

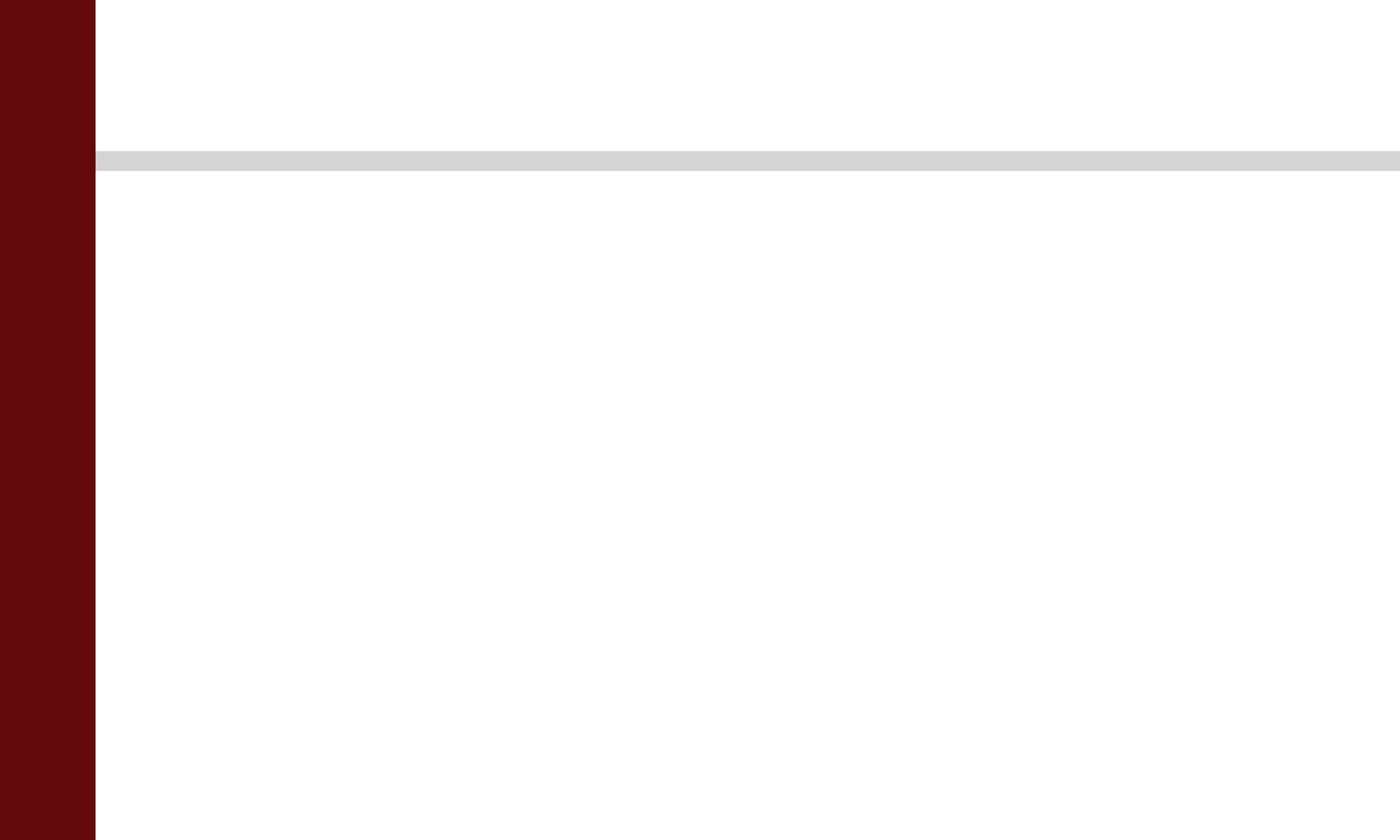
JOURNAL

Jesuit BROTHERS



THE SOCIETY OF JESUS IN VIETNAM

*65 years anniversary of the return of the Jesuits to Vietnam
for the second time (1957-2022)*



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PREFACE

*Vincent Pham Van Mam, S.J.
Provincial of Vietnam Province*

Dear Brothers,

The year of 2022 is the 65th anniversary of the return of the Society of Jesus to Vietnam at the invitation of the Vietnamese Church (1957) to contribute to the proclamation of the Gospel after more than two centuries of absence. This year also is the 15th anniversary of the signing of the decree by former Superior General Peter Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., raising the Vietnamese Jesuit Region to the Vietnamese Jesuit Province, with the holy name Francis Xavier.

Thanks to God's grace, over the past 65 years, the Province of Vietnam has gradually grown: from 26 members in 1975, the number of members is nearly 300; from a dependent, then an independent Region, now becoming a young and promising Province of the Society of Jesus; from the initial training mission when returning to Vietnam, the apostolates of the Vietnam Province have gradually developed over time: 6 ministries in the 2000-2010 decade, 13 in the decade 2011- 2020, and more than 20 different ministries planned for the decade 2021-2030. In addition, more than 60 members are participating in international missions and studying in many different Regions and Provinces around the world.

We are convinced that the growth of Vietnam Province through the ups and downs of the past 65 years is due, first of all, to the grace of God and the commitment of different Jesuit generations, among which the spiritual, dedicated, and faithful contribution of our Jesuit brothers in consecrated life and in various ministries throughout more than half a century of Vietnam Province's history.

In place of the annual apostolic activity report and to celebrate the 500th anniversary of Saint Ignatius' conversion, the special journal 2022 on the presence and apostolate of the Jesuit brothers in Vietnam Province is published and sent to all to help us realize the gift that God has given and is giving especially to Vietnam Province, and help us appreciate the priceless and colorful gift that God has given to Vietnam Province.

Finally, I thank God for giving Vietnam Province a large number of brothers. On behalf of Vietnam Province, I would like to thank all of you who courageously and generously responded to the Lord's call to commit to evangelization by choosing to live the brother vocation in the Society of Jesus. May God bless you and wish you always happy on your chosen path.

FOREWORD

Anthony Nguyen Cao Sieu, S.J.

Many people didn't know the fact that the Society of Jesus consists of the members without priesthood called BROTHERS.

Someone recognizes a Jesuit Brother when asking him why he had no priesthood after many years living in the Society of Jesus.

In fact, at first glance, it's not easy to distinguish between a Jesuit Brother and a Jesuit Father.

Jesuit Brothers are trained on Philosophy and Theology as the Scholastics who can be priests.

Besides, Jesuit Brothers can study some other subjects on their ability to serve people in their vocation.

Brotherhood vocation is special gift that God bestows on the Society of Jesus.

Among more than 14,000 Jesuits in the world, there are only more than 800 Jesuit Brothers.

Jesuit Brothers take care of all kinds of missions in the Society of Jesus except priestly missions.

Jesuit Brothers are friends who live in the same community, share the same vocation and mission with other members in the Society of Jesus.

Nevertheless, there are some proper features with Brotherhood Vocation.

Jesuit Brothers know that they are chosen to live with this Vocation forever.

The Vocation of each Jesuit Brother is a mystery with a very little explanation.

Only when you meet and talk to a Jesuit Brother in a deeper state at the bottom of your heart, you can probably

Behind the life with simplicity, serenity and silence, there is a serious choice to follow Jesus Christ, serving everybody in humility.

This choice regulates all the life of a Jesuit Brother.

Happiness in the Vocation absolutely requires sacrifices.

Having peaceful eyes with lighting smiles requires a Jesuit Brother of overpassing himself.

This overpassing is a journey with hardship, which many people have to give up.

Hardly have Jesuit Brothers written on themselves and on the mystery of their life.

This little REVIEW consists of some minutes of heart-talk of some Jesuit Brothers:

Some joyful and sad stories as well as the challenges they dealt and are dealing with;

Some enduring efforts they try their best to win themselves.

There are also some interesting stories on the passed-away Jesuit Brothers.

Their brightly light life is a source of assistance forever.

Memories of their life never fade.

Hoping that the writings in this REVIEW

help us to understand more and more our Jesuit Brothers and love them from the bottom of our heart.

They are in the Society of Jesus as the co-workers with the Priests and as the gifts coming from God.

This REVIEW can be an introductory word to the young men who are looking for their vocation;

It can help them listen to the God's Voice resounding in their soul,

And respond to this voice in the Jesuit Brotherhood Vocation.

FOREIGN JESUIT BROTHERS IN VIETNAM



Vincent Dinh Trung Nghia, S.J.

“The understanding points of the foreign Jesuit Brothers at that time is their humility. They lived and worked in the Society of Jesus as St. Ignatius and the first Jesuit Brothers lived.”

Luckily, I have kept the 'Catalogus' of Jesuit China Province in 1974, in which some information on Jesuit Vietnam Region are recorded. At that time, the Jesuit China Province had its Curia in Taiwan. The Superior of Jesuit Vietnam Region was Father Sesto Quercetti, an Italian. He had been in his office since 1972 after Father Jacques de Leffe, the first Superior of Jesuit Vietnam Region, was promoted to another function.



Father Sesto Quercetti, S.J.

1974

General information

Since 1972, the Jesuit Vietnam Region had a completely organizational structure of an independent Jesuit Region with the offices as the Jesuit Vietnam Province has today.

The official foundations are the Curia of Region with all committees as it has today. The Jesuit Houses consists of

- In Dalat, the Pontifical College of Saint Pius X has been set up since 1958 when the Conference of Bishops of Vietnam invited the Jesuits Fathers to come to Vietnam to train the seminarians.
- In Saigon, The Alexandre De Rhodes House has been set up since 1957, at



Alexandre De Rhodes Center

175B Yen-Do street. This House is the residence for the Jesuit Professors who are invited by the government to teach students in some Universities in Saigon, Dalat and Hue. Later, this House is sold to the Jesuit Vietnam Region at the price of 1 USD. This legal act makes the Jesuit Vietnam Region officially become the owner of this house. Today, this House is at 171B Ly Chinh Thang, District 3.

- Besides, some other Residences and Working Places were also set up such as Saint Joseph Jesuit Scholasticate at 9 Co-Giang Street in Dalat; the Xavier Center for Students in Hue; Saint Ignatius Community and then the Alexandre De Rhodes Library (Since 1960, this place has become the Alexandre De Rhodes Center with Library, Foyer for students, Jesuit Candidate House)
- The Jesuit Sacred Heart Novitiate was set up at Thu-Duc in 1960.

Generally speaking, since 1960s, the Jesuit Vietnam Region has set up its structures and communities as being seen today.

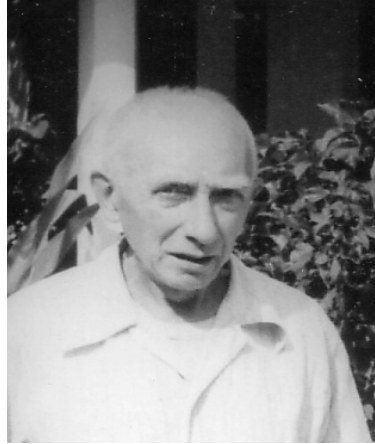
The names of Vietnamese Jesuits in the CATALOGUS of Jesuit China Province in 1974 as follows:

- Priests: Khuat Duy Linh, Ngo Van Vung, Dinh Van Trung, Hoang Sy Quy, Le Thanh Que, Do Quang Chinh, Pham Huu Lai, Doan Cao Ly.
- Scholastics: Tran Van Nam, Dinh Trung Nghia, Co Tan Hung, Nguyen Ngoc Tien, Hoang Van Dat, Nguyen Trung Kien, Hoang Van Tinh, Tran Van Nhu, Vu Tam Khi-
et, Tran Van Tan, Nguyen The Minh.
- Novices: Pham Thanh Liem, Nguyen Van Phuong, Nguyen Cao Sieu.

The Jesuit Vietnam Region at that time consists of 68 members: 44 priests, 15 scholastics, and 9 brothers.

The foreign Jesuit Brothers in Vietnam before 1975

Except Brother Dom. Tran Van Tan is the first Vietnamese Jesuit Brother who entered the Jesuit Novitiate on 31 December 1967, the other Jesuit Brothers are foreigners.



Brother Jean Hanrio, S.J.

1968

The first Jesuit Brother came to Vietnam since 1957 is Brother Jean Hanrio, a French. He took care of the garden in the Jesuit Novitiate at 76/2 Linh-Trung Hamlet, Linh-Xuan Commune, Thu-Duc District. All his life, he is a gardener. He cut herbs, took care of the mango trees in the garden...He often finished his job at about 10.00 am. Then he visited the Eucharist in the chapel about 15 minutes; and the prepared the table for lunches or dinners. He had done his job like that until he was expelled from Vietnam.



Brother Gömöri Pál, S.J.

1968

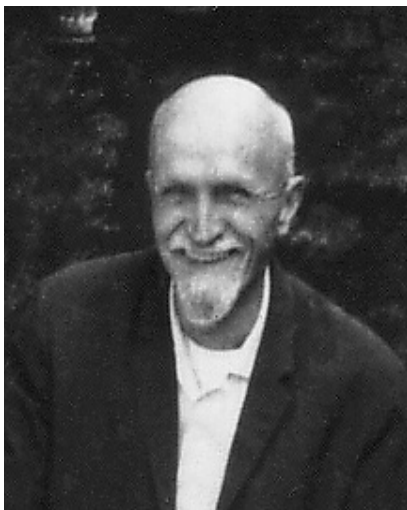
Brother Gömöri Pál,, a Hungarian. He raised pigs at Tam Ha Farm after a short time working as a cook at the Pontifical College of Saint Pius X in Dalat. When finishing cooking a dish, he had a habit of cleaning his hands with his tablier before making another dish. The cold air in Dalat was not good for his health and he had to leave Dalat. As Brother Hanrio, he didn't know Vietnamese, but he mixed many languages he knew in Vietnamese, English and French with one another to express his ideas. For example, he said: "CON HEO CO BABY DANS STOMACH". This means: "The Pig has baby in her womb"



Brother Paolo Moü, S.J.

1975

Brother Moü, an Italian. He took care of ornamental plants and decorative garden at the Pontifical College of Saint Pius X in Dalat. He liked singing songs and he sang all day. He planted the willow trees in front of the Fathers' Rooms. However, he always changed the positions of other trees to different places in the garden. Anyway, his decorative garden attracted many people. They came to Brother Mou's garden with many kinds of flowers for taking photographs. He liked to plant many kinds of lily with different colors.



Brother Herhold Ārapad,, S.J.

1975

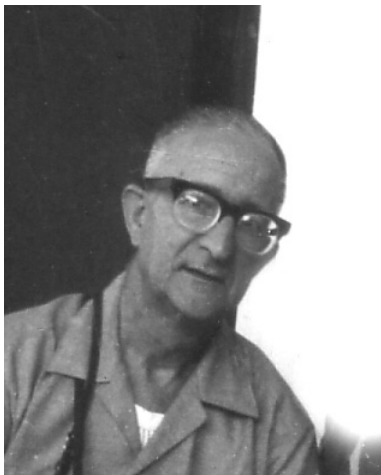
Brother Herhold Ārapad, a Polish. He lived in the Curia of the Jesuit Vietnam Region at 105 Nguyen Dinh Chieu Street, District 3. He was the assistant to Father Jozsef Krald, the Ministry of this Residence and a professor at the Pontifical College of Saint Pius X. Brother Herhold Ārapad was a good technician. He took care of all moto-cycles for Fathers in the community. The moto-cycles are always ready for use. Especially, he successfully repaired the old washing machines released by the army. This work helps the sisters in washing clothes for students at the Pontifical College. Brother Tran Van Tan was his technique student until he went to the Novitiate.



Brother Lionel Tremblay, S.J.

1968

Brother Lionel Tremblay, a Canadian. He was an electronic specialist and he designed the operating system for the Alexandre De Rhodes Television. Later, Brother Francois Xavier Ross came to work in a short time. This Television Station produced many educational programs for the public and propagated in the national Television weekly. Brother Tremblay had a relaxing life and lived with the servicing desire for everybody. Every week, he assisted Fathers to Vung-Tau and had some films borrowed from the 'Centre Culturelle Fran aise' or the Vietnamese American Association to serve the Community.



Brother José Antonio Navascués, S.J.

1971

Brother José Antonio Navascués, a Spaniard. He was a specialist in sculpting figures on wood with his electric pens. He sculpted the 14 cross stations on wood. He had his own works with many pictures. He lived in the Alexandre De Rhodes until he was excelled as Brother Lionel Tremblay.

The understanding points of the foreign Jesuit Brothers at that time is their humility.

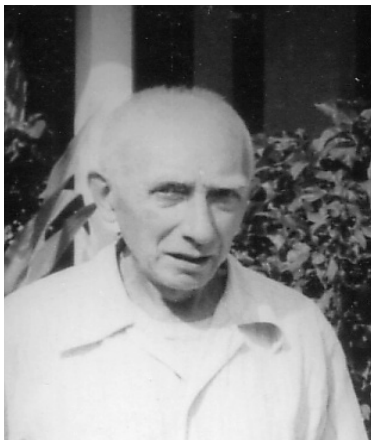
They lived and worked in the Society of Jesus as St. Ignatius and the first Jesuit Brothers lived.

The General Congregation 32 of the Society of Jesus had the new direction to promote the life of Jesuit Brothers. Before that day, the Jesuit Brothers took the role of people who assisted the priests, in a literal sense of the word coadjutor. The coadjutors

lived a humble life and considered themselves in a lower level in comparison with the priests. The General Congregation 32 had the trend to dilute the class in the Society of Jesus; that is, there will be no distinction between Profes and Spriritual Coadjutors any longer. However, this thing is opposite to the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and it is unacceptable. Anyway, the situation is better now. There is no distance between Priests and Coadjutors. Instead, the Society of Jesus pays

attention to the charism in each person. Everyone is called to live their life with Priestly Vocation or Brotherhood Vocation. Today, many Jesuit Brothers work in different fields in the Society, especially in the field of astronomy.

Alexandre De Rhodes Center
February 2022



Brother Jean Hanrio, S.J.

1968



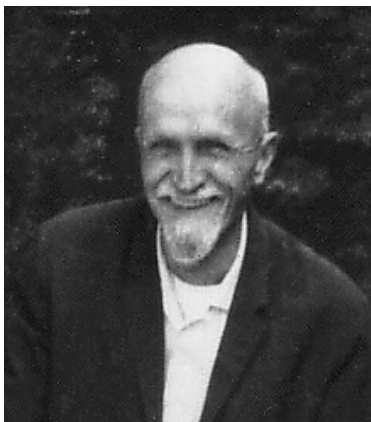
Brother Gömöri Pál, S.J.

1968



Brother Paolo Moü, S.J.

1975



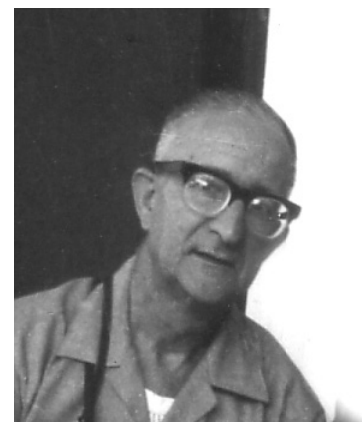
Brother Herhold Ārapad,, S.J.

1975



Brother Lionel Tremblay, S.J.

1968



Brother José Antonio Navascués, S.J.

1971

A MEETING WITH JESUIT BROTHERS AT ALEXANDRE DE RHODES CENTER



Dominic Tran Van Tan, S.J.

“The images of Jesuit Brothers with Brother Navascués, Brother Ross and Brother Tremblay in many years of service in this community, still remain in the memories of many people. Their material bodies can be faded by the time, but their way of life is still there in the other Jesuit Brothers working in this country.”

In 1964, when being a Jesuit Coadjutor Candiadate working at the Pontifical College of Saint Pius X in Dalat Vietnam, I was surprised at the pictures of 14 cross stations sculpted on wood by the electric pens. The personages in the picture are cut separately and then, stuck on the wall of the Chapel in the Pontifical College.

