



Our Lady Of The Missions Viet Nam Province



RNDMS IN VIETNAM

1. The founding history of the Vietnamese Province

In response to the invitation of the vicar apostolic of Coastal Tonkin, Bishop Alexandre Marcou MEP (1856-1939), the first five RNDM missionaries from France arrived in Phat Diem on 23 October 1924. The Sisters began working in a school, a crèche, and a dispensary, all previously run by the Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres.

In 1926 the RNDM Sisters came to Thanh Hoa. The sisters established a Vietnamese medium - school and a small boarding French medium - school for Vietnamese children, some French and Eurasian students. The Sisters also began caring for leprosy patients. More RNDM communities gradually established and grew in Lang Son, Sam Son and Ha Noi.

In 1954, due to the country's political situation, the Sisters joined the refugees fleeing to the South.

Up to now, there are 25 communities in 12 Dioceses: Sai Gon, Phu Cuong, Xuan Loc, Dalat, Nha Trang, Ban Me Thuat, Kontum, Bac Ninh, Long Xuyen, Pakse (Laos), Tainan and Chiay (Taiwan). Note: In Long Xuyen, our community is at the stage of experiment, not officially established according to our Constitutions, but we would like to include it here, not as a community as such, but to acknowledge the sisters' presence and services as RNDMs.

2. Current missions

➤ **Education:** Kindergarten, Residential Homes for ethnic children at Primary, Secondary and High school level, charity school, Student Hostel.

✚ Kindergarten: We have eight Kindergarten at Thu Duc, Thi Nghe, Minh Hung, Xuan Loc, Thach An, Dalat, Nha Trang and Quang Lam.



Sister My Khanh and an autistic child

Thanh Tam Kindergarten in Thu Duc

✚ Taking care of ethnic minority children is one of our mission priorities. Through this mission, the children and students are welcomed into our residential homes, where we create a healthy environment to help them grow holistically. We have seven residential homes for ethnic children located in Minh Hung, Long Dien, Nha Trang, Vinh Trang, Pleijut, Nam Ban and Pakse.



Long Dien Residential Home



Minh Hung Residential Home



Pakse Residential Home

- ✚ Besides that, in Cu Chi we have a charity school for poor and migrant children who do not have an opportunity to attend school.



- ✚ In response to the need of society for students from distant provinces to have a safe place to stay whilst pursuing their studies at universities in Ho Chi Minh City, we opened a hostel in Thu Duc in 2005. This hostel can accommodate 70 female students. Besides studying, these students are accompanied in the process of their spiritual, intellectual, human and social development. The Sisters help to strengthen their faith through teaching them Catechism, praying together, attending daily Mass, sharing Gospel weekly, organizing funding activities and charity outreach trips etc. In this wholesome environment and with the sisters' close accompaniment, some students have discovered their vocation to live a consecrated life. Every year, some of them join the Aspirancy after completing their university studies. We hope to continue to welcome more.



Student Hostel in Thu Duc

➤ **Evangelization for people:** As a missionary institute, the RNDMs strive to prioritize Evangelism through daily witness, carrying out missions and visitation. The Sisters also took the initiative to evangelize in many different ways including through modern media and social networks.

➤ **Pastoral ministry:** is carried out in all communities as an integral part of our mission involvement. The sisters train and accompany catechists, teach catechism, in charge choirs and groups.



Sister Ngoc Tam and the choir

➤ **Social ministry:** providing a shelter for young women with special circumstances; protecting and empowering women, accompanying migrants and providing counselling for families.

✚ **Tan Binh shelter:** located in Tan Binh district. It welcomes rejected young pregnant women. The women are accommodated and cared for until their babies are born. Normally these unwed mothers would have chosen to abort their unexpected babies. At this shelter, they are helped to respect their dignity and be aware of the value of life. They are also assisted in learning a trade to earn their living, such as sewing, hairdressing, etc. Moreover, the Sisters connect with the parents of the unwed mothers, and when possible, with fathers of the babies to help them become more ready to welcome their daughters, children and grandchildren home at a suitable time.



➤ **Serving ethnic minorities:** including faith strengthening, medical care, village visits and community development. Recently, we expanