inserted in his hip. Now he is on neither his beloved motor bike, nor a Qantas Jet – but on crutches. Pray for a speedy, pain-free healing – thankfully a family member has arranged for a business class reclining seat for Peter's trip home. Peter is a long-term volunteer at Mercy International's English Language School in Sisaket.





## THE MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS IS IMPACTING THAI LIVES

In fact, Christmas has been happening all the year! Jesus has come into many lives in amazing ways during recent months. Our Thai teachers, staff and children have been telling of wonderful answers to prayer, of healings, protection, provision and special work opportunities. It is exciting to listen to the spontaneous, unsolicited declarations of faith!

Thais are known to have 13 different smiles – but we've seen the 14th Smile that comes from a heart rejoicing because of a personal encounter with a Living God. Fifteen years ago an eight year old surly boy was brought to us. Life was never easy for him, not even after he came. Many times we despaired for him. He was angry, moody and difficult. When he completed his schooling we offered him work but more often than not he would lock himself in his darkened room for days on end. He fought with the teenage boys and with himself – putting his fist thru doors etc.

Much love, patience, prayer plus fathering from John Scholten on the building site began to see changes! Today in his early 20's this young man is an amazing trophy. He has become a diligent, gifted builder – able to learn almost any skill; but the big change is in his heart, mind and character. The non-communicative, rude, erratic boy we handled with kid-gloves has become a warm, balanced, kind, caring young man with a great future. Jesus has made an unbelievable difference in his life.



Almost 20 years ago, Glom the manager of Ban Meata Children's Village - Phetchabun had a personal meeting with the Christ of Christmas. She has maintained a very devoted relationship with Him ever since. She loves to have her Thai leaders around her for times of worship and prayer for the work. Several months back, Glom and her leaders were having such a time when a knock came at the door. God's Presence was so real that jokingly she said – "Maybe it's the Lord." When she opened the door, another one of her staff members was standing there weeping. Between the sobs she asked, "Can I have Jesus in my heart?" - We now see that 14th smile often on that staff member's face. That's the real meaning of Christmas!

At the end of this amazing year, we want to thank you for supporting this work. Hundreds of children's lives are so different. They are now well fed and clothed, receiving an excellent education and they have hope for a better future. They are loved and cared for, and really enjoying life. The 120 staff, workers, school teachers and families of House of Mercy Foundation are also being caught up in the many blessings that are flowing thru the work.

**Be blessed and refreshed this Christmas,  
Love and Blessings from everyone at House of Mercy Foundation,**

*Jean Dunk*

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