When entering the Novitiate, I can also see the picture of the

Last Super sculpted on wood by electric pen on the wall in the dinner room. This is the picture made by Brother Jose Antonio Navascués, a Spaniard. He is a specialist on sculpting pictures on wood. He used the electric pen to sculpt many pictures and put them in his office. He lived in the Alexandre De Rhodes until he was excelled from Vietnam after 30 April 1975.

Brother Navascués specialists on drawing pictures. There are many Jesuit Brothers who do this work in the world. In Rome, in Gesu Church, there are many famous pictures on important events in the life of Saint Ignatius made by a

Jesuit Brother. Brother Navascués was not the great sculptor, but with his light shape, his industrious and clever and friendly and joyful attitude in living and working, he sculpted his picture and gave it to our Jesuits as well as people who know him: a Jesuit Brother hides himself in a picture-room to contemplate the beauty and listen to God's Voice in anything. Nearly 20 years looking for the Glory of God in the middle of bloody war, he drew a picture not with electric pen but with his life of entreating and imploring for the hoping blue of peace for everybody.



Brother José Antonio Navascués, S.J.

1975

The activities of Alexandre De Rhodes Community are various:

- A foyer for students
- A studio for Alexandre De Rhodes Television Station.
- A library for students
- A little chapel with religious activities for the young with the famous Cung-Chieu Choir in the weekly Mass. Besides, there were the Mass for the Incarnation Family activity.
- Teaching activity in University of Saigon by Jesuit Fathers

Working in a community is a mission. Jesuit Brothers are present in the middle of the missions of a community as a mother who takes care of each member in the family.

Brother Lionel Tremblay, a Canadian, specialist on electronics. He designed the operating system for the Alexandre De Rhodes Television Station. In the community, he took the role as an assistant to the material minister, taking care of all things as maintaining residence, preparing the meals, driving cars for Fathers and borrowing some films from the 'Centre Culturelle Fran aise' or the Vietnamese American Association to serve the Community weekly.

Father Hoang Van Tinh SJ, after 50 years living in the Society of Jesus, recalls the first day when he met Brother Tremblay when he was still a Jesuit candidate: "the first Jesuit Brother I met is Brother Tremblay SJ, a Canadian; he is an assistant to the minister of Alexandre De Rhodes Community in Saigon".



Brother Lionel Tremblay, S.J. 1994

More than 8 months in the Jesuit Candidate House (from August 1967 to April 1968), we consist of 8 candidates, staying at two rooms in the higher floor of a villa in this community. We participate in all activities, but we like best 45 minutes of playing sport in the afternoon daily.

In the attractive atmosphere of the basket-ball game, Brother Tremblay often appeared and looked at us when we played. We felt worried when we cast the ball to the windows of Fathers' rooms or other places such as Kitchen, the Hall or Dinning Room; but Brother Tremblay only smiled and said in French: 'Allez! Continuez! Allez!'. We felt relaxing and said: 'Merci beaucoup Frere!'

In 1974, when I took the role of an assistant to the minister of the Curia of Jesuit Vietnam Region at 105 Nguyen Dinh Chieu Street, District 3, Saigon, the Alexandre De Rhodes Community invited our community to have dinner every Sunday evening. This is the meal for friendship. We use the available food without cooking. This is an opportunity for the members in the two communities to meet Jesuit Brothers: one young Vietnamese and three elder foreigners. Our Jesuit Brothers on this occasion also exchange and help one another the necessary things for our communities.



Brother FX. Ross. , S.J.

1972

Brother Ross was only present in Alexandre De Rhodes Community in a short time to take care of the problem of sounds and light for the Television Station. Brother Tremblay took care of the electric system for the studio. Brother Navascués helped to design the programs.

However, had sooner the system of studio been available for stable operation than it was closed. Father Sesto Quercetti, Superior of Jesuit Vietnam Region, who was owner of this construction would be expelled from Vietnam. During the days of the end of April 1975, Jesuits had to leave Dalat to Saigon through the way NhaTrang-Saigon. On the bus to Saigon Father Superior prayed all night. In the morning, when being asked what to pray in the past night, he answered that: "I prayed and I knew God accepted. I asked God to take away all things."

And only one year later, all foreign Jesuits had to go out of Vietnam. The Alexandre De Rhodes Center was also forced to stop all activities in 1980. However, all images of Jesuits still remain in the hearts of many people in this country. Especially, the images of Jesuit Brothers: Brother Navascués, Brother Ross, Brother Tremblay still remain in the memories of many people. Time can make all material things disappear, but their way of living and working is still there in other Jesuit Brothers, who are living and working in the Jesuit communities in Vietnam and all over the world.



Brother José Antonio Navascués, S.J.
1975



Brother Lionel Tremblay S.J.
1994



Brother FX. Ross., S.J.
1972

TWO FAMILIAR JESUIT BROTHERS IN THE SACRED HEART NOVITIATE



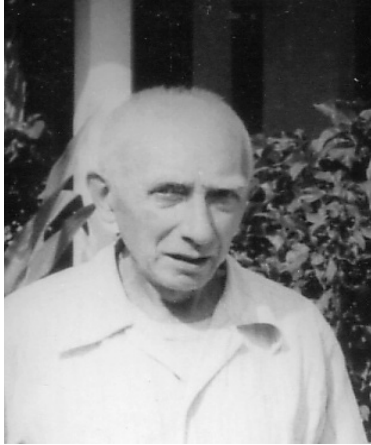
Dominic Tran Van Tan, S.J.

“Two shapes, one face and one devoted heart in each own way,
but in the same JESUIT BROTHERHOOD VOCATION”

T came to the Jesuit Novitiate at Thu-Duc for the probation period of Jesuit Brotherhood Vocation in June 1967. The face of Brother Hanrio, a French Jesuit Brother, always remains in my memory as well as other novices from 1966 to 1975 with the most excellent impression.

I don't know how Brother Hanrio has lived his religious young life and what he has done in the Society of Jesus. The year when I stayed in the Novitiate, he was an old Jesuit Brother, but he took care of the work in the kitchen and in the garden. In fact, the cooking was taken on by Mrs Thu and the work in the garden was taken by Mr Nhi. However, thanks to Brother Hanrio, all things were put in good order and kept the Novitiate in peace. Every day, he trimmed the branches of trees and cut grass or uprooted the thorn grass in the garden by pincers. At 10.00 AM o'clock, he came to the chapel, kneeed before the Eucharist and prayed about 15 minutes and then he went to the dining-room for placing the table for the meal.

We, the novices since 1960, beside Father Master of Novices and Father Socius, learned from him a lot. Brother Hanrio said a little. His French with the accent of Basque made a little difficult to hearers. However, with his devotion to work, his humility and the joy and peace in his face, he set a good example to us on the religious life for only looking for the WILL of GOD, not his own will. This is an excellent example to us as the novices of the Society of Jesus, who are trained to know how to entrust God through our Superiors and how to cooperate with other members in the Order to go onwards.



Brother Jean Hanrio, S.J.

1968

The second Brother in the Novitiate is Brother Gomori from the Pontifical College of Saint Pius X in Dalat. He came to the Novitiate in Thu-Duc about the middle of year 1973. Because of the cold air in Dalat, he had to lay on the grass-lot under the sun in the afternoon to avoid being cold. Therefore, Thu-Duc might be suitable for him to live and work. The cooking at Pontifical College would be taken by Sisters of the Congregation of Cross Lovers.

Brother Gomori arrived the Jesuit Novitiate at Thu-Duc when Father Gelinas needed someone to help him to set up the Center for students at Tam-Ha, near the

railroad. Brother Gomori became the supporter to this mission. He stayed in the Novitiate, but every day, he came to Tam-Ha for working from the morning to the evening and came back to the Novitiate. He was a positive man. Together with a dozen workers, he set up a farm for raising pigs, growing some kinds of vegetable. On the way from the Novitiate to Tam-Ha, when meeting children, he often gave them many kinds of sweets that people had given to him. He loved children, especially who were born in the war and lacking of their father's care.



Brother Gömöri Pál, S.J.

1968

After event on 30 April 1975, he was expelled from Vietnam together with other foreign Jesuits. He came to Manila, Philippines. At the old age, he couldn't work any longer. As Father Gomez told, Brother Gomori often went on the bus (free for the old), bringing an album with many pictures. He used pictures to talk to people beside him as one way to proclaim Gospel to them.

Brother Hanrio was composed, soft, humble and quiet. He seemed to merge himself into God. Brother Gomori was effervescent, friendly and easy to contact. He knew how to meet others in a simple and natural way.

Two shapes, one face and one devoted heart in each own way, but in the same JESUIT BROTHERHOOD VOCATION.

SUCH A DREAM



Joseph Dinh Van Trong, S.J.

“Lord, I wish that one day the church bell would ring in their ears, and everyone in the village could together go to the church to pray and praise God.” I don’t know when that dream will come true, but God made such a dream in me.”

Among the regency places after the philosophy program, the Laos Jesuit mission was where I desired to be sent to serve the poor. Then I realized that the Lord taught me to become a missionary in different environments. As people say that a missionary is the dream bearer; indeed, after years of living among non-Christians, God gave rise to a dream in me.

After a few months of learning Lao language, I was introduced to teaching Vietnamese to police and army officers working here. This is the first time I have worked as a “board pointing person.” I was a bit timid, especially in front of the communists; so it was even more difficult. My aspiration at that time was to empathize with the souls of the people God sent to me and build friendships with them. Besides, as an “underground missionary,” I could somehow convey the great value of the Gospel to them. The lessons were filled with laughter and funny stories. My students love me so much, perhaps because of the young man’s loving care for them. Through them, I see the open-mind-

edness and enthusiasm of people who are eager to advance further in their jobs. However, I also found in the “unsupported souls.” They are called “unsupported” because they do not find the value of life to cling to and rise up. The morality decays every time a soldier takes off his uniform. They told me about their darkest sins behind their own “veils”. I thought to myself that the environment was likely to teach them too many slogans but didn’t convey any value as a person. I have compassion for the poorness of that living life. I wish they would realize the illusions they are pursuing, which they would regret for the rest of their lives.

In the second year of my regency, I decided to open English and Vietnamese classes to teach the children in my village. This was an opportunity for us to make friend with the villagers and approach the educational apostolate. And so the house turned into a school. Many students of all ages came to the Doan Ket school, the name an old father called that little school. We had come up with many ways to teach not only knowledge but also values and physical exercises. Therefore, some games like football, badminton, table tennis, and marbles were designed in the study program. A small room turned into a reading room. Thanks to the trust and closeness of the children towards us, we know more about their family situations and the Lao culture. The villagers like to call us “village teachers,” but sometimes I feel like a parish brother.





The community house is like a parish, and the people of God are gathering to share the love of God and the joy of the Gospel. Thanks to our close relationship with the children, we can easily gather them. Once, the children went to the school together to cook, make cakes, and organize music to celebrate the national teachers' day. There was also a time when the children helped us cook and welcome our teacher friends visiting the school. I am very happy when the children are the mediators to help us approach their parents and activities in the village. I still remember that on the celebration of Sakyamuni Buddha's birthday, hearing the temple bell, many children invited us to the village temple to chant and pray for blessings. My heart suddenly overflowed with joy and happiness of an event in my childhood when my neighborhood friends called each other to go to church every night. At that moment, I whispered to God:

“Lord, I wish that one day the church bell would ring in their ears, and everyone in the village could together go to the church to pray and praise God.” I don’t know when that dream will come true, but God made such a dream in me. And he said to me, “Let plant and keep watering... in due time I will make it grow.”

In the last year of my regency, I was assigned to take care of two construction projects, a kindergarten and a church. This was the first time I had experienced working in construction; I was nervous but enjoyed it. Perhaps the greater opportunity was to work with the local people, especially builders from another ethnic group. Therefore, I kept reminding myself that I was doing technical work as well as apostolic work. I am not only finding work efficiency but also ways

to build relationships and convert other people. In addition, I also said to the parishioners in the village that: “We have to live our Christian life so that the non-Christians may see the God we are following.” However, I still took a lot of time to resolve some issues between parishioners and workers. In the evenings, I stayed at the construction site; I used to eat and converse with the workers. They asked me everything about my life, belief, and even my religious life. The

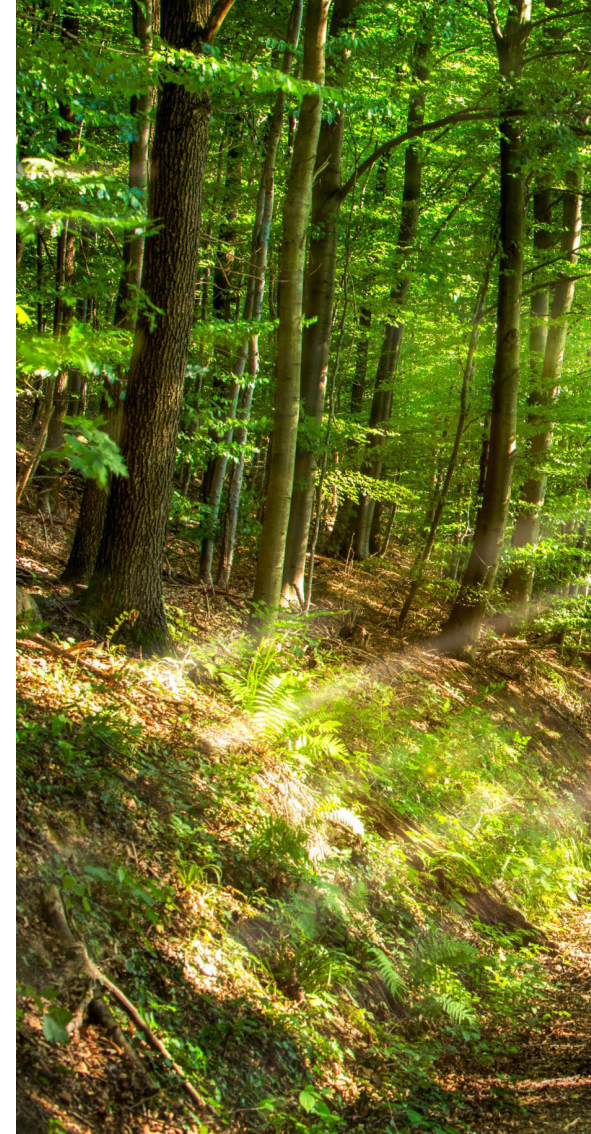
group leader shared that he was very grateful but also scared when the weather was dark; I still rode a motorbike for more than 80 kilometers to go home, especially crossing a forest --- if it were him, he wouldn’t dare do so. He said that his ethnic group believes in gods and fear ghosts. He asked me if I was afraid. “No, brother!” --- I replied immediately.



Indeed, I have no fear at all. What can make me scared, I think, are the dangers on the road. One day when it was raining heavily and very dark, I had to hurriedly come home because I was afraid of being robbed. The headlights and downpour made it impossible for me to see anything in front of me as the trucks rushed toward me. At that moment, I prayed to God: "Father, I commit my spirit into your hands." That's what I told the builder as well. He would have nothing to fear if he had someone to trust and love, like a child hugging his mother tightly. Of course, the One I trust always exists. He replied that he wished that he would have the same belief.

Living among non-Christians, God caused in me a dream that is also his: “make disciples of all nations.” That dream has stirred up my longing and motivated me to commit myself to God’s mission.

I love the tracks on the trails into the village, my hands touching the small, calloused, and dusty ones. I love the way God has trained me to be a missionary who is humble, silent, patient, and enthusiastic. When I think of the missionary model for the Laotian, it comes to my mind with the image of a holy and happy priest. The priest embodies Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, the mediator between God and people. The priest is close to God to pray for his people.





The people here believe in graces and miracles. The image of Jesus moving around the villages, healing the sick, and performing the miracles will certainly appeal to them. The image of Jesus, sharing human suffering, and consoling the grieving will be more and more embraced here. Therefore, the word of God will refresh the souls that are hungry for justice or seeking a fulcrum for life.

Keep your dream alive, the missionary of God!

05/01/2022



Biography and Apostolic Work

Brother Đinh Văn Trọng entered the Society of Jesus in 2012. With a desire to serve the poor, he was sent to a Laos Jesuit mission after the philosophy program. Here, he has discovered his missionary vocation, specifically desire to bring God to people. After the regency, the Order realized that he needed to be better prepared to serve the local Church and mission. Therefore, he was sent to the Philippines to study theology. During this time, he has spent time reflecting on his apostolic experiences in Laos in the light of theology and the teaching of the Church. Thanks to that, it helps strengthen the desire to serve God and His people. Finally, he found that the more he loves and desires to serve God and the poor, the more he has the strength to be transformed to become the missionary as God and His people expect.

BEING CALLED TO LOVE AND TO SERVE



Peter Le Cao Tai, S.J.

“I am called to live a quiet life of service, especially serving the poor in both material and spiritual terms..”

I have sympathized and fallen in love with the vocation of brotherhood since my high school years, when I had the opportunity to interact with older brothers who lived a quiet and humble life. In particular, I really enjoy going on a mission, living with the poor to comfort and help them to get out of poverty, suffering from hunger and disease. Seeing that possibility, I chose the vocation to the brotherhood right in the days of orientation retreat.

When I was admitted to the Society, learning about saints who are Brothers like Saint Alphonso Rodriguez and Garate, who silently served out of love for Jesus, I was further strengthened in my decision to choose my vocation. During the 30-day Spiritual Exercises in the Novitiate, I realized that my vocation is primarily to love Jesus, and my whole life and mission is to serve God in the poor. My love for Jesus was the only driving force that made me choose this vocation. I have always kept in mind that, without loving God, pursuing this vocation would be meaningless.

In general, regarding the vocation of a Brother, I find it to be a special vocation. Since I entered the Society until now, I have witnessed more than 10 Brothers who had to give up and no longer continue on this path. To me, this is clearly a vocation from God and not from any human effort, because it goes against the normal human tendency. Usually by human nature, everyone wishes for themselves to develop themselves, to be known by many people and to have a lot of influence on others. But this vocation is a renunciation, a complete commitment to service without expecting anything in return, other than knowing that one is doing God's will.

This is a special vocation, so those who pursue this vocation also face many challenges. The vocation to the Brotherhood is a reversal of the tide, especially in Asian culture. The culture of Vietnam or Laos is the same, Priest and Brother, in the eye of the laity, are two different ranks, there is a very clear difference, so the majority of parishioners only see the Brothers as servants for Priests. Usually, the contributions and ideas of Brothers are overlooked. According to human nature, sometimes that also makes me a little heartbroken. But since I understood the essence of this vocation is to be humble and to serve, that was not much of a challenge for me.





In my family, my parents always respect my decision. Although they did not object to the vocation of a Brother, I knew from the way they talked to others that in their hearts they always wanted something more from me. I also know that in the minds of some relatives, they think that going to a religious order is to become a priest, if not, then it is because of the inability to do so, or because of some other problems. Although this is a challenge, it is not a hindrance to my vocation, because I have thought about this from the beginning when choosing a vocation, and I also understand that this vocation is a reversal of the current.

Perhaps the biggest challenge to the Brothers, in my view, is our fellow Jesuits in the Society, because they are the people in our real family who directly affect our lives. I see many Jesuits who still have high and low distinctions between Priests and Brothers. Before, when I was in a large community, there was a father who shared with the Brothers that “The Brother must be the one who pays attention to serving the tables for scholastics and priests”. Maybe he meant to remind me of the custodian role of the Brothers, but it made me feel very sad because I saw that there

is such a clear distinction between the Brother and the Priest. If the duty is given, the Brothers will be ready to do their best with all love, but if we are all fellow Jesuits and there is a tendency to distinguish between high and low ranks, treating Brothers as such workers, it’s really sad. Another experience that also made me feel sad, was when a priest of my age and I presented our opinions, even though the other priest’s opinion was not as convincing as mine, but in the end, it was accepted and my opinion was rejected.





When I asked why, the person who had the authority to decide said it was because the other was a priest and I was just a Brother. Outside the society, it doesn't matter what people say or think, because they don't understand the vocation of a Brother, but if there is such discrimination among our own fellow Jesuits, it is a great challenge to me as well as to other Brothers.

For me, having lived in the Society for nearly 20 years, those challenges were too small compared to the advantages and consolations I received. Since entering the Society, despite going through ups and downs, I have always been aware that my vocation as a Brother is my vocation. I am called to live a quiet life of service, especially serving the poor in both material and spiritual terms. I have been sent on a mission in Laos for 15 years, most of my time is studying: learning languages, studying at university and graduate school.





The Brotherhood is a great advantage to serve and develop the mission here. I can immerse myself in Lao society, present officially as a Lao citizen without suspicion or scrutiny. Naturally, in the learning process, I have good relationships between teachers and students, close friendships with university professors. I have friends who are Buddhist monks; they are classmates; they are my teachers. Through charity work helping the poor, I easily interact with the local government. The Church of Laos received me gently, not to minister, but to serve the Church in my profession without any doubt.

After completing my master's degree in Lao literature, the opportunity to serve the Church and the Society opened up to me greatly. I can help the Church with document research, translate basic documents of the Society into Lao; and social apostolate also opens up so many possibilities without having to worry or face difficulties regarding political aspects. I feel that the vocation of a Brother is very relevant to the context of the Lao mission, as long as it is not sacramental ministry, all other apostolates seem to be favorable.





Another consolation is that when I returned to Laos after 3 years of studying theology in Vietnam, the community also had many changes. Currently, the community I live in has 3 young priests and me. We live in harmony and respect each other. The superior always listens and consults with me. This makes me feel confident and happy, because I see the community without discrimination between vocations to Priests and Brothers. Together, we identify and plan together an apostolate to serve God and the Church in this country of Laos. Currently, I am still moving forward in the process of deeper integration into Lao culture; I hope this will strengthen my mission and my vocation, so that I can fully commit myself in my journey of serving God and the local Church.

Vientiane, January 26th 2022



- **Biography and Apostolic Work**

- 15 Oct 1981 Born at Trà-Đà, Pleiku District, Gia-Lai Province.
- 31 May 2002 Being a Jesuit novice after finishing High-School and gained diploma-level C in English language.
- 31 May 2004 Taking the First Vows
- 2004 - 2007 Studying Philosophy at Saint Joseph Jesuit Scholasticate in Thủ-Đức, Vietnam.
- 2007 - 2013 Studying Literature and Culture at the National University in Laos.
- 2014 - 2016 Teaching Lao language to the high-school seminarists; doing pastoral village work and teaching catechism to the students of the Congregation of Cross Lovers and the Charity Order in Laos.
- 2016 - 2018 Studying Theology at Saint Joseph Jesuit Scholasticate in Thủ-Đức, Vietnam.
- 2020 - 2021 Following a post-graduate program on Culture and Literature to get Master Degree at the National University in Laos.

Apostolic work

- Together with the Sisters of the Congregation of Cross Lovers to take care of the students on their way of living and learning.
- Together with Group “Enfant du Mekong” to give scholarship to the poor students.
- Taking care of the social apostolic work in making houses, digging wells and supplying clothes to the poor children.

ACCOMPANING AND SERVING IN JESUIT BROTHERHOOD



Tadeo Duong Tha, S.J.

“Studying the example of St. Stanislaw Kostka in the noviciate: “I was born to live for something nobler”, I understand the noble and precious here means that: “- Becoming a saint”. This is joy and happiness nothing else can be compared.”

Dear Fathers and Brothers in the Lord,
To celebrate the 65th anniversary of the return of the Jesuits to Vietnam, our Provincial Father chose this special opportunity to mention about Vietnamese Jesuit's Brothers. I am very happy and proud to write this article to share something to you. The 65th anniversary of the return of the Jesuits is also the year when I was born (1957). I am also happy because God called me to serve Him in the Jesuit Order as a Vietnamese Jesuit Brother. Thank God for the past 65 years, I am still healthy in body and soul to continue serving the mission of Christ in this small country Timor-Leste.





My vocation as a Jesuit Brother was formed simply; but it is not easy for acquiring this noble vocation. I was born in an ordinary Catholic family like many other brothers in the the Society, but fortunately, where I was born is also the place where the Blessed Andrew Phu Yen, a student of Father Jesuit Alexandre De Rhodes, came to this world.

Before entering the Society, I had no intention of becoming a monk because I thought that I have not dared to be a monk; I only dreamt of finding a way to save my soul and to serve the souls of others. At that moment I recognized that the sin separates us from God and eternal life. When knocking on the door of the Society, I still not understood who the Jesuits are and what charism of this Order is...

When entering the Society, I also did not think that I would become a Priest or a Brother, but I was convinced of one thing that I would have become a servant of God and my brothers and sisters. In the early days of my vocation in this Order, after a few months I discovered many things about the Jesuit vocation. Being aware that I was looking for a way to become a Saint, I didn't care much about studying at that time, seeing my friends competing for academic achievement; but I preferred to compete on how to love and serve God more in ordinary life. That's also the reason I later decided to live my vocation as a Brother if I would be chosen in the society of Jesus.



After the candidate period, being selected to enter the novitiate, learning about the spirituality of this Order, many surprises came to me because the Jesuits have become many saints. There are many diverse apostolates in the Order and the Jesuits can serve God depending on their ability and save the souls. During the period of novitiate, I knew better about God's Will, understood the Order better, and understood myself better; I am happy because even I am a sinner that God chose to call me into such a great Order. Through the example of the Saints and the history of the Jesuits, I see that the Jesuits are really big, but the Jesuits also have the doors to open for many people to lead them to Heaven.





Studying the example of St. Stanislaw Kostka in the novitiate: "I was born to live for something nobler", I understand the noble and precious here means that: "Becoming a saint". This is joy and happiness nothing else can be compared. I am convinced that I can live anywhere and do anything as long as I belong to God through Jesuit vocation. Father Nghia SJ once gave recollection to the candidates at Thu Duc. (At that time, he was a scholastic from Da Lat). I forever remember Father Nghia's words until now, he said: "Our life is only the value of knowing how to serve".

65 years of my life together with the Jesuits, serving the Vietnamese church for the second time is full of memories of the hardships and happiness in the Jesuit vocation: there are hardships in what people consider to be happy and I am lucky to see happiness through what people consider to be difficult. Thank God, thank the Society of Jesus, thank all of you, brothers in the Lord.

Even far away from you, my heart still remembers and prays for you twice a day in my time prayer.

Finally, I would like to share with you some simple pictures to express the joy of serving God and the Church in Timor Leste, a small country in the Southeast Asia.

In the Lord

Timor Leste
January 31, 2022







Biography and Apostolic Work

- 15 Sep 1957 Born on, at Mang Lang parish, Phu Yen Province, Qui Nhon diocese, in a farmer family with 8 brothers and sisters.
- In 1963 His grandparents and his 4-year-old brother died in a bombardment in Vietnam war; and his family had to move to another place for 10 years (1964-1974) before returning to the hometown.
- In 1974 Being a candidate in the Jesuit Candidate House at Thu-Duc, Vietnam.
- 1974-1978 As a Jesuit candidate working to help Jesuit farm at Tam-Ha, Thu Duc
- 13 Nov 1978 Being admitted to the Thu Duc Jesuit Novitiate.
- 2 Feb 1981 Taking first vows.
- 1981-1985 Serving at the Thu Duc Jesuit community: teaching catechism to children of the Epiphany Church and continuing to work in raising livestock and farming for living in the years of difficulties after the war in the communist regime.
- 1986-1995 Teach catechism to children at Angel's parish, Thu-Duc; working as a community minister, raising livestock and farming, and working as a representative for the community and parish to participate in local government as a member of the People's Council.

- 1996-2003 Working at Ho Nai Jesuit community for the tertianship; participating in proclaiming the Gospel to the uneducated, and taking the last vows in January 2000.
- 2004 Working as a minister at the Jesuit community of Angel Parish.
- 2005 Starting a new ministry in Timor Leste, following the call of superior JCAP.
- 2005-2012 Participating in the Jesuit Mission Suai --- a social apostolate; serving the poor in the southernmost of Timor Leste .
- 2008 Studying in SEARSOLIN (Social East Asia Rural Leadership Institute) Philippines.
- 2009 Returning to Timor Leste; continuing to work in Jesuit Mission Suai - project Agricultural program.
- 2013-2017 Working as a minister of the community and taking care of a 5-hectare farm in Hera, 15km from capital Dili, in the Timor Leste .
- 2018 up to now: Continuing to take care of the farm, raising livestock to increase production and helping maintaining the houses of the local communities when they needed, giving recollection to students and laity in different parishes; and assisting agritechnical help to farmers.

A THOUGHT ON MY VOCATION



Benedict Nguyen Hoang Dai, S.J.

“Living the Jesuit brother’s vocation means in whatever I do, I am aware of the great mission of God and cooperate with him in that mission through the charism of my vocation in daily life with the motto “AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM”.”

When I was asked to write about some experience of a Jesuit brother's vocation on the occasion of celebrating the 65th anniversary of the Society's return to Vietnam (1957-2022), I felt both proud of the vocation of brother in the Society from its beginning until now, and actually hesitant to write about it because the experiences are subjective and it is hard to share them concretely. However, I still want to

share my experience of being a Jesuit brother in today's context. I have lived this vocation for 15 years. Fifteen years for me are not too short and not too long but they are an opportunity to help me look back with gratitude and open my heart to the panorama still unfolding. I realize that it is also meaningful when writing these experiences in the process of the common discernment of the Synodal Church. And in my intuition, it is communion, participation, and mission, laid out by Synodality, that is also the identity of the Jesuit brother's vocation today.

When preparing to live this vocation I was also trained to study different subjects. I learned various philosophical theories to help me realize people's wisdom through the times and then I can compare them with the wisdom of God embodied in the mystery of Christ, especially through the mystery of the Incarnation and Passover.

I believe that the mystery of the Incarnation is the driving force for me to commit to this vocation. On contemplating this mystery in the silent night, I realize it is a source of grace to transform my soul and the world by God's love through Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ, who is grace, touches my personal history and all humankind to make it holy and bring out salvation. He will sanctify the history of each person and the creature to live in peace and happiness in the kingdom of God.





I realize that the mystery of self-emptiness (kenosis) is the center of religious life. So, the consecrated life peculiar to the vocation of the Jesuit brother in the Society is always a constant reminder for me to live out that conviction. Namely recognizing the presence of incarnated logos in the daily scenes of vocation.

In my feelings, the Jesuit brother's vocation is rather attached to the care of earthly matters. It sounds strange to say so because people often talk about heavenly matters but few dare to talk much about the reality of this life. I have understood more about this vocation since learning the Constitutions. The Constitutions describes the vocation of a brother with the simple word *coadjutor* (a helper) but the word contains a full meaning, both constructive and descriptive. The mission of the Society is God's Mission (*Missio Dei*) which needs assistance or collaboration from many people. The helpers in sacred matters called the spiritual *coadjutor*. The helper in earthly matters is called the temporary *coadjutor*.





Simply, I think that whoever lives in this vocation of a coadjutor has a chance to approach this reality where suffering and injustice still exist. It is also an opportunity for me to live a more committed religious life. Many people are curious about my identity and vocation, and they often ask me, "Why do I choose this vocation". Facing this question, it is hard to explain immediately because I don't know if the question is based on any value or just curiosity. I think this vocation is not only a constructive but also a charismatic, mystery of vocation. Usually, those who ask me like that due to seeing me in a modest position compared to a priestly vocation.

Indeed, looking back on the journey of my vocation, I found myself being molded in different mission fields. After the basic formation, I was sent to serve different apostolic communities that are prone to pastoral works, serving the poor and announcing the Gospel. I am charged with being the community's minister and engaging in the service of the local church, teaching catechism, accompanying small groups, and formation of the youth.

I have a passion for the education of children, especially ethnic people. I believe that investing in integral education is the best way to help the poor liberate themselves from poverty, and social issues later on and towards a sustainable future. My working field with multitask requires me to adapt to different environments, skills, and people whom I serve. I learned by doing, so I realized the practical lessons of life, and my limitations and certainly it left me with many different emotions in the journey of commitment.







Định lý Viète (Relation Coefficients)
 (Chưa học)

(A) $S_1 + V + O$

Tìm x_1, x_2 là các nghiệm của phương trình bậc 2
 thì quan trọng là $(-b/a)$ và (c/a)

Tổng tích $(-b/a)$ và (c/a)

$a > 0$

đồ thị hàm số $y = ax^2 + bx + c$

$a > 0$

$x \rightarrow -\infty$

y

Đồ thị hàm số $y = ax^2 + bx + c$

$a > 0$

$x \rightarrow -\infty$

y

TO HAVE

$y = ax^2 + bx + c$ ($a \neq 0$)

$\Delta = b^2 - 4ac$

Tìm x_1, x_2 là các nghiệm của phương trình bậc 2 thì quan trọng là $(-b/a)$ và (c/a)

Tổng tích $(-b/a)$ và (c/a)

$a > 0$

đồ thị hàm số $y = ax^2 + bx + c$

$a > 0$

$x \rightarrow -\infty$

y

Đồ thị hàm số $y = ax^2 + bx + c$

$a > 0$

$x \rightarrow -\infty$

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Đồ thị hàm số $y = ax^2 + bx + c$

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Đồ thị hàm số $y = ax^2 + bx + c$

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$x \rightarrow -\infty$

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Finally, I thank God because I continue to live in this vocation. Even though there are many challenges ahead, it is also a chance for me to gain more experience in life with God and with others. I thank God for giving me a taste of the mystery of vocation. Looking at the Jesuit brother's vocation in general, and my vocation in particular, I have a common sense with the process of the Synodal Church, walking together on the way, in which she invites every Christian to have communion, participation, and mission. It is also the identity of the Jesuit brother as a helper with God in the service of the Gospel for people today. Living the Jesuit brother's vocation means in whatever I do, I am aware of the great mission of God and cooperate with him in that mission through the charism of my vocation in daily life with the motto "AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM"



Biography and Apostolic Work

- 23 Jun 1982 Born in Qui Nhon City, Binh Dinh Province.
- 31 May 2005 Entering the Jesuit Novitiate at Thu-Duc, Vietnam
- 2007 Taking the first Vows.
- 2007-2009 Studying Philosophy at the Saint Joseph Jesuit Scholasticate at Thu-Duc, Vietnam
- 2010-2011 Regency period in Ho Nai, Bien Hoa Province, Vietnam.
- 2012 Studying Theology at the Saint Joseph Jesuit Scholasticate at Thu-Duc, Vietnam.
- 2013 Going to Rome to serve in an infirmary.
- 2014-2016 Coming to Vinh city, Nghe-An Province, Vietnam for preparing to set up a new Jesuit Community.
- 2017-2018 Continuing studying Theology at the Saint Joseph Jesuit Scholasticate at Thu-Duc, Vietnam.
- 2019 up to now: Working as a community minister of Saint John Brebeuf Residence in GiaLai Province, Vietnam; and taking care of teaching catechism to the catechumens and the young adults in this region as well as taking care of the ethnic dormitory house.

SURPRISES IN MY LIFE



John Nguyen Hung Son, S.J.

“Thanks to God, I feel strongly on the way to proclaim the Word of God.”

Surprise 1:

I was three months old when my mother passed away in January 1950 (December of Vietnamese lunar year of the Ox).

Surprise 2:

I was five years old; and on a Polish ship, I followed my family to the South of Vietnam, when the Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities in Vietnam divided Vietnam into two regions in Geneva in 1954.

Surprise 3:

When coming to the settlement at Dakmil district, Daknong Province, my childhood had experienced through five years in the primary school; but in the last year, due to getting heavy sick, my father couldn't work and my step-mother had to become the main labour of the family with 3 hectares of coffee and rice. In this situation, my father asked me to stop going to school and starting to help my family to work for living.

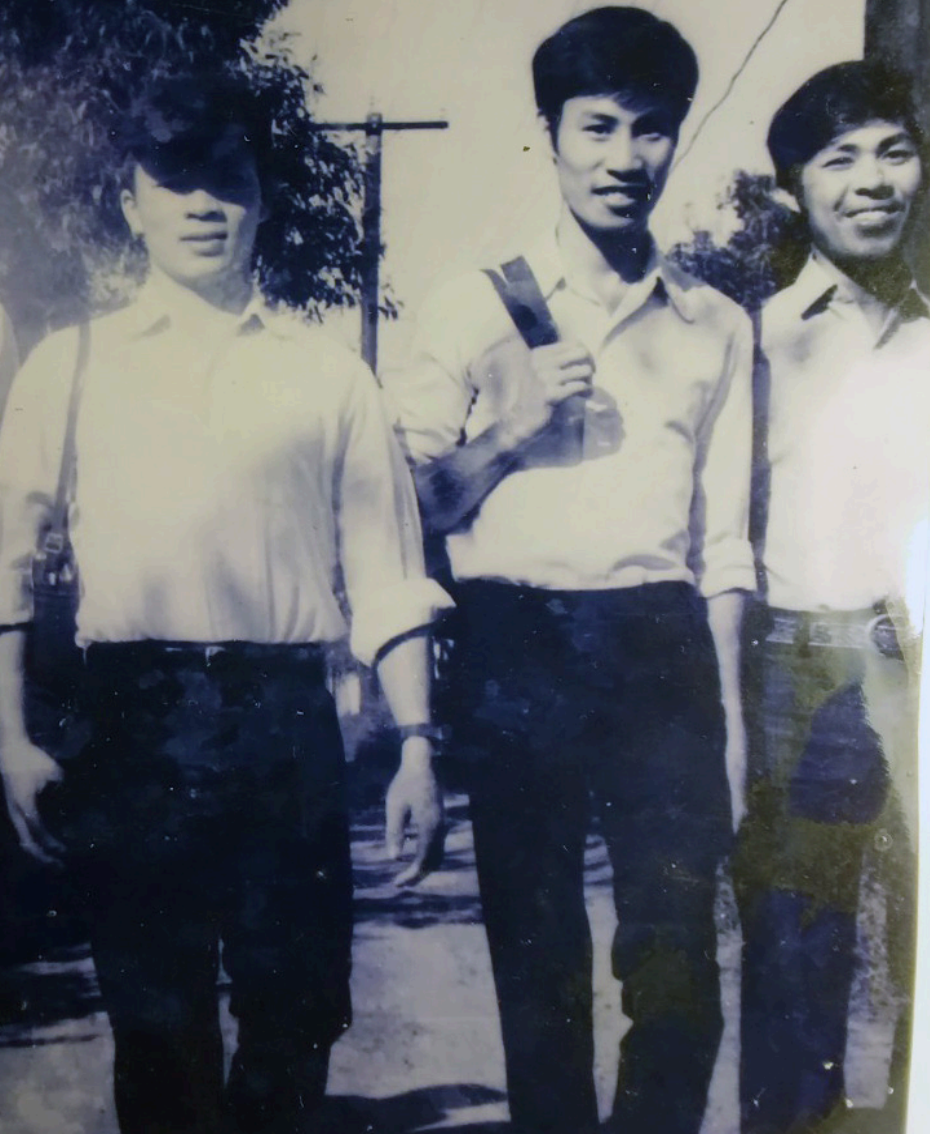
Surprise 4:

Two years later, one day at the beginning of the year 1966, on the occasion of being ordained to the priesthood, Father Joseph Đặng Sĩ Bình came to visit his relatives. When meeting with me, he asked me: “Why haven’t you gone to school any longer?”

I replied: “Due to the serious illness of my father, he couldn’t help my step-mother to work; and due to having no money to pay school fee, I have to stop going to school and help my family to work for living. Father Đặng Sĩ Bình said to me: “I will pay for your school-fee”. From that day, I had an opportunity to go to school again.

Since 1970, a benefactor with his generosity let our eight brothers to stay in his house, near the parish church named KIM-MAI in Ban Me Thuot city. Thanks to this, my elder brother Thanh and I could participate in the Mass every morning. The weekly adorations of the Eucharist have always attracted me because,





day by day, I feel that I am invited to proclaim the Gospel of God more and more. However, I couldn't explain why I always have this feeling. I didn't know what to do and who could help me. Then one day at the beginning of 1971, Fr. Michel Nguyen The Minh SJ came to Ban-Me-Thuot province from Saigon in his small car Volkswagen. He came to the catholic schools in this region to find the young men who could be Jesus's disciples. Five other boys and I are chosen to participate in a Spiritual Retreat for the discernment of the vocation; and among six retreatants, I am the only one to be received as a candidate of the Jesuit Candidate House at Thu-Duc, Vietnam in 1972.

Surprise 5:

At the beginning of 1972, when preparing for the Baccalaureate after twelve years of high school. I was called to be in the army by the order of general mobilization of the government. No one could be exempt. One of my friends and I have been ready to say good bye to the Jesuit Candidate House for joining in the army. Luckily, at the last minute. Fr Nguyen The Minh has explained our cases to the Department of General Staff and both of us didn't have to go into the army due to the religious reason.

Surprise 6:

When studying at the Faculty of Literature of University of Saigon, I was invited by Father Director of the Jesuit Candidate House to be examined for a novice of the Jesuit Novitiate. Together with 3 other candidates, I was received to the Jesuit Sacred Heart Novitiate at Thu-Duc on 31 July 1974.





Surprise 7:

I have lived as a novice for 9 months when the South of Vietnam falls into Communists on 30 April 1975. No one knows what happen under the communist regime. However, one month later, the Jesuit Sacred Heart Novitiate received more four new novices on 31 May 1975. All eight novices had to adapt to the new situation with the time for being trained and the time for working for life with the agricultural jobs of a farmer in raising pigs, goats, hens, ducks and planting some food plants such as manioc, sweet potato.

Surprise 8:

On 31 July 1976, two other novices and I were admitted to First Vows in the Society of Jesus at the Chapel of Alexandre De Rhodes at 161 Yen Do St. District 3, Saigon. In the Mass, Father Superior Nguyen Cong Doan SJ said to the novices that the Society of Jesus couldn't promise to give you any things beside the contents of article [101] of the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus.





Surprise 9:

On 22 April 1995, on the occasion of celebrating the Mass of priestly ordination for my cousin at Chau-Son Monastery in Don-Duong, before all my relatives in the reception, my father asked me: "When is the day of Priestly Ordination of Brother Son?"

I replied: "Daddy! I've never had that day because I'm always a Brother in the Society of Jesus."

My father said: "Then, what do you go to live in a religious organization for? It's better to get married and live normally as other people in the society."

At that time, I remember a verse of God: "I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ, and be found in him." (Php 3: 8-9a). This is the WORD OF LORD that I confirmed in the month of doing Spiritual Exercises in the first year of Novitiate at the twilight of the South of Vietnam. This WORD will go with me in my life to help me.

Surprise 10:

At the end of the year 1995, I was invited into the third year of probation. I have experienced through this period with Father Mariano Manso SJ. He was also my Master of Novitiate 20 years ago. Once more, the WORD OF LORD (Php 3: 8-9a) comes to me with its light and strength: Following Jesus Christ living with the poor, bringing my own cross and being humiliated.

Surprise 11:

On the Lent of the year 1997, the community of Saint Francis Xavier was established to take care of the proclamation of Gospel to the minor tribes in the High-Land of Vietnam. One priest, one other Brother and I activated this community for this special mission. Thanks to God, I feel strongly on the way to proclaim the Word of God. My Master of Tertianship told me to give the Spiritual Exercises and organize the groups for listening and practising the Word of God to everybody weekly.

Surprise 12:

At the end of the year 2000, the movement of High-Land tribes asking for the life-rights caused difficulties for all religious activities in this region.

On this occasion, the community made a retreat to find the Will of God. Then, the community decided to stop the High-Land mission; meanwhile many pastors of quasi-parishes or parishes in the remote regions asked to organize the groups for listening and practising the Word of Lord to everybody weekly. Therefore, at the beginning of the Lent of the year 2001, Three of us set forth for this mission: Father Phuong went to the North; Brother Tan to the Central and the East; I went to Ca-Mau and Can-Tho.







**Đồng Hành Khóa Linh Thao cho Quý Dì
Dòng Đức Mẹ Hiệp Nhất**



Surprise 13:

- My apostolic work had been proceeding when the Superior asked me to be a minister for the Retirement House which has just established. This is a great challenge to me; but remembering the desire of obedience and quickly giving-up all own will suggested by St Ignatius in the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus, I'm ready for this new mission. I believe in God in HIS PROVIDENCE: He closes this door, but he will open other door to me.
- I have been working as the minister of the Pignatelli Retirement House at Thu-Duc for about two years when Father Director of the Pastoral Center in Saigon asked me to assist to set up the courses for training to listen, prayer, and practise the Word of Lord weekly for about 300 people. They are the presentative for 200 parishes and 30 associations in

Saigon Archdiocese according to the requirement of His Eminence John Baptist in the year of the WORD OF GOD. For the first time, I dare not take care of this work because I feel that I haven't enough ability to fulfil the task. It's better to have a specialist with solid knowledge on the Bible and Theology.

- The Director of the Pastoral Center, for the second time, asked me again to do this mission. As before, I refused to get it with the same reasons and replied in asking him to let me pray for it and discuss the problem with my superior.
- For the third time, Father Director asked me again. This time I said I have been ready for this mission. Please help me if I make any mistakes in doing this task.
- I continue praying and asking God to help me to know what to do for His WILL; and then, I remember a priest with many

years of organizing the praying groups for listening and practising the Word of God according to the method of seven steps for the Christians in the parishes. I asked him to go with me every Saturday at the Pastoral Center in Saigon from 08.00am to 11.00 am. There was also a layman with many years of experience in organizing the praying groups for listening and practising the Word of God. He is ready to cooperate with me in this difficult task.

•At last, our working group consists of one priest, one layman and me, a religious. There will be two periods for training every Saturday morning. Each periods consists of 15 minutes for suggestion; 30 minutes praying in silence; 30 minutes for sharing ideas and experience in divided groups. There is a 30-minute break between two periods.

•At this time, Father Director of Pastoral Center opened the Class of Catechism on the Bible with 100 weeks on every Thursday. I'd like to participate in this class, but I can't because I have a community meeting at this time weekly. I asked Farther Director to give me the permission to record these lessons for my learning at home. At first he didn't agree, but when I asked him for the third time with the reason of letting all people (including the Vietnamese living in other countries) without condition to come to the Pastoral Center have an opportunity to learn the WORD OF GOD, Father Director let me record his lessons. Mr. Paul Nguyen Anh Tuan in the Communication Board of Saigon Archdiocese positively assists on the technique aspects. Thanks to this, hundreds of CD and USB with lessons came to people who desire to study the WORD OF GOD.



**Tuần Lời Chúa
tại Bản H**



**à cho các BÀ MẸ CÔNG GIÁO dân tộc H'Mông
Huổi Thủng sát biên giới Lào, năm 2020**

Surprise 14:

At the end of the year 2018, I am doing the apostolic work at the Holy Family Community when the provincial Superior asked me to go to the North to work with the mission group at Bac-Ninh Diocese. I replied that I'm ready for it. Then, I was at the parish called NY in Bac-Ninh diocese at the beginning of the year 2019, working together with three other Jesuits in the Bac-Ninh mission group.

Since then, more than three years passed. Thank GOD, the Father, who leads me to follow Jesus Christ, the Beloved Son on the surprised stations of my life; but thanks to it, I have experienced deeper on YOUR LOVE for me forever and ever. Amen.

Canisius Community
January 31, 2022



Biography and Apostolic Work

- 20 Aug 1950 Birth
- 31 Jul 1974 Novice
- 31 Jul 1976 The first Vows
- 20 Jan 2000 The final Vows
- The missions: Social Ministry, Evangelization Ministry, Member of Construction Committee, Giving Retreat, Catechizing.

EPISODE OF A RIVER



Peter Nguyen Huy Hoang, S.J.

“How I wish I could simplify my vocation journey and my mission just in one word “A River” so that I myself and all people I have been encountering in my journey will all join and pour all our own rivers to the open ocean far there.”

I cannot clearly remember, but many years have passed since I saw myself as a river. This river was joined from so many small streams flowing up there on high mountains longing for the open ocean. From a romantic search for varieties of colorful flowers, the river turns to the quest for cleansing and mingling with bigger rivers to fulfill the final quest for the dream of union with the mother ocean.



A river thirsts for purification

Flowing is the process of discovering and at the same time of questioning and solving. As other young fellows begin religious life, I found myself with a dream to become a priest in the Society of Jesus. I was simply thinking that being a priest is good in front of the eyes of others. I would be well educated, able to cross all continents and dressed in black cassock. This was my dream when I was at my high school years. Not to minimize the vocation of Brother, but I did not consider that kind of state of life, just because I had no information about it.

The Novitiate is one pause of the flowing river of mine. As a tiny flowing river pouring into a lake one day, it slows down, speeds up and wanders with anger to escape. But it doesn't know that is the reason for the lake. It creates an encounter deep down between the river and its deepest desire. It gives the river a chance to discover itself, to know what it really needs. Days in that active yet silent lake, I came out to find myself reoriented.

For the first time, it came to my consciousness the life of companionship and saw the Society as a physical Body. The time in Novitiate was a period that helped me to discover that the devoted life is not a means to obtain mere ambitions. This was the

time to deeply reflect on all my choices and that of others. This period helped me to confirm what I should be: to become a friend of the Lord Jesus, and thus being a Brother or a Priest was no longer a big deal to me. I decided to take my vows to live as Brother with a simplicity of heart: If the Society of Jesus is a Body with two types of states of life, then there will be works fitting for one kind, and also there will be other services suitable for the other. Of course, for the life of the Body as a Whole there are needs of correlative supports among different parts and I devote myself to live the supporting role in the life of a Brother.





Leaving the Novitiate, a new journey helped me to squarely understand my choice. As in the Spiritual Exercises, one makes a choice and in a certain time that choice is in need of sure confirmation. I decided to make choice and that choice lead me to face so many people. My mother cried because she knew her son will not be ordained as priest anymore. Many relatives of mine were upset while lot of friends of mine were disappointed. From that moment I was fully in touch with my mantra **"Journey Alone"**. This short phrase reminds me of the advice of our Socius and our Novice Master: ***You yourself live your own call, no one lives it for you...***



So many times, I have faced the question: “Why not become a priest, but a religious brother?”. To tell the truth, I could not know how to answer this question “fully”. More pious? More silent of heart? A proper sacrifice? and adding some more attributes? No! I never considered such attributes as standards for me to make my choice of life. Many aim for those characteristics in their lives, especially with priests. However, there is a certainty: I devote myself to become a friend of Jesus and to live out the dimension

of subsidiarity in the Society not as priest but as a Brother. Thus, for me, making this choice was quite emotional: I was to simply follow Jesus as a Brother in the Society. Experiences in those days of apostolate outreach equipped me with certainties. I was tired, had conflicts, and sleepless nights. But from those experiences I now see how I have been growing in my love for the Society, my sense of belonging to it, the happiness to be part of that living Body, the joy to participate in the life of brotherhood and services of the

Society as a Brother. There is one question I keep asking myself all the time: “Are you really happy to live in this Society?” The answer is never in a negative form.



Mingle with the River of History...

The river runs through each part of formation process of the Society. I am now finished with the basic formation and I find myself now devoted in a special study: a choice that the Society fully supports, and I am interested in it. Keeping on the ministry of study but in a different culture, I am now writing my dream since the time of my university study: deepening my knowledge and love for the History of the Church.

Unlike my other Brothers working in their fields of ministry, directly extending their services to “the poor” longing for the Good News, my field is the classroom in the university. It is a life in the library early in the morning from 9 to 9 in the evening, archives with information of all walks of the Church stretching from of old. It is also a field of a bicycle rolling along the river on the way to the university faithfully through all seasons of the year from spring to summer across fall and chilled in winter days. It is running along the natural river connecting myself with an unseen river which embraces me tightly, History. As a philosopher once said: “History is a River of lived experiences”, and I devote myself to the Walks of History, I have been embraced by those lived experiences, and follow them.



One day in summer, I arrived in Manresa where Saint Ignatius practiced the Exercises. My first willing was “to be barefoot” on that very soil even on rocky roads. How I wished I could stretch my foot on the land printed with the footsteps of our Founder, to touch on the very walls of the cave where our Founder Saint was sitting, his back resting to pray, to walk on the roads on which our Founder Saint passed on the repeating pattern of “hospital - cave - river bank”, I found myself connecting with the past, with the establishing days of the Society of which I am blessed to be a member. The past keeps falling back on my barefoot steps without resistance. This connection helps me to perceive the sense of belonging to the Society blessed with the very Name of Jesus.



I was not born catholic; my mother was Buddhist and my father belonged to Caodaism. My whole family baptized to be Catholic on Easter of 1993. From the very beginning, even I was not strong in my faith but I wished to share this faith with others when I am grown up. I always thank God for the gift of faith and that grateful heart urges me to discover the journey of faith lived in our soil, and that was the beginning of my interest in studying the History of the Church. My study of today helps me to comprehend and taste a drop of the faith of our Church, that of Missionaries crossing the oceans to bring the seed of faith to our homeland. They lived as our ancestors and with our ancestors to spread the seed of faith and strengthen it in our

ancestors. I cannot forget the images of missionaries passing countless miles with the routes sometimes taking almost a year sailing on boats just with the zeal to come to our soil. There were missionaries who crossed the deep sea and vast desert from the Mediterranean Sea to the Middle East then to India spending several years even sometimes sacrificing their lives on the journey in order to come to our homeland. Therefore, it was not so rare to know a group of missionaries, but just half of those members who remained were able to reach their destination in the early days of the history of the Church in Vietnam. They lived, ate and drank as our local people just to spread the Good News from town to town to the iso-

lated areas and so many of them lost their lives right there on the missionary fields. "Shortage of Supplies" was the term familiar with the life of the missionaries. In the difficulties of pastoral circumstances of the localities, even the episcopal ordination of an elect took place in the kitchen of a trading post with the participation of a few missionaries and faithful. Those missionaries, once boarded the boat, never had a thought of reunion back in their motherland. They just carried in their heart the zeal to spread the Gospel to the pagans and bring more souls to God. That was the meaning to make them spend the whole of their lives in the missionary fields and consider the local soil as their homeland.





I was blessed to read the well-kept scripts about the lives of those missionaries written from the days of their age. After four to five centuries passed, those scripts are not fully intact, handwritten words no longer clear, sometimes I had to use a magnifier to read them. There are cases of ancient terms of old clearly read but I could not comprehend the meaning because of the time gap. However, to grasp those endeavors makes me directly get to know the missionaries of the days, listen to their experienced sharing of difficul-

ties and their anxieties sent from the missionary fields back to the ordinaries. Their lifestyle and labors right in the missionary fields encourage and empower me to overcome cultural differences. At the same time, they motivate me to stretch the journey back to their time in history, to imagine and recreate freshly the scenes of the past and to narrate the episodes of lived faith experiences to all people I encounter.

While the formation process guided me to understand the meaning of the vocation I chose and to grow in love and blessed with the sense of belonging to the Society, I find that the program of special study has been raising me to maturity in the love for the Church as a whole through the zeal to discover all the scripts of the missionaries, to know how they lived and sacrificed themselves for the Church. To live in the international community is a very good opportunity to know more about the universal Church in each locality. Concretely, the experience of thesis writing to complete the requirements for graduation enables me to enjoy the spirit of brotherhood in this very Society and the Church as a whole. Coming from a South-Eastern Asian country and having certain difficulties with language barriers, I found the ancient reading materials in varieties of languages (like French, Italian, Latin, Portuguese, and Spanish) was really a hardship. However, there were so many supports from here; and there were many people who were always available for me; and a lot of helping hands were there to extend to me in time of need.



Just by chance, recently I have listened to part of a song as I could not listen to the whole of it, but there is a short phrase in the lyrics I like to sing it sometimes: "Our smiles have shined in those days ...". Actually, to quote just this phrase is not enough to express the theme of the song since it is about the feelings of the young of twenty, but for me I enjoy singing it. During the university days, I was so serious in my way of life to the point of "strict in a sense", such bored routines: just classroom then dormitory, and even no friends in the third year in the university. However, I learned to smile after I entered the Jesuit House and the Society helped me learn how to smile naturally. The vocation of the Jesuits forms my free-

ly shining smiles. Today, too, I live in smiles to the max and some brothers name me as the "laughing Jesuit" even in reality, it is not easy for me, as a foreign student religious, facing hardships of all sorts in academic life. However, I keep reminding myself that just in five or ten years and even many years to come, I will remember this moment, will miss each minute lived in the past and say to myself honestly: "My smiles brightly shined those days". I smile to express naturally the joy at the bottom of my heart.

The journey I've ever lived is a quietly running river always in need of purification because that is the episode of my whole life. I repent in order to get in touch with the spiritual realities and to prepare properly for better service in mission. Study is my mission as of now and at the same time a preparation for the service tomorrow: to share the gift of faith with which I was blessed to receive. How I wish I could simplify my vocation journey and my mission just in one word "A River" so that I myself and all people I have been encountering in my journey will all join and pour all our own rivers to the open ocean far there.

February 5, 2022.



Biography and Apostolic Work

- 14 Jun1983 Born in Khanh Hoa, Vietnam
- 2001 - 2005 Studying History at Hue University, BA.
- 31 May 2007 Entering the Sacred Heart Novitiate
- 31 May 2009 Taking the first vows
- 2009 - 2012 Studying Philosophy at Saint Joseph Jesuit Scholasticate
- 2012 - 2014 Doing regency in the province office
- 2014 - 2018 Studying Theology at Saint Joseph Jesuit Scholasticate (SJJS), STB.
- 2018 - 2020 Studying French and year of preparation, France
- 2020 - 2022 Studying History of the Church at the Institut Catholique de Paris, STL.
- From August 2022 Province archivist, assistant to Socius and teaching History of the Church at SJJS.

A LOVING CALL



Peter Nguyen Quoc Vinh, S.J.

“I realize that God loves me and that He has called me through mediators and instructors by whom I can find what God wants in my life.”

“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation” (Mk 16,15). That is the call of Jesus not only to the apostles of the past, but also to everyone today. This invitation kindled in me the desire to serve people and trained myself to be better every day. In this short reflection, I would like to share something about the vocation and mission of a Jesuit as a brother in the Society of Jesus.

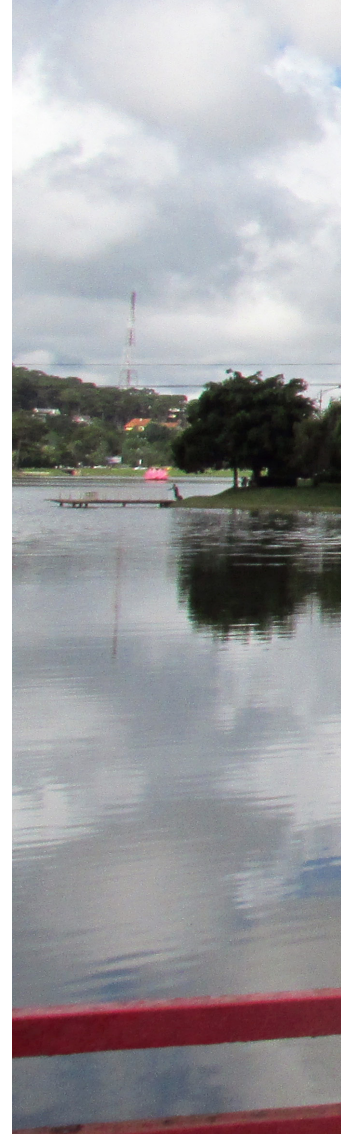
Vocation

First of all, a vocation is always initiated by God, who calls to him those he wants: Peter, James, John, etc... Secondly, an attitude to respond to the Lord’s call. The disciples gave up everything to follow God, such as careers, wives, and children. So, we wonder what makes them dare to give up everything to follow Jesus even though they do not know the future; as Jesus even said, “Foxes have dens and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay His head” (Lk 9, 58). Following the Lord means accepting

an unpredictable life. What God promised to reward them was a hundredfold with the accompanying challenges. Contemplating the apostles’ experience, I realize that God loves me and that He has called me through mediators and instructors by whom I can find what God wants in my life.

Indeed, initiated by God, vocation is often nourished by a long journey. From a very young age, my mom taught me how to read, write, and send me to school; she also taught me catechism and how to pray in my family and in our Christian community. I also participated in a few parish activities, such as teaching catechism, singing in the choirs, and volunteering at the church. I am grateful to be taught Catholic Catechism by the sisters of the Congregation of the Lovers of the Cross, especially the Course on Salvation History. One day I said to myself, I long to serve in the Church, but at the time, I didn't know what a vocation meant. As time passed, I was introduced to the Jesuits by a sister. I had a chance to meet the Jesuit priest who was in charge of

vocational promotion. I took an entrance examination at that meeting, and the director asked me to take a three-day retreat. During the retreat days, I was inspired by the example of Mary, who "has chosen what is better" (Lk 10,42). Then I returned home for more than a month; the candidacy director informed me that I was admitted to the candidacy house at the end of 2003. After spending four years as a candidate, I entered the novitiate in 2007 and took my first vows in 2009. I completed my philosophy and theology study in 2018. Through the basic formation stages, I understood more about myself, about the Society of Jesus, and grew up in the way of proceeding of a Jesuit, especially in the experience of discernment and the attitude of apostolic availability.









Mission

The primary duty of a Jesuit at the first stage of formation is to study. Besides studying philosophy and theology, my formation is enriched by doing the weekly apostolate and taking various community jobs. Each summer, I also was sent to different places such as Kontum, Gialai, Ca Mau, and Hanoi to do a one-month apostolate work. Through this experience, I had the opportunity to understand more about people's faith and I can share with them what I have learned. After my first study, I was sent to the Loc Ninh mission in 2018 where a Jesuit companion and I were in charge of building a new house to set up a new mission. For me, the primary mission is always community life where I was appointed as a minister. Besides being responsible for some jobs in

the community, I also taught catechisms for some ethics groups such as Stieng, and I also visited the sick and distributed the holy communion to them. As a discovery of the new mission, we lived in a little temporary cabin residing in a land filled with thorny plants and weeds. One year later, Jesuits started building a new small house and began their ministry in Đồng Tâm parish, collaborating with a diocesan priest. The mission and community services taught me how to discern and do ministry through challenges and difficulties. This experience allows me to understand what Henry Ford has said: "the airplane takes off against the wind, not with it."

At the beginning of 2021, I was sent to a new mission in Lào Cai where Jesuits mainly attempted to discover new possible apostolates such as working in the sub-parish, visiting the poor, distributing the holy communion for the sick, and teaching Catechism for Hmong ethnic group. In addition, I am collaborating with the social mission of Jesuits in Vietnam by sharing with others, spiritually and materially, small things such as clothes and food.



Challenges and Joys

A new mission always gives me a chance to learn new things, but some challenges come. Two Jesuits are often sent to a new land to discover a new mission. In such a situation, Jesuits often have to learn a new culture, a new way of life, and overwhelming with pastoral works. Therefore, we find it challenging to have time for monthly retreats, community meetings, and spiritual direction.

In other words, the challenge is how to keep the balance between pastoral work and prayer. It is not easy to pray, say the rosary, read spiritual books, and do the examination of conscience after a long working day. In addition, there are also challeng-

es in in-culturation. For example, as a custom, the people often invite us to have a drink and a meal. Another example is that the northerners often drink tea and coffee, but I cannot consume them; interestingly, even though I was born in the land of tea and coffee.

Moreover, people today are inherently living in the context of globalization and are accompanied by several consequences such as individualism, liberalism, and hedonism. It is challenging to live up to the identity of a religious. The challenge is how to respond to mission needs. The new land still has a lot of needs, both spiritually and materially, while I have many limitations.

Geographically, Hung Hoa is a

prominent diocese in which Catholics are scattered everywhere. Especially in the parish of Van Ban, there are three missions and one sub-parish with about 600 people spread within a distance of 100km with hills and dangerous mountains. The temperature is highly fluctuating. In addition, the church is still newly founded, so all organizations, activities, and faith lives are not yet deep.

Although we have challenges in our vocation and mission, there are joys. Despite living in a geographically distant environment, the fellow companions are always present and support each other in carrying out the mission.

Reflections

Reflecting on my vocation and mission journey, I first give thanks to the Lord; then, I am grateful to the Society of Jesus for loving and supporting me in one way or another so that I am able peacefully to follow the vocation and mission that God has entrusted to me. Like Mary, I realize that God is working in my life and the people I meet and serve. For that reason, I am more confident to follow Jesus through the spirituality of the Society of Jesus, and to be more courageous and generous, to respond to God's call in the vocation and mission that God has entrusted to me.







Biography and Apostolic Work

- 4 June 1981 Born into this world
- 2003 Entering the Jesuit Candidate House at Thu-Duc, Vietnam
- 31 May 2007 Entering the Jesuit Novitiate at Tam-Ha Thu-Duc, Vietnam
- 31 May 2009 Taking the first vows
- 2010-2012 Studying philosophy at Saint Joseph Jesuit Scholasticate
- 2013-2014 Doing reGENCY
- 2015-2018 Studying Theology at Saint Joseph Jesuit Scholasticate
- 2018-2021 Mission in Loc-Ninh, Vietnam
- 2021-to date Mission in Lao-Cai, Vietnam

JESUIT BROTHERHOOD VOCATION: SOME REFLECTIONS



Andrew Huynh Tan Tai, S.J.

“Because God is always with me, always gives me enough grace and will forever lead me on my journey of Jesuit brotherhood vocation through the Society of Jesus.”

In the spirit of spiritual communion with the other Jesuit brothers in the Francis Xavier province, in response to the invitation of Father Provincial, I would like to share a few sentiments about my own vocation to the brotherhood. Specifically, I will share the following 4 points:

The Grace of Recognizing My Vocation

For me, realizing my God-given vocation was a gradual process over time through the formation stages of the Society of Jesus. Indeed, from childhood until graduating from high school, I never paid attention to choosing my state of life. After graduating from high school, I took the university entrance exam and passed Duy-Tan university in Da Nang city. However, because the economic condition of my family was very difficult at that time, I did not hope to go to university like many other students. My par-

ents gave birth to 9 children (7 boys and 2 girls) but a son passed away at a very young age. I am the third child in the family. At that time, I prioritized working to earn money to support my family as well as hoping to return to university in the future. My parents gave me the freedom to choose my life direction, and my eldest sister wanted me to go to work to help my younger brothers and younger sister. It was in that situation that my elder brother, my twin brother, wanted to become a priest and invited me to find out what my vocation was. Introduced to the Society of Jesus by an elderly nun of Qui Nhon con-

gregation of the Holy Cross Lovers, my elder brother and I went to Angel parish and were helped by Fr Joseph Ngo Viet Tan SJ (who was a scholastic at that time) for 3 day-long prayers, and was accepted by Fr Provincial Vincent Pham Van Mam SJ (the candidate director at that time) to be a candidate of the Society of Jesus at the end of 2002. For me, this was a very important event. Because that 3-day retreat consisted of 5 people. After the retreat ended, my elder brother and I were chosen to be candidates. I thought God wanted me to continue to explore my vocation during my period of life in the candidate house.





My elder brother and I officially lived in two different candidate houses in early 2003. But after a year, my elder brother left the candidate house to do military service, and then changed his direction to become a diocesan priest. As for me, I continued to live and find out my vocation in the three different communities. Through the formation of the Society of Jesus as well as the spiritual friendship with fellow candidates, I knew myself more and more, paying attention to the Lord's call to me. Indeed, before living in the candidate communities, I had never left my family, never had a "real collision" with social environment. So, when living with fellow candidates, my personality was very timid, shy, lacking of confidence, lacking

of understanding of how to treat people... It had a great negative impact on my life. For example, I wanted to improve my English but too shy to make conversation in English with my classmates. I wanted to talk to my fellow candidates but did not dare to speak. I even did not know how to present an issue in a simple and natural manner... Thank God, because the Society of Jesus still trained me patiently; and my friends in the different candidate houses also accepted and supported me. Through their encouragement, I persistently sought God's calling for me.

By the time I was considered for the novitiate on May 31, 2005, I whispered to God that “God, you have led me to this point. I will consider the Order’s decision to be God’s will for me in my vocation search. Whether I can enter the novitiate or not is God’s will for me.” The special thing was that the Society of Jesus accepted me into the novitiate from 2005 to 2007. And I took it as God’s will for me to continue to discover my vocation.



During my two years at the Sacred Heart Novitiate, I was taught to discover and believe in my personal vocation, especially the 30-day retreat. At this retreat, I personally decided to choose a Jesuit brotherhood if it was God's will for me. I had heard many people say that "the reason a person chooses to live as a Jesuit brother is that he is poorly educated or has no talent"... I did not know if that argument makes sense. I was convinced that I choose to live as a friar in the Society of Jesus because it suits my personality. And I considered the Order's final decision on whether or not to take

the first vows as the confirmation of God. Thank God, after two years in the novitiate, the Society of Jesus knew my personality well (strengths and weaknesses) and still decided to let me make first vows to become a Jesuit brother. And I was also convinced that because my vocation was God's gift, God would give me enough grace to be able to follow Him to the end if I faithfully love and stick with Him.

After officially professing the perpetual first vows to become a Jesuit brother, I had been formed in St. Joseph Scholasticate for 5 years (3 years in philosophy and 2 years in theology). I did my regency in St. Joseph Pignatelli Community (or Retirement Community) for 2 years and afterwards; and then, I have been given a long-term mission in this community until now. Frankly speaking, my religious life after the novitiate's stage seemed like the waves of the sea, sometimes rising, sometimes falling, sometimes spiritual devotion, sometimes full of weakness and fragility. It depends on how much I love and attach to God. But my conviction of Jesuit brotherhood vocation has remained unchanged up to now. That's my vocation journey so far.

The Joy To Be Shared In The Order's Mission

From the time of studying philosophy, I often thought about what mission I would do to serve God's people in the Society of Jesus in the future. I haven't any academic special training. I neither have any outstanding talent to rely on. I just thought that I would do any missions the Order entrusted to me. That thought made my heart light, without thinking much. Before ending the philosophy phase to enter the 2-year period of regency, I opened my conscience with Fr Thomas Vu Quang Trung (who was Father Provincial at that time). He asked me "What do you want to do?" I said "I

don't know either". Then I asked him if there was a community in the Province which I could serve. He said that the retirement community needs staff to take care of the elderly and sick Jesuits. So I would like to serve at the retirement community for regency. Honestly, representing the Province in caring for the elderly and sick Jesuits during the two years of regency was full of joys, hardships and challenges. But my biggest challenge at that time was that I didn't know anything about medical knowledge.



When my regency ended, I met Fr Joseph Pham Thanh Liem (Father Provincial at that time) to open up my conscience. He asked me whether I still wanted to serve in the retirement community or not. I replied that if he wanted me to continue to serve the elderly and sick fathers, I would obey. I just wanted to learn medical knowledge to take care of the patients better, and he agreed. So I returned to St. Joseph Scholasticate to complete 2 years of theological study for Jesuit brothers, then came back the retirement community as an official member to learn nursing skills to better take care of the elderly and sick Jesuits. And I am still doing this mission until now.

Looking back on nearly 10 years at the retirement community, I only thank God and thank the Province for trusting me and giving me a specific and noble mission, representing the other members in the Province to take care of old and sick Jesuits, even though I don't always do my duty well.





Consolations from Brotherhood Vocation and Mission

My religious life has been having practical and profound consolations. Firstly, from my time in the novitiate until now, I have become more and more convinced that the brotherhood vocation in the Society of Jesus is a priceless gift which God has given to me. So I have happily received it with gratitude to God.

Secondly, I have a clearer understanding of brotherhood vocation in the charism of the Society of Jesus. It was Saint Ignatius of Loyola who, in the direction of God, accepted brotherhood vocation from the very beginning of the founding of the Order. Thus, Jesuit brothers still share the same charism with the Jesuit priests to glorify God more together.

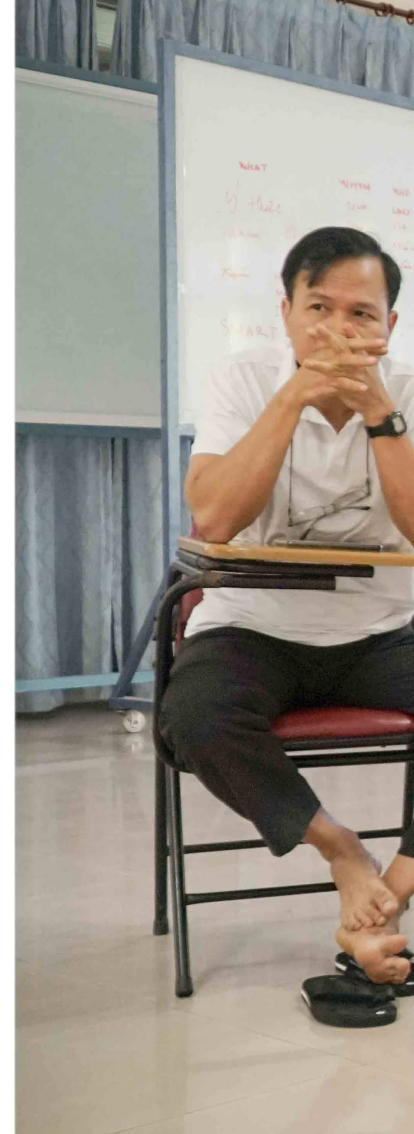
Thirdly, I have been loved, supported and properly trained by the superiors of the Order to live happily in my religious life.

Fourthly, the Order permitted me to learn nursing and to serve the mission of taking care of retired Jesuits. My religious life, through this mission, is meaningful.

Fifthly, the good example of retired Jesuits also helps me a lot, especially their faith and prayer life.

Sixthly, the pain and hardship of retired Jesuits due to illness still helps me to realize the passing fate of human life.

Hence, I am awakened not to follow worldly trends but determined to turn my heart to God, to seek what belongs to God. Finally, caring for retired Jesuits helps me connect with God more. Because, I believe that when I care for them with sincere love and humility, I am taking care of the suffering Jesus Himself.





Challenges from Brotherhood Vocation and Mission

When choosing to live as a Jesuit brother and committing myself to the ministry of caring for retired Jesuits, I cannot avoid the following challenges.

Firstly, when visiting my hometown parish, I often encounter prejudiced views and words of many lay people about brotherhood vocation. They only respect priests and nuns. As for me, I take this challenge as a normal thing and think “thank God for giving me the grace of simplicity and humility before lay people”.

Secondly, I sometimes recognize rude remarks or obvious jokes

about brotherhood vocation from several members in the Province. This makes me sad. But I always believe that God and the Society of Jesus have always loved me.

Thirdly, the mission of taking care of retired Jesuits sometimes makes me physically and mentally exhausted. Because the nature of patient care is continuous, having to be present at home day and night, not being able to go far and be away for a long time; and it requires care-giver in good health.

Fourthly, taking care of retired Jesuits is a silent but very important mission because it is the direct care of people’s body and spirit. Therefore, care-givers must

have a high degree of dedication and responsibility towards this mission. This sometimes makes me stressful and nervous. When I serve retired Jesuits well, everything is fine. But when I make a mistake or omission in taking care of them, my soul is often troubled, not to mention the harsh comments from other Jesuits in the Province.

Finally, I am a bit worried when I think about the structure and personnel for the retirement community in the future. I hope the Province has a plan for this community in the next 5-10 years.



ENDING WORDS

Looking back on the journey from the time I was accepted to the candidate house at the end of 2002 until now, I only give praises and thanks to God. – I also want to apologize to God and the Society of Jesus for my weaknesses and mistakes on the past journey. Now, with the spirit of trusting in God's boundless love, I can only ask God to give me more love for Him, attachment, loyalty and generosity to Him. So that I have the spiritual strength to love my vocation, to love the present mission, to serve retired Jesuits with charity and humility, to love and cooperate with other Jesuits in the Province for the greater glory of God. Then my vocation and mission will be united in a life of love and service following Jesus' example.

May Mary Mother of God, saint Joseph her spouse, all the saints and blessed in the Society of Jesus intercede with God for me.



Biography and Apostolic Works

Huynh Tan Tai SJ is a Jesuit brother in the Francis Xavier Province in Viet Nam. He made his perpetual first vows in 2007, completed 3 years of philosophy and 2 years of theology program for Jesuit brothers in the Province. He did his regency for 2 years in the retirement community. After completing his theological studies, he has returned to the retirement community to study nursing and serve retired Jesuits so far. He will be doing his tertianship in Vietnam from the beginning of July to the end of December 2022.

LIKE A DREAM



Stephen Tran Thien Kinh S.J.

“The vocation to the Brother and the mission of communication is like a dream that God has made come true in me now. Thanks God and to those who have contributed to my vocation journey.”

It can be said that my vocation comes from habits: the daily routine of joining Mass that my father encouraged his children to practice; the habit of reading books, especially moral books, the Saints' lives. These things are like seeds for my vocation.

As a child, I enjoyed the priestly life and cherished the dream of becoming a Priest, because I did not know anything about the vocation of being a brother.

The Jesuit vocation came to me from an unexpected event. When I was in college, I thought that after my graduation, I would decide the direction for my vocation. But during the summer of my 2nd year of university, I was introduced by the parish priest to have three-day retreat with priests of the Society of Jesus; Then I was accepted as a candidate for the Society and lived with the group of candidates Samuel in Dalat. This is like a dream I never imagined.

After graduating from university, my father passed away due to illness. It seemed that the dream of a religious vocation would end here because of the responsibility to take care of the family. I was born and raised in a large family (10 people), I realized that I had to fulfill the responsibility of an eldest child. So I decided to temporarily put aside my religious vocation and stay at home to help my family; but still promised the candidate director's father that I would return in 5 years.

During the years I worked, there were periods when I found it difficult to continue pursuing my religious vocation. Sometimes I think to myself, should I get married? The dream of vocation seems far away and gradually fades away with the hard work.

But in my heart I felt a certain sadness about my life in case I get married, a life I think would be very monotonous. If it were such a life, then it would certainly not bring happiness to myself.

exercises. I had the opportunity to reorient and discern my vocation. Later, I realized that perhaps it was the spiritual exercises that nourished my vocation: following God was the ultimate goal of my true happiness.

After much consideration and discernment, I decided to enter the candidate's house and entered the J.B. class. in 2006. Vocational dreams became bigger and true.





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During the time the candidate learned about the vocation to the Brother, I fell in love with this vocation. Especially the example of the Saints, the Blessed Brother has left beautiful images in me: silently but passionately.

I love the priestly vocation because it has been an ideal since my childhood. However, I find that the vocation to the Brother is more suitable to me, to my nature than to the priestly vocation.

So I decided to choose my vocation to become a brother after making a careful selection during the great spiritual exercises. To this day, I have no doubt about my choice and I love this vocation.

When choosing this vocation, I am often asked why I chose this state of life but not the priest. I do not hesitate to answer that a vocation to the Brother suits me better than a vocation to the Priest. So I was at peace and didn't have to worry anymore.

At the interview to enter the Novitiate, I was asked what I would do in the future. At that time, I replied that I would serve the poor. I want to serve them, but how to serve them? By my which strength? I knew I cannot serve them effectively without expertise. I studied information technology before, so I thought I could use the media to do something for them. Therefore, I decided to choose a communication mission.

I presented this to the Father superior finishing my studies, the Jesuits gave me a mission of communication --- a mission that is suitable for me. I was very happy when I can conduct this mission, I rarely feel discouraged, although sometimes I am tired. When you can live according to your vocation in accordance with your nature and carry out the mission you like, you will truly have full joy; my vocation dream is more fulfilled.

The vocation to the Brother and the mission of communications is like a dream that God has made come true in me now. Thanks God and to those who have contributed to my vocation journey.





Biography and Apostolic Word

- 20 May.1979 Born in Dakmil Daknong
- 31 May 2007 Entering the Sacred Heart Novitiate
- 31 May 2009 Taking the first vow
- 2009-2012 Studying Philosophy at Saint Joseph Jesuit Scholasticate
- 2012-2013 Doing regency the Sacred Heart Novitiate
- 2013-2015 Doing regency in Bangkok - Thailan
- 2015-2018 Studying Theology at Saint Joseph Jesuit Scholasticate
- 11 Apr 2018 up to now Working on communications at Ignatian community

A JOURNEY FOR MY VOCATION AND MISSIONS



Anthony Nguyen Van Chieu, S.J.

“Oh Lord! Please make me become the sign of God’s Mercy to others. At night, before coming to sleeping with a very short time of a day, I feel that God be satisfied with me. That’s enough.”

When Vietnam was separated into the South and the North on July 1954, my parents went to the South and settled in a poor rural area named Lac-An of Binh-Dương province. Two years later, on 24 August 1956, I was born to this world and then one day, my mother passed away, left me with her mother. I had lived with my grand-mother in the Christian life until the day when I received the Sacrament of Confirmation.

After that day, my grand-mother came to Saigon and I came back to my father.

My childhood had gone through my life tranquilly in a Christian family with the morning and evening prayers. It is a plough, a hoe, and a small field which help me to grow and grow up until I finished the secondary school in my village.

My Vocation

During the time learning in the secondary school, in addition to going to school and working to help my family, I participated in the religious life daily; worked in the Eucharistic Youth Movement of the parish and the diocese. I also took care of the morning and evening prayers in an area of the parish and assisted to the Priest in the Mass if necessary.

When practicing Christian ethical and serving activities, I had an opportunity to work with a Catechist. He was a photographer and lived alone without a community. I loved him because he had done all things in many areas to serve God's people in the parish. He showed me the right way to practice the ethical and serving work. I have learnt a lot of things from him. Although he is good at many fields, he has worked quietly and humbly. I have been influenced by his morality and his way of living and working. One day, I thought whether I could be a man like him.





I had still gone to the secondary school and worked for my family with growing the crops as usual. However, I felt something new in my soul. Going to church, in front of Tabernacle every noon, I had prayed to God. I recognized there had been a call to me to a Religious Life regardless of hardship and sufferings. I had been obsessed by some terms such as poverty, quietness, humbleness together with the image of Jesus of Nazareth. This made me happy in my heart.

When finishing the secondary school at Lac-An commune, I did not know where to go to continue my studying. In addition, my family had no money for me to continue going to school. At that time, there was a Jesuit candidate, who was in my village, came home for his vacation. He told me the Jesuit Candidate House has been looking for young boys who want to be a religious in the Society of Jesus. Although I did not know anything about the Religious Order, I asked him to introduce me to the Jesuit Order. A short time later, I received a letter from the Jesuit Order saying that I should go to the Jesuit Novitiate at Thu-Duc for a

tree-day retreat for my vocation. Tree days with prayers and do spiritual things made me live with happiness and peace. I asked God to receive me into His House. During the time of retreat, I asked my Father Spiritual Director Manso, a Spaniard: "When living as a religious, I only want to be a Brother without Priesthood, do I?". Father Manso smiled and replied: "Of course, you do". After the retreat, I have been received as a candidate in the Jesuit Candidate House. I stayed there one day more to complete the necessary procedure for my study at Thu-Duc.

A way to become a Jesuit Brother: A Religious with Missions

I joined the Jesuit Candidate House in July 1972 and began the first year at High-School. At the end of the school year, I asked to stop my schooling because my family could not afford to pay my school fee. The Jesuit Order has assisted me in this time in order that I can continue going to school and confirming my vocation. One year later, when coming back to my family for my vacation, I fell seriously sick. My father could not want me to continue going to school; additionally, he also needed me to help my family. However, after the Jesuit Order knew this, Father Manso came to my house and took me back to the Jesuit Candidate House to continue to study and complete my High-School during the time when the South of Vietnam fell on 30 April 1975.





The war time made people fall into the difficulties of chaos and sufferings. At the end of the year 1974, my family had to migrate to the other place. My village was under the bombardment. Nothing remained. By 20 April 1974, the Jesuit Candidate House at Thu-Duc dismissed. All candidates had to come back to their family. I stayed in Saigon. At that time, although I had an opportunity to go to another country, I decided to stay in Vietnam because I thought that there have been a few Vietnamese Jesuits and some Jesuit Candidates coming back after this event.

After Saigon fell, the difficulties covered all the society. The Jesuit Order with some Vietnamese members continued to live and share difficulties with everyone. All activities focused on the religious things and working for living. I had been working actively in growing the crops for food.

At the beginning of year 1976, by bicycle, I came back to visit my family. Facing with difficulties of my family, I intended to listen to my father, deciding to stop living my religious life and staying home to support my family. Nevertheless, Father Doan Cao Ly SJ, my superior, once more, came to my house and took me to come back to the Jesuit Community.

On 16 July 1976, I was received into the Jesuit Novitiate at Thu-Duc. During this time of training, I didn't follow the normal training schedule; but aiming at completing the training of a Jesuit novice in a changing society. Beside the time for the Mass and Prayers, I spent time on working for living as everyone in the society after war.





On 2 February 1979, I took the first vows after completing the first training time of a Jesuit; and then, I had to join into the army as requested by the government. I had been in the army from 30 April 1979 to April 1983.

I had left the army with a lot of changes in social environment together with new governmental policies and regulations for Religious and Priest. Moreover, the Roman Catholic Church in Vietnam invited layty, religious and priests to participate in the new society with all activities more positively. After discerning

the problem with my superior, I joined into the Movement of the Young Pioneers of HCMC, working at Nhi-Xuan farm, in Hoc-Mon District, HCMC. In 1990 I had to stop working there because they discovered my "Jesuit identity".

Having left the social environment, I came back to Tam-Ha Jesuit Community and took care of many services there.

In 1993, I was sent to a place called 'the Warming Nest in Ho-Nai' to take care of professional training to the poor and the ethnic people. Before taking my duty, I had three months of learning on basic carpentry at the Professional School in Bien-Hoa. After this time, I self-studied many other professions in order to meet the needs of teaching careers, repairment, construction and taking care of students in the dormitory.

In 1997, I had to stop working at 'the Warming Nest in Ho-Nai' because of an order of stopping working by the government. I came back to Tam-Ha Jesuit Community. As a Jesuit Brother, I served both Hien-Linh Jesuit Community and Tam-Ha Jesuit Community, and took care of many other duties if necessary. In 1998, I belonged to Hien-Linh Jesuit Community.





In November 1999, I took the tertianship and took the last vows on 14 September 2001; and then I took the role as the Vice-minister, and then, minister of Hien-Linh Community. Additionally, I worked for the Office of Vietnam Jesuit Region, dealing with the Library, Lands, and Construction. I served under 6 different Superiors of different communities at the same time onwards to the day I was sent to Dalat Community.

On 10 May 2004, I came to Dalat. Father Superior Nguyen Ngoc Tien SJ told me that I had to serve the community; additionally, I could also help him in the pastoral work in the parish. Besides, I could give the Spiritual Exercises to the communities if necessary.

Since 2011, there have been many members in the community. I didn't do pastoral work any longer; but I have still given the Spiritual Exercises to people who needed. Besides, I could do some evangelical work, serving the poor and the ethnic people; particularly, I visited them, helped them with something material and mental. I assisted the ethnic young people, catechists and students to make them persistent living their faith through the five-day or eight-day retreats in Summer annually. Since 1994, I have continually assisted the retreats.





Consolation - Sufferings - Sinfulness - Grace: VOCATION

When coming to the Jesuit Candidate House, I had to adapt to a new way of living. I had not enough money to buy manual books for my learning, and my clothes, and other necessary thing for my life. I felt so surprised at all things that I was laughed at as a boorish boy; but I tried my best to complete all my duties perfectly, happily and responsibly. Later, Father Director of the Jesuit Candidate House pointed at me and talked to other candidates: "Look at this boorish boy and learn from him". I didn't feel happy due to being praised; but due to my progress. I could live with a new way of life easily. I lived peacefully and believed in God's happiness on me.

In the environment of the Young Pioneers, called a semi-army force, there had been more challenges to me; but there have been also positive things that help me to find the new ways to serve people more effectively, aiming at building a good way of life for everybody. As a matter of fact, when facing with a hard-working life together with all kinds of people with all kinds of diseases without conditions for necessary life such as water for drinking, washing... daily. All things for life is only the flow of black water in the canal. Every day I pray: "Lord! Show me how to live in my life!"

For the first step, I set up an ordered life with high responsibility in the worst group of the company in all aspects. A sort time later, this group became an example group. This was considered as an event that brought happiness to my friends and me. After this, I was transferred to another job without working directly in the field any longer.

During those days, I was appreciated as a qualified person and was given many different jobs with much of power on other people. I had to let environment challenge myself

and because I am a religious, I have to behave moderately. However, I believe God is always beside me.

Sometimes, I felt risky in doing something; but there have been some positive things in helping the poor in the new economic zones, the illiterate or the primary-school students, the criminal. Oh Lord! Why do I have to do this?

After 1975, all social activities in the South of Vietnam have been changed. So has the religious life. All people had to work to have something to eat. All intellectual, apostolical, evangelical work is limited and difficult to do. In this situation, the meaning of religious life is seriously challenged. In the role of a religious Brother, I thought living as a religious in a community and living as a normal person in the society is not different. This kind of thinking, sometimes, made me desire to stop my religious life.

Once in a while, I wanted to stop because my father said, "If you want, you can go; let me be suffering all my life!"; however, the Jesuit

Order wanted me to continue. Since there, I have continued deepening the meaning of my religious life, especially, a Jesuit Brother Vocation. What do I do for HIS GLORY?

On the way to look for GOD'S WILL, I do not consider more or less; but I only follow the right way, regardless of hardship and sufferings. I start to learn how to trust my family to GOD and my self to the Jesuit Order.

During the time of joining the Army or Movement of the Young Pioneers, I felt so much challenging in all aspects. I recognized that I had to live in the group whose ideal could not bring any benefits to me.

Only one thing that made me stronger and proud and never ashamed to my conscience is that I have lived to prove that God still be present. I lived my serious life without carelessness or deceitfulness among people. One day, Mr. Political Officer of a battalion told me: "It is better if you make the soldiers live as your Christian Group." I felt proud in my heart because I am a religious.

The higher level I get in my services, the more I show my justice in my life. Nevertheless, I had also to deal with some challenges on material aspect such as diseases, hunger. I always asked God to give me peace and persistence.

For many years of living in the middle of society without normally practicing the sacraments, I had only relied on the loyalty to God and to the Jesuit Order in all my prayers; and then, discerning and deciding to choose the best way of behavior in my daily life and, sometimes, in a special event suddenly coming. Thanks to it, I felt peaceful.

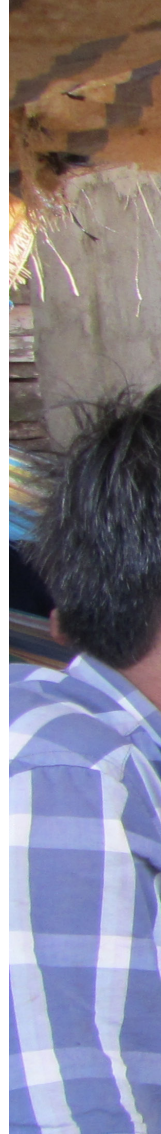
Living in the middle of society with up-and-down circumstances made me become a decisive person without concession or heartlessness to someone; especially without concession to injustice and illegal oppression. Hot-temper is the most challenging to my charity to the criminal and the stubborn persons.

Jesuit Brother Vocation: God's Achievement

Recalling to my vocation is not to reclaim that I am convinced of it now. In fact, God confirmed my vocation in an event in which He received my plea and I could verify it.

When entering the Jesuit Order, I met Jesus and I was pushed to the fact that I asked Him to let me bear the same sufferings with him. My life depends on Him; and when being in the Jesuit Order, my life depends on the Jesuit Order. I have never asked the Order to give me any opportunity to be more talented or more effective or more comfortable. What to do, where to live... all things in my life depend on God and the Jesuit Order.

Doing the Spiritual Exercises annually and helping other people do the retreats are opportunities through which God let me experience deeply on Him and His Love and Mercy for me. In my turn, I have to be responsible for the Love and Mercy to the others.





HAKAPHOS
Hakaphos
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During the years living in the middle of social environment, lacking of all necessary things for life, I had been trained to get some experience when I have served the poor at 'the Warming Nest in Ho-Nai' and today. Nevertheless, it seemed that God wanted me to go further as given in Saint Ignatius' Sacrifice Prayer:

Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty,

My memory, my understanding, and my entire will.

All I have and call my own.

Whatever I have or hold, you have given me.

I restore it all to you and surrender it Wholly to be governed by your will.

Give me only your love and grace.
And I am rich enough
and ask for nothing more. Amen.

Sacrifice is, firstly, receiving from God; and then, offering all things to Him in return to receiving only HIMSELF. That's enough. This idea made me give up all things. Because when I have HIM, I don't need anything else as given in Psalm 15:

O Lord, who may abide in Thy tent?
Who may dwell on Thy holy hill?

He who walks with integrity, and works righteousness. And speaks truth in his heart.

He does not slander with his tongue.
Nor does evil to his neighbor. Nor

takes up a reproach against his friend;

In whose eyes a reprobate is despised. But who honors those who fear the LORD; He swears to his own hurt, and does not change;

He does not put out his money at interest. Nor does he take a bribe against the innocent. He who does these things will never be shaken.

This revelation also let me know the mystery of loneliness of religious life. My life belongs to God, not to anyone, any creature. I must live in poverty and in freedom to every one and every thing.

I learnt from Abraham. Listen to God's voice. Set forth and not know where to.

I also learnt from Jeremiah: "He seduced me and I let Him seduced. He was stronger than me and He won" and "I told you where to go, go there"; "I told you what to say, say it. Because I am with you to liberate you". Jeremiah had served God in sufferings and humility.

From Samuel, he set an example to me through his plea to the people and God always received his request.

Saint Paul helped me welcome and

overcome my weaknesses and sinfulness to recognize God's goodness and power in my soul.

The Spiritual Exercises have taught me to look at Jesus on the Cross to know how Jesus prayed to the Father because Jesus sit on the right hand of the Father and Jesus prayed for human beings. I recognize that the Cross of Jesus is the place to complete his vocation of being beloved and also complete my vocation.

I am grateful to God due to spiritual experiences being granted to help me to be faithful to Him; and

understood the meaning of my religious life; without Him I have never got those experiences. In fact, I have not known more. Perhaps I am the only Jesuit Brother having no official training with all necessary subjects for a religious such as Philosophy, Theology, Bible, and other subjects due to the specially difficult circumstance after the South of Vietnam fell.

Later, I have also known more things thanks to doing research, thinking, comparing and discerning the different positions and find out the results. Nowadays, the way of understanding and recognizing the role of Brother Vocation in the Jesuit Order has changed to be suitable to the present situation. I understand that it doesn't not express the depth of a Jesuit Brother Vocation though a lot of effort is spent on giving it a right definition. This vocation starts from Jesus and His mystery of salvation. Only one who replies the call understands and feels satisfied.

My daily Mass is a new start. I set forth as a Jesuit Brother receiving the forgiven grace. I prepare the Sacrifice which is my human being including all aspects

of my vocation and my Jesuit Brother life together with Jesus Himself. I re-offer all these things to Him.

Everyday I ask God's Mercy to cover me. Thanks to that goodness LOVE, I can raise up the Mystery of the Cross of Jesus in my way of living as a religious in my community.

Oh Lord! Please make me become the sign of God's Mercy to others.

At night, before coming to sleeping with a very short time of a day, I feel that God be satisfied with me. That's enough.

And...When closing my eyes to leave this world, I would be recognized as a Jesuit Brother.





Biography and Apostolic Works

- 24 August 1956 Born at Lac-an, Binh Dương Province, South Vietnam
- July 1972 Being received in the Jesuit Candidate House at Thu-Duc.
- 16 July 1976 Being received in the Jesuit Novitiate at Thu-Duc
- 02 February 1979 Taking the first vows
- 30 Apr 1979 - Ap 1983 Joining into the army
- 1983 - 1990 Joining Movement of the young Pioneers
- 1990 - 1993 Working at Tam-Ha Jesuit Community
- 1993 - 1997 Working at the Warming Nest in Ho-Nai
- 1999 Tertianship
- 14 Sep 2001 Taking the last vows
- 2001 - 2004 Working for the Office of Vietnam Jesuit Region
- 2004 - 2011 Working at Dalat Community
- 2011 - Up to date Doing apostolic work at Dalat Community

A MOMENT FOR REFLECTING ON MY VOCATION



Joseph Dinh Viet Hung, S.J.

“After years of cultivation, I am still a sinner but loved and encouraged by God to become a companion, a Jesuit serving the Church in my Jesuit vocation. Thank God for the many wonderful things he has done for me and for the Jesuits.”

In the spirit of gratitude to God, to the Jesuits, to people, and to life, in the days leading up to Tet, I reflected on the nearly 20 years of being in a religious vocation in the Society of Jesus.

In the summer of 2002, I went to the Jesuit Candidate House, at 600-A Hanoi Highway to meet a priest to guide me in realizing my vocation. Words are not enough to express my joy at being admitted to the Jesuit Candidate House. Step by step, I was trained in 5 aspects of my vocation: spiritual, intellectual, apostolic, community, and humanity. When I first moved into the community, I was taught to be more flexible, open-minded, and welcoming the differences by the brothers in the community, who came from all over the country with the variety of cultures and family diversity.

In the summer of 2003, I was accepted into the Jesuit Novitiate with Father Ly, Father Socius, a minister and the other novices of 2 years. They are people who has helped me immerse deeper into the religious life. There, I learned and to be trained to know God through the Ignatius Spirituality and experienced practical periods. Looking back, I see that, thanks to the grace of God, I have matured a lot over the training period. Here, I learned about the 34th General Assembly and realized the Jesuit Brotherhood Vocation that I had chosen and loved.

In the summer of 2005, I took my first vows at the Sacred Heart Novitiate and entered the academy stage. The bewilderment and challenges with the period of studying philosophy helped me to think more deeply about many issues. Philosophy helps me to be more open to the world, less rigid about what I usually assert. I have been renewed many things and need to reset to find the truth. Studying philosophy is difficult but interesting, it has helped me become softer, have more positive thoughts so that I can realize that God is transcendent, worthy of truth, the source and also the desire of human. To God, nothing is impossible; and so it is possible for me to find out what Saint Ignatius Loyola invites me to do. God has given man wisdom, reason, spirit and freedom to fight for the truth.





In the summer of 2008 I began my apostolic practice in Hanoi at Ngoc Mach Sub-parish. This is the first steps into real life with parishioners and mission, it is God who led and made me grow up through lay people in the community and mission group, I learned to discern God's will. "Lord, what should I do in this situation?" is always a daily prayer for me to be at peace, to be enlightened to live, to behave, exist and adapt to flourish in another culture, and turbulence about religious persecution and sensitive political issues when the events at Thai Ha Parish, Nunciature and especially at the Ngoc Mach Sub-parish with divisions and disagreements among

lay people. I grew up, committed to serving not only in Ngoc Mach but also in the surrounding small sub-parishes. The parishioners look forward to having Mass, to be helped to read and share the Word of God, to study catechism... with me, here is a really full ripe rice field but lack of a reaper.

My two years of apostolic practice filled me with such joy that when I finished I could say "What a great thing the Lord has done for me!"

I was called to come back to study theology in the summer of 2010. At that time, I was filled with the dreams of parishioners. Many people wonder why I don't pursue a career as a priest... I often wonder why I didn't chose to be a priest so that I could better help them. These thoughts tormented me for a while. The theology program lasted only two years. At a time when I was distracted and tempted, I realized that I did not study well.

In the summer of 2012, after finishing two years of basic theology for a religious, I was asked to come to a new community, the Luy Gonzaga Community in Da Nang, to take on the initial task of assisting in the construction. Having spent six years here to manage the community, together with other friars, I was invited to participate in the mission of Evangelism and Social Apostolate. There, I had more contact with the poor, the sick, the apostate or the people who lost faith in God, etc. They left me a lot of things with memories and a deeper understanding of injustice society. To me, a Jesuit can be an evangelist and a social apostle wherever he lives. That can be shown through his own life, as a witness of Jesus' Companion, a witness of a life of poverty filled with love and service.





The Jesuit Order urged me to continue into my third year of novitiate with 6 months in the Philippines in the summer of 2018. Everywhere I went, the Lord opened up a new horizon for me to better understand the Jesuits, the Church and the people. I ended the session full of joy and gratitude for the paths God had led me. I returned to Vietnam with a new assignment in the construction department, namely taking care of the construction of community houses for the Jesuits.

Returning to my old job before entering the Jesuits with joys and challenges, I thank God for preparing me for a career so that I can serve people and live in the Jesuit Order. There are changes I need to update in my work, constantly updating with new knowledge, and proper conduct as a Jesuit. I also encountered mistakes, but fortunately, my brothers supported me with words of encouragement and sometimes with direct criticism. Now, to me, God is everything, God is the wonderful architect who created the universe and let it run in order. I always ask God to accompany, enlighten, help, and let me meet brothers and sisters who accompany me in building a better and stronger house for the Jesuits. All to praise God and serve people.





December 5, 2021 is my last profession in the Order. After years of cultivation, I am still a sinner but loved and encouraged by God to become a companion, a Jesuit serving the Church in my Jesuit vocation. Thank God for the many wonderful things he has done for me and for the Jesuits. Pray for God to continue to accompany and guide us every day of our lives. With gratitude, I want to say to the Lord as I did on the day of my first vows: "Lord, I will praise you forever and ever" (Ps 89:2).



- 25 March 1971 Born
- Summer 2002 Entering the Jesuit Candidate House at Thu-Duc, Vietnam
- 31 May 2003 Entering the Jesuit Novitiate at Tam-Ha, Thu-Duc, Vietnam
- Summer 2005 Taking the first vows
- 2006-2008 Studying Philosophy at Saint Joseph Jesuit Scholastic in Thu-duc, Vietnam
- 2009-2010 Regency period
- 2010-2012 Studying Theology at Saint Joseph Jesuit Scholastic in Thu-duc, Vietnam
- 2012-2017 Working as a member in the mission of Evangelism and Social Apostolate in Da-Nang, Vietnam
- Summer 2018 Tertian-ship in the Philippines
- 5 Dec 2021 Taking the last vows

IT IS ALL GOD'S GRACE

25 YEARS IN A JOURNEY OF VOCATION



John Tran Hong Long, S.J.

“My life is called by God,
Peaceful despite the solitary sea of life.
Regardless the mist and darkness of night,
My heart is still thirsty to build love.
Fraternity with God's fellowship is interpenetrated,
25 years of trust in God's infinite love.”

If a lifespan is about 100 years, I have been absorbed in my walking on a half of my life path. On this journey, I have felt happy and peaceful with my deep conviction that I am a child of God and disciple of Christ in 25 years, a quarter of a century. It is unbelievable for me to follow Jesus Christ as a Jesuit brother during 25 years of perseverance and steadfastness.

Reflecting on my life's vocation, I think that I have taken a pilgrimage which is neither short nor long, but is enough distant for me to be convinced that my Jesuit vocation is all God's grace. This chain of all grace is connected and embroidered by all consolation and desolation events happening at each hour, on every day of the last 25 years.

When I remember my vocation orientation retreat, I myself feel surprised with what I had last done. Namely, it was the first time that I prayed many hours and many times during each day of the retreat. It was also the first time I shared my prayer experience with a retreat director after each hour of prayer. During this triduum I was invited and encouraged to pray at midnight, which was the first time I had experienced such a thing in my life. Truly, it is hard for me to express the joy and happiness I felt with God's presence through the precious moments of silence. I thought about this many times over the years!

After the days of this vocation orientation retreat, one Jesuit priest, the director of the candidate house, encountered me and helped me to make my vocation discernment. Then, he said to me that I could help the poor and build houses for the people in need later! When doing the vocation examination before entering the next stage of formation, I was asked a question; that is, "In religious life what would I do? With enthusiasm of a youth and initial surprise, I thought that I could do "this or that." I wanted to do many things! Living nearly 25 years, I have started reflection on my vocation to "implement" the so-called "later" time that I was guided almost 30 years ago. I am grateful to God so much for all grace, which God has given to me is priceless and boundless.





Then time and tide wait for no man, I no longer count days, months, years, but I have only focused the whole mind and heart on the cultivation of inner desires of restless service for the missions of the Society of Jesus. Now I think about it and recognize that 25 years walking with my brothers, undertaking different work or ministries of our Vietnam Province and in its many local communities. I realize that what I have done is not completely compatible with my initial thought or tentative plans. On the contrary, all things are done with God's mysterious guidance and miraculous accompaniments.

Following Jesus Christ in the vocation of Jesuit Brotherhood. I have received many inquiries from my family, relatives, and those who I have encountered and accompanied. They wonder why I did not seek priesthood which would bring fame to our family. However, after listening to my sharing, all of them have understood and supported my vocational choice to be a Jesuit Brother.

I have felt joyful and happy that I have chosen and lived this vocation. I am so glad to share, collaborate with many people doing charity work together; cheerful to visit, to encourage, to share, and to help the people in need. I feel that what I have done





is really meaningful when I live truly my trusted mission. Happiness multiplies every time when there is sharing, collaboration, and connection among groups and friends whom I have accompanied over many years. The grace God has given to me speeds without end owing to the connection from those who I am accompanying. 25 years is enough to confirm it. I am grateful to God and everyone.

Experiencing 25 years of the vocation of consecrated life, I cannot avoid misunderstanding, conflicts, and failures, or stumbles. I believe this peaceful poem expresses it well:

My life is called by God,
Peaceful despite the solitary sea of life.
Regardless the mist and darkness of
night,
My heart is still thirsty to build love.
Fraternity with God's fellowship is inter-
penetrated,
25 years of trust in God's infinite love.





I am convinced that vocation is mystery because it is hard to write about and describe what the mystery of vocation is. Like the past 25 years, my vocation is still new to me because my restless desire to perfect my vocation has not stopped. However, I don't know how to tell the story of my vocation and ministry while every moment of my life has been a miracle during which I felt happiness and pain. I want to write and share a part for a journey of my vocation in order to express my deep gratitude to God. On the road ahead, I believe firmly and I trust in God who I have chosen to follow.

Thanks for 25 years of grace!



Biography and Apostolic Works

- 6 Nov. 1967 Born in Kien Giang Province, Vietnam
- 15 Feb. 1995 Entering the Jesuit Novitiate at Thu-Duc, Vietnam
- 1997-2000 Studying Computer Sciences at HCM City of University of Technology
- 2001-2009 Minister of the Saint Joseph Jesuit Scholasticate
- 2001-2015 Working as member of Financial Ministry.
- 2009-2010 Studying at EAPI in the Philippines
- 2011-2013 Minister of Curia community
- 2014 Doing tertianship in Australia
- 17.01.2015 Taking final vows

- 2015-2017 Minister of the Ignatius community.
- 2015-2019 Treasurer of the Social Ministry
- 2017 up to now Minister of the of the Claude de Colombière community in Long Xuyen diocese.
- 2021 up to now Member of the Social Ministry, the Evangelisation Ministry and the Migrant and Ethnic Ministry.

FIREWOOD



Anthony Pham Van Quoc, S.J.

“What I currently have is wood sticks that I can get to sustain the fire to warm Baby Jesus. I am God’s firewood collector!”


Tf ever joined a Spiritual Exercise retreat, no doubt that you will be impressed by a praying method called contemplation which Saint Ignatius introduces to retreatants for contemplating some mystery of God. I am no exception. The 30-day Spiritual Exercise retreat that I had a chance to take part in during my novitiate period lasts a great impression

on me, and perhaps I have never forgotten it. Then back to a place that I was keen on contemplating. It was a poor, cold, and dark nativity scene. This place lacked warmth and light, yet it was the only place to receive the Son of God to come and dwell among us. I, a stranger, was assigned an urgent task “Go and get some firewood.” I went in a rush, happiness, and silence to pick up some firewood anywhere that I could; then thanks to it, a flame would be kindled to warm Baby Jesus and his family.

“Go and get some firewood.” This calling kept imprinting on my mind for 2 years of novitiate. During the journey as a pilgrim, at times I asked myself some questions. “Go and get some firewood?”, “For what?”, “What is its underlying message?” And Holy Spirit again responded by prompting in my mind the idea of the journey that I have embarked on so far. That is the idea of a Jesuit brotherhood. You may ask me “Is there a correlation between going and getting firewood and such a life?” To respond to the concern, I will tell you what God has endowed me with through the calling of Saint Joseph.

In the freezing atmosphere of that winter, the snow dominated the landscapes like a giant white curtain concealing distant scenery. However, the smiles of Baby Jesus and his mother, and the father dispelled that coldness of the night. I smiled, my heart seemed to be filled with warm and fresh lifeblood. Its power made me exhilarate with indescribable joy, and since then I have always wished to bring smiles to warm those whose souls are covered by a thin layer of ice yet still cold. During the 2-year period in the novitiate, through some real experiments, I got into contact with those persons. The Baby Jesus has been hiding until today in them, in those who are fighting to regain their lives from the hand of Death,





and in their relatives whose faces are deeply anxious. He is veiling under the uniform of manual workers who are struggling to make their ends meet. He is still there in the elderly, homeless children wandering on the streets to find anything eatable to fill up their stomachs, and so on. He is still there and waiting.

On the dark and cold winter's night, I kept going around and collecting some firewood in silence. In fact, this task was not a big deal, or even it could be considered petty and mediocre. Nevertheless, it was the most meaningful thing I could do at that time to meet the urgent demand of someone, and here, it was of the little and weak Baby Jesus in the middle of an enormous universe. He needed warmth. Being warm was the most needed for him. Also, once time, when another brother in the novitiate and I were riding our 'blue bicycle' in a place where we met a stranger. I saw

Him in an old man, named "Hai Xin" in a wasteland. This man was thin and infirm with a pale complexion reflecting his suffering and tough life, lying under a thatched hut. This scene was a far cry from picturesque ones in my imagination when reading fairy tales. There he was, lonely due to the lack of closeness of family, relatives, and friends. Fortunately, he still had a 'friend', a small and undernourished chicken. It was his only joy. Sadly enough, I failed to see it at the time we said goodbye to Mr. Hai to return home. The firewood, then, was no longer material, food, or

clothes, but the warmth of human sentiments, conversations, and encouragement. Although the warmth of the burned wood sticks might be insufficient strong, I thought that it was enough to make his smiles find their meant-to-be place after a long time of disappearance. Perhaps, it was an initial spark to ignite other sparks in him. During this Christmas time when I was away from home, Baby Jesus was really lively before my eyes. It was at that moment that wind gently passed

through my soul, resonating and bringing me back to the feeling that I had experienced. I quietly contemplated, listened, and again, I was touched deeply but unsettlingly.

The novitiate, which has been called by many forefathers of mine with the lovely name 'the Society's kindergarten' at Ba Song-Tam Ha, was a peaceful place in the heart of a crowded and bustling city. When living here, I felt like I was experiencing a similar ambiance to that of the Holy Family in the past. I imagined and bathed myself in such scenery. I was busy but not crazy with a continuous schedule of the day with repetitive tasks. We, individual novices coming from different places, were residing together under the same roof. Everything here

was not special to the point that people could be impressed at first sight. However, it was the ordinary and simple features that make it special and urge an unsettling heart to unite with Jesus. There were many works for us to do here such as praying, gardening, collecting chicken eggs, feeding pigs, cleaning the yard, and so on. But those tasks were just a means or a bridge for us to build an intimate rapport with the One who has been calling us to follow Him.



At the beginning of the Spiritual Exercises, our founder father, Saint Ignatius, firmly states that the purpose of man being created is to revere, praise, and serve God alone; everything else is just a means to assist others in fulfilling that purpose. Therefore, the aforementioned commonly regarded mundane jobs are equally valuable as other supposedly noble ones. If all things I do is just for myself, there will certainly be degrees of value between them. But when they are just considered a means, you will feel free to do anything as long as it helps you to enhance your intimate union with God!

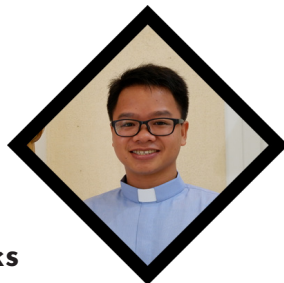
Here, I would like to mention again small works to make me feel more of their power. Saint Therese of the Infant Jesus brought many souls back to God just by tiny acts like picking up needles or sweeping. Saint Alphonsus Rodriguez spent forty years working as a faithful gatekeeper without failing to intimately unite with God, to name but a few. That power does not come from small works themselves, but from God's will. He failed to be incarnated in the figure of a King

or a Queen, but a poor man. He did not choose to be born in a magnificent palace with all its commodities, but in a stone cave on the field on a winter night. He chose to be with the poorest, the most pitiful, and worst people among others in human society. It is Him who chose the small and ordinary things to make them extraordinary.

I was called to engage in seeking the meaning of these ordinary things with nothing more than a longing for imitating the meekness and humility of Lord Jesus who is a perfect exemplar. He is God; but He wants to be a nameless and petty man immersed Himself amid His innumerable creatures. The path that God wants me to follow is one of things such as extraordinary simplicity; and ordinary, tiny, and quiet things.

Having said that, any feet walked on the path of roses on the surface are certainly wounded by the beneath thorns. The “thorns” is a necessity in each individual’s life and the same goes for each Jesuit. Instead of causing fears, however, those wounds will make the bare feet stronger and bolder to walk on the endless journey of faith ahead. I have also gradually felt the difficulties in choosing the state of life that I should follow; but they are not so serious, and just like a sort of cold that can be cured by the strength of ‘antibiotics’ of Lord Jesus who has gone before and become an exemplar to me so that I can imitate Him and enter the Heaven.

If you are feeling joyful, peaceful, and happy with what you are having now, it is your vocation. So do I. I am in peace, joy, and happiness with what I have been granted such as studying hard, being faithful with all my heart, working diligently to the best that I can, and so on. That is a good sign that I am gaining more motivation and power to take on the journey as a disciple of Christ. What I currently have is wood sticks that I can get to sustain the fire to warm Baby Jesus. I am God’s firewood collector!



Biography and Apostolic Works

- 23 May 1994 Born
- 31 May 2019 Entering the Jesuit Novitiate at Thu-Duc, Vietnam
- 26 Jan 2022 Taking the first vows
- 2022 up to date Study philosophy at the Saint Joseph Scholasticate

JESUIT BROTHERS: GOD'S PROMISE AND MY VOCATION



Dominic Tran Van Tan, S.J.

“The more years I spent in the field, the more I raised the prayer of thanksgiving because God had given me the grace to be the Herald of the Gospel.”

Having been received into the Society of Jesus, I have always desired to meet and live among the poor. During my time at the novitiate, I used to visit the Thu Duc Orphanage every Thursday. After completing the training period in the novitiate, I was assigned to live and work in a monastery in Saigon. As if there was an arrangement, my place was located opposite an orphanage... At that time, I felt that my mission was attached to orphans. Finally, I was sent on a mission to help ethnic people.

Grace is also found in the mission. Every person, regardless of their position in society, priests or laity, no matter how rich or poor they are, all along the way of the mission, occupies a place in the bosom of God and in his plan.

Look at Mary when she is entrusted by an angel with the task of bearing the Son of God, a task with the promise that "the Holy Spirit will come down on you, and the power of God will

overshadow you". It's a clear mission and a clear promise. Above all, her faith makes her believe that no matter what happens on the journey, it will happen in the Spirit and power of God, as He promised.



My journey to follow God began at the age of 16, when I left my hometown for Saigon City, working during the day to earn a living, studying French at night, and looking for a monastery to train myself and fulfill my wishes. I went to the Ho Nai hospital, the Redemptorist order, and then the Order of Preachers, but all refused. By chance, I was introduced to a Jesuit priest at a time when the novitiate was closed to newcomers. It seemed that the meeting was detrimental, but miraculously, the door to the monastic life was opened again for me when I asked the priest: "Can I help you with something while you go to Da Lat?". One month later, the priest called me to Dalat to

work at the Pontifical Institute. I was at school during the morning, worked in the afternoon, and took on the role of guarding the gates of the Pontifical Institute on Sundays. The beginning of my monastery life as a Jesuit student was that simple.

After April 30, 1975, I was assigned to Thu Duc to receive the livestock farming area of the order. I have been here for 15 years. These years have helped shape the spirit of poverty-simplicity.

Since then, when I was sent among the ethnic people in a remote and poor area, I was able to blend into their lives so gently and sweetly. My love for the poor started to bloom

from here. I had many friends from a variety of races. The more years I spent in the field, the more I raised the prayer of thanksgiving because God had given me the grace to be the Herald of the Gospel.

The light of the Gospel has freed people from superstition and charms that engulf them in the whirlpool of evil spirits. The joy of the Gospel has enveloped the villages where our brothers were assigned.

Obviously, our brothers' journey to proclaim the gospel as well as spread God's mercy and forgiveness begins with visiting the sick, the elderly, and playing with children. Soon, we became acquainted with everyone in the village.

Honestly, when I first set foot in the land of ethnic minorities, facing poverty, I used to think about material supports such as food, clothing, and education fees for children here, along with minimal instructions on farming. However, when I did immerse myself in people's lives, I came to realize that what they need is the heart of friends who are willing to listen to them, a breath full of the spirit of God, a manner of the Bible to reveal the image of the one sent by The Father in The Holy Spirit.









Walking with many friends, we have passed through many fields...One day, on an autumn evening in 2004, we set foot in a new and unfamiliar land. In the early days of the field, there was a community without a chapel between three Khmer villages and a Stieng village, with only a few lay houses around. The priest who comes to Mass every week often borrows a family yard so that parishioners can gather to attend Mass.

In the midst of a dry sky, they were waiting for the living Word: the seed of the Gospel had been sown. People from Bu Nom, Chang Hai, Cay Dua of the Khmer, and Bu Tam of the Stieng all expressed strong faith. We also invited some brothers and sisters to come to Phuoc Long to attend catechism courses, but most of them were illiterate. That's not a big deal either. People are illiterate but have faith in God. However, what is more important than literacy is an open heart, to hear from God and to follow him.

Within a year, we gathered a number of pioneers to become companions and core members of the new field. Initially, these members were not called catechists because of certain limitations in knowledge and awareness, but they helped us a lot in gathering parishioners, coordinating activities, and preparing of important occasions such as Christmas.

This year, the parish priest asked the government for permission to decorate for Christmas. Besides, we also built more stone caves in some places in the village as many parishioners returned. At Bu Tam, home

of the Stieng people, there were five families, but the head was a Khmer brother who was once kicked out of the village because of his Protestant faith. In the Chang Hai area, we know Lam Y, who is a gentle but slow person, fortunate to have young brothers to support. The Bu Nom area consists of a group of young men and women, while the Coconut area is a bit separate, with only a few families. On Christmas Eve, after Mass, we went together with some core members to visit each cave.



Tạ ơn 
5



năm Hồng Ân Dân Hiến
THẦY ĐAMINH TRẦN VĂN TÂN, SJ







When we got to the Cay-Dua area, there wasn't a holy statue. Some joked that Saint Joseph and Mary were still knocking on doors looking for a place to stay. In fact, families who have Christmas cribs soon took their statues away to avoid embarrassment, because right in front of their house was the shrine of Khmer people, who had traditionally followed Buddha. Contemplating the Son of God born in the middle of a deserted sky. Thinking about how there are only 3 families that have faith in God, we felt like we were lost in the old Belem sky. The Son of God gave his first cry to call the world, a call lost among people who knew Buddha but had never heard of God.

However, even in the quiet surroundings, we heard the father's voice replying to the son: "You are my son." Today I gave birth to you." The mission of the Son through the message announced by the envoy: "Today a savior was born FOR you..." The Father's promise to the Son when living as a human: "You are my son, today I gave birth to you."



Even today, when the Son is in human form, the Father embraces the Son in eternal love. In return, the Son with a filial heart, is always obedient. Therefore, when coming into the world, Christ said, "God does not like sacrifices and offerings, nor holocausts nor sin offerings, but has created a body for you. Then I said: "My God, I have come to do your will, as it is written in the Holy Scriptures (Heb 10, 5-7)."

At the manger of Bethlehem tonight, we also wish to receive the same calling and the same promise: "You are my beloved Son. Today I give birth to you". Yes, Father. No matter what happens in this life, we will always be priceless treasures that you will always love and protect, as you said: "You are my beloved son." All my life, I have professed and proclaimed your love for us.





Biography and Apostolic Works

- 15 Feb 1947 Born
- 31 Dec 1967 Novice
- 31 Dec 1969 The first Vows
- 27 Jan 1982 The final Vows
- The missions Evangelisation Ministry, Training Catechists, Pastoral Ministry

MY LIFE AS A JESUIT BROTHER



Joseph Duong Minh Quan, S.J.

“Wherever I am, wherever I go and in any community, I still feel peaceful, joyful, and serene.”

Before being a Jesuit candidate of the Society of Jesus, I had learned to know the consecrated life at Saint Joseph Seminary of Saigon for about 3 years. However, I could not register as a permanent resident in Hochiminh City, so my spiritual director at the Seminary advised me to move back to my diocese or to enter a certain religious order.

When discerning and praying, one day I had suddenly placed myself under the guidance of the Holy Spirit on the path of my vocation. I thought if I contacted any Order today, I believed that order would be the one in God's plan for me.

One day, I went to another parish with Father Joseph Tran Van Binh for his business. Then, I knew it was a parish belonging to the Society of Jesus so I immediately asked Father Joseph introduce me to the Society of Jesus.

After talking with Father Joseph Tran Van Nam, I was immediately introduced to Father Joseph Hoang Van Tinh (director of the Society of Jesus Candidates). After a three-day retreat, I was accepted as a Jesuit candidate of the Society of Jesus.

One thing I have in mind and desire is to sanctify myself to serve God and help souls, to serve in humility. All for the glory of God.

During my two years at the Novitiate, I discerned and prayed more, I chose the path of life as a brother and made my first vow at the Sacred Heart Novitiate at Tam-Hà, Thủ Đức

After that, I moved to the Jesuit Scholasticate, where I continued to be trained for about three years in basic theology. After studying at the Jesuit Institute, I have moved to many communities, to live and to work with other Jesuits.

Living and working in many communities have helped me gain a lot of experience and benefits for my spiritual life, for my relationship with other Jesuits and anyone I meet and work with.







Although I work quietly as a minister in the community, I am always aware that I am working with other Jesuits in the mission of the Society of Jesus: As member of the same body of the Society of Jesus, each one has a different job but is united in the common mission.

This awareness has helped me have the motivation to live my vocation and work with others in the field that God calls us to commit and to work.

Likewise, when I go to work outside, other brothers work at home instead of me. Whether working in the community or outside, trying to fulfill responsibilities means fulfilling mission. Although I have shortcomings, I always try my best. Therefore, wherever I am, wherever I go and in any community, I still feel peaceful, joyful, and serene.



Biography and Apostolic Works

- 09 Sept 1995 Going to the Guest House of the Society of Jesus, and after that, entering the Jesuit Novitiate at Tam Hà.
- 08 Sept 1997 Taking the first vows at the Sacred Heart Novitiate at Tam Ha, then entering the Saint Joseph Scholasticate to study the basic theology.
- 2000 Moving to Thien Than Community to conduct apostolic works: to assist community management and parish pastoral works.
- 2002 Coming back to the scholasticate and becoming Father Truong Thanh Tung's assistant to take care of the library.
- Mid-2002 Moving to Hien Linh community to join in the pastoral work of Hien Linh parish, assisted community minister and continued to work as a library assistant at the scholasticate.

- 2004 Moving to “Warming Nest” community - Ho Nai to manage this community, to live and work with brothers and sisters of the ethnic minority, teach catechism to ethnic brothers and sisters, visit villages, take part in training evangelical agents at Hanoi Parish in Xuan Loc diocese.
- Mid-2010 Studying English for 6 months at EAPI - Manila Philippines, then attending the courses at EAPI: Effective steward Leadership, Pastoral Management Workshop, Pastoral Renewal Program.
- 2012 Coming back to Vietnam and moving to Pleiku community of Kon Tum diocese to work as a community minister; doing pastoral work for one year at Hoa Lu parish and Tra Da parish, then partaking in pastoral works at parishes and small parishes, participating in evangelization and social work for people living in the highland.
- 28 Aug 2018 Taking tertianship in Srilanka for 6 months.
- 01 Mar 2019 Coming back to Pleiku community to work as before.
- 06 Jul 2020 Moving to Hanoi community as a community minister and a pastoral collaborator of Ngoc Mach parish until now.

BE AMAZED BY THE MIRACULOUS GRACE OF GOD



Joseph Nguyen Luong Hue, S.J.

“God always does things that are unexpected and beyond my thoughts and desires. Through every milestone, the Lord is the One who calls me, motivates, and guides me to be an instrument of His love.”

My vocation history is always full of surprises. God allowed me to meet the guy who introduced me to a Jesuit father while my family and I were appealing for an asylum under the Humanitarian Operation Program to the USA. Although I refused to meet, the priest called me over the phone. I thought we would only meet once, but unexpectedly the priest made an appointment to see me many more times.

When I was in the candidate phase, I continued to work, and the accompanying priest made it feasible for me to receive spiritual direction at lunchtime. When my classmates asked to return, I was called to the Jesuit Novitiate for a monthly retreat. When I was not confident in my studies, I had a lot of help from my Jesuit fathers and brothers. When I wanted to study nursing to serve the sick, the Jesuits gave me the mission to learn constructively. When I was tired and stressed from the construction work, the Jesuits invited me to do the tertianship.

When I was sad due to the passing of a family member, I was visited by the Jesuits and celebrated Mass together. When I was depressed because of illness, I saw many brothers generously shouldering together in the service of the Kingdom of God. When I was happy and at peace with the given missions, I was invited to a new mission by the Jesuits.





Following the Lord has always been a vocation that challenges for the Jesuits. The challenge of denying yourself, accepting God's will in all things and any situation. The three vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience are the weapons God has given me to refine myself and strive to give up human desires. Looking back on my steps to follow God, I have been weak and fallen many times, but God is still with me and gives me the grace to continue to follow Him in my vocation as a Jesuit. God always does things that are unexpected and beyond my thoughts and desires. Through every milestone, the Lord is the One who calls me, motivates, and guides me to be an instrument of His love.

I feel God's grace pouring down on me more than I could have wished. I realized God's grace is flowing to me in more ways than I could have imagined. God continues to offer specific care for me through the people He sends. He discreetly loved and cared for me even while I struggled with myself without relying on God. God's love and grace, prayer, and the solidarity of people I've met are all intertwined into my vocation life. My wish is to entrust myself to God because when I have God, everything around me becomes the Kingdom of Heaven. Recognizing God's love for me brings me serenity and joy. With each passing day, I am reminded of God's love, and I am asked to live a life full of

love, committing myself to better helping others in the mission I have been given. I am certain that following the Lord, no matter how difficult life may be, is entering 'life,' since "with God, nothing is impossible" (Lk 1:37).

"Give thanks to God for his goodness, God's love endures forever and ever" (Ps 136:1).







Biography and Apostolic Works

- 13 Dec 1965 Born into this world
- 1992 Living as a Jesuit Candidate
- 13 Feb 1994 Entering the Jesuit Novitiate in Thu-Duc, Vietnam
- 19 Mar 1996 Taking the first vows
- 1996-2000 Studying Philosophy and Theology at Saint Joseph Jesuit Scholastic in Thu-Duc, Vietnam.
- 2000-2012 Working as a Construction Consultor and a Minister of St. Ignatius Community.
- 2014 Doing the tertianship.
- 17 Jan 2015 Taking the final vows.

THE LORD MAKES ME A WONDERFUL GIFT



Vincent Pham Duc Tuan, S.J.

“God’s love is greater throughout the time, it makes my life become a gradually greater and more valuable gift for others. I grow up, live in joy and happiness.”

Each person is the greatest gift of God because he or she is surrounded by grace. I deeply feel this sense in my vocation journey. My life, my vocation as a brother is a gift from God. Moreover, He makes me a “greater” gift for God and people. Reviewing my life’s history, I realize that God loves me so much. This is the journey in which God helps me “transform”.

1. The story of my vocation

I am an “elfish” boy. Being defiant and free-hearted, I behave bravely, recklessly and superficially. My local friends were so scared of me due to this characteristic. The Lord called such a boy to make me become a gift for Him and others.

On a day in December, 1991 when I had been studying at grade 12, I fortunately joined in the Mass for celebration of 500 years since Saint. Ignatius’s birthday and 400

years since the foundation of the Society of Jesus. The image of St. Ignatius impressed on me, I found myself in it, which urged me to know who he is. However, because of being superficial, I forgot that idea. Until I entered the university, I was serious in this decision – the decision to live in the religious life.





Suddenly knowing the Society of Jesus is the arrangement of God for me. It was the God's plan to make me become a brother in the Society of Jesus; it is not my own plan.

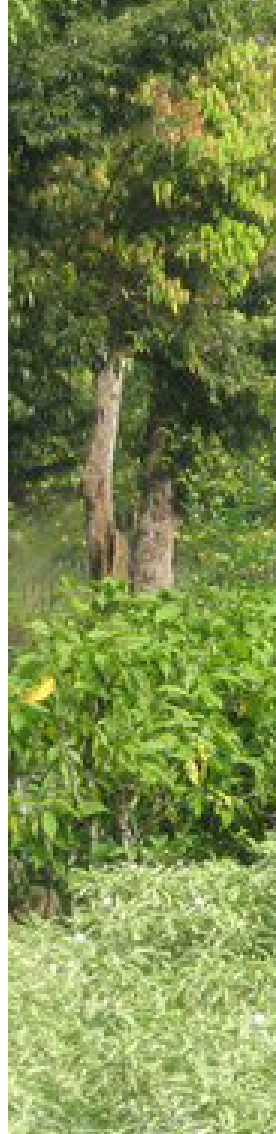
Back in the day when I "came to see" the vocation, I did some multiple choice quiz; and in the part of choosing the vocation level, I chose to become a priest like many others without knowing what it was. I did not know why I could become a Jesuit candidate and kept studying university. My characteristic was gravitated towards enjoying rather than studying, so my studying was not

good enough. At that time, the Society required me to focus on my studying, and I saw that it would be more suitable for me to become a brother. I did not know who is a "brother" in the Society. I love religious life so living in the Lord's house is a good thing. The Society prepared me for becoming a brother, but because I was lazy and satisfied for everything, so any choice was fine for me.

On September 9th, 1997, I entered the novice. During the novitiate, I was trained as many other brothers in my class or in other classes. The Lord's call through the 30-day spiritual exercises and

trials in the Society made me feel difficult to choose my way. I was not really sure about my choice to become a brother. Although my complexion and living style was appropriate, I still wondered and wanted to become like other brothers. That might be the reason why the Society offered me to live in the novice more to have an affirmation for living as a brother in the Society of Jesus.

The extended time before taking the first vows was the chance that God has transformed me to become flexible in God's hand through the training of the Society. Thinking about being a brother was more comfortable for me than thinking about becoming a priest like other brothers. This was a sign for me to realize God's call. Time flew until the time I took the first but perpetual vows with God. That day happened silently with other brothers in the novice. The vows mass was zealous but started later than usual because I overslept. In this Mass, the Priest who celebrated the Mass wore the red garment because that day was the Mass for reverence of saint martyr John Brito S.J. I felt that my life would be different from other brothers because in the vows Mass, fathers often wear the yellow garments. My life transferred to the new period when I officially became a Jesuit. I was happy and tried to live every day with God in humbleness and joy.









2. Training time in the Society of Jesus

After finishing the basic studying of philosophy and theology in a short period of time, I was assigned to become the minister of the candidate house. Then, my life was led by God into the new period.

I was the minister of the candidate house within 3 years and in this time, according to the father superior, the vocation for being a brother in the Society increased considerably. I was happy with what God gave me. Although I was not good at studying but He still gave me necessary grace in my role and teaching to help candidates have more convictions in the vocations. In the candidate house, I was called by the candidates in a cute name as “chu chin” (the 9th uncle), which made me feel that I belong to the So-

ciety because in the Society there have been so many fathers and brothers being called as an uncle. That was an intimate name which was not easy to have. The name still belongs to me today, and it is called by many brothers now in the Society.

Having finished the time of supporting the candidate house, I returned to the retired house to take care old fathers. This was the time God trained me in the silence and humbleness. It was the 5-year time when I was sent to make the 3rd year of novitiate. I was happy and sometimes honor because I was nothing but God gave me beyond what I could expect. I did tertianship much sooner than other brothers in the Society. In that year of tertianship, God called me to have a strong belief in my vocation as a brother and commit myself more in the Society.

In the time finishing the tertianship, I suffered from a vocational crisis. God allowed me to foresee this crisis in the 30-day retreat. However, I did not dare to think God would allow it to happen. What God did to me only made me love Him more. I had a good temptation to transfer my vocation level to become a priest only due to outside pressure. But I was still happy and satisfied in my mind with my life. That was true when St. Paul said: "For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do – this I keep on doing" (Rm 7,19).

However, I felt gratitude to God because of this crisis because they helped me become more convinced of my vocation that God chose for me. Time was the opportunity for me to consider, work and review my life in the light of God. It was in that time that I had a chance to deeply see the Society, other brothers as well as myself. I

thanked God for sending me those such brothers, those who continued to support, accompany and help me to be loyal to my vocation. I gradually overcome worries about myself, secular considerations and also guilts about myself. I grew up, became more mature, committed more, love God more and love the Society more. What I could not believe was that the Society allowed me to make the final vows in the Society. There were only brothers in the Society in the day I made the final vows, but the number of these brothers was ten times more than ever as that was the day of the gathering of the whole province. That was also the nice time when I had been having 20 years living in the Society which is a period of time enough for being independent and take care younger brothers in the Society. I was happy in God's hand and among other brothers. I was loved, so I would like to spread my love to anyone I met.







All these things were told above to show my weaknesses and imperfection, but God still loved me and called me to follow Him in the spirituality of the Society of Jesus. By the love, patience, forgiving and teaching that brothers and the Society gave me. I grew up every day throughout lessons. Sometimes the more valuable the lesson is, the more I have to pay for.

- How God teaches me the meaning of one minute for discernment.
- God teaches me to reorder my life to find happiness.
- God shows me that He loves me unconditionally throughout developments...

Although the cost was so high, what I received was priceless.

In solitude of my mind, I asked God: "Why you chose me instead of others? Why could I be still rounded by your hand despite difficulties and challenges in the religious life? Why I could still live in your call while many others gave up? The only answer for this question is that God loves me by a constant love.



3. The current mission and challenges

After making the final vows, I was assigned to work for the Province as a supporter for father treasurer and for father director of social apostolic department, and do other unnamed work in the community. I was happy with which work was assigned to me and tried to complete them. Perhaps my life had got familiar to the small things so I was happy while doing them.

My apostolic work was the same when I tried to finish my responsibility as a supporter. That was also a challenge because sometimes I was blamed for not collaborating but I was still happy because I could only do small things. There have been some small and ordinary things that I was

assigned to do over more than ten years, for example, helping those suffered from the leprosy. I thank God because I am only the instrument that He uses to support the poor. I am neither good at launching projects, raising fund, nor calling on social networks to do any great things. I only knew that I can do small things by telling stories in my mission journey, then God send helpers to those people.

I could never believe that I could help unexpected mothers and abandoned babies. I was so happy with those sudden events. My heart always flutters among the difficult, the poor. I wholeheartedly listen to them because that teaches me in a more practical way.







With apostolic preferences of the Society, I was unofficially called to bring people to God throughout spiritual exercises. I could not help do retreat if knowledge was the only consideration, but God still sent me chances to share and accompany with people. I have never told people doing the retreat that I am helping them but I am sharing because I could only talk about my experience of meeting God rather than basic knowledge. In the experience of spiritual sharing, I saw that God loves me, God loves human. I was happy because although I was only a brother but I had a chance to share and sympathize with people from the deepest of their souls. It was not an easy thing to have those experience. I saw that God still taught me to respect human dignity and tried to live in an intimate relationship with God.

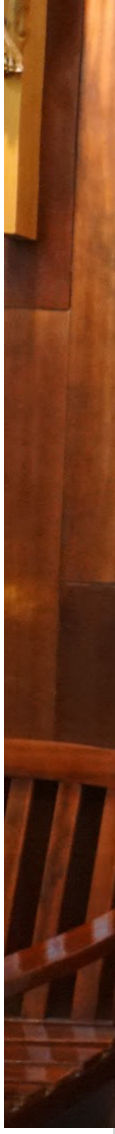


In the community, I tried to complete my tasks and support others. Still, I could not avoid making mistakes in collaboration and common works. I knew that I had a number of limitation and was not good enough to set an example to other brothers. Standing in front of God, I saw that I did not deserve the great grace of God for choosing me as a brother living in the Society. However, I was always happy in my work and tried my best to complete what God and the Society called me to do.

Perhaps I never want to tell my vocation story but due to my brothers and the Society, I am writing what happened in my vocation journey as I convince and commit myself more into what God sent and is sending me to help me live and be an example of Him. Please pray for my vocation which is still negatively affected by secular spirits. I see that I must always live with God, the God who loves me, calls me and sends me the gift so that I can become a gift given for God and others.

God's love is greater throughout the time, it makes my life become a gradually greater and more valuable gift for others. I grow up, live in joy and happiness. I make for the greater glory of God by my own life, when telling others His love in my life, when helping others realize His love on their life. That does not mean that I am perfect now, as St. Paul said: "Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me." (Pl 3,12). Every

day, I still press on to take hold of the gift, is Jesus Christ, by opening myself to receive God grace throughout my brothers, the Society, my family and everyone...That love urges me to collaborate with God to make my life become a greater gift for God and other people.







Biography and Apostolic Works

- 18 May 1974 Born into this world
- 1992-1997 Living as a Jesuit Candidate
- 09 Sep 1997 Entering the Jesuit Novitiate at Thu-Duc Vietnam
- 04 Feb 1999 Taking the first vows
- 1999-2002 Studying Philosophy and Theology at the Saint Joseph Jesuit Scholasticate in Thu-Duc.
- 2002-2006 Working as a minister for the Jesuit Candidate House in Thu-Duc, Vietnam
- 2006-2010 Working in the Jesuit Infirmary at Thu-Duc, Vietnam
- 2011 Taking the tertianship
- 2011-2014 Serving at the Jesuit Holy Family Community at Ho-Nai. Dong-Nai, Vietnam
- 2014-2016 Serving at the Jesuit community at Pleiku, Gia-Lai, Vietnam

- 2016-2017 Serving at the Can Tho community and the Jesuit Holy Family Community at Ho-Nai
- 18 Jan 2017 Taking the final vows in the Society of Jesus
- 2017- up to date Serving at the Curia and Residence of the Jesuit Provincial in Thu-Duc, Vietnam
- The missions Member of Social Ministry Committee, Member of Construction Committee, Assistant to Province Treasurer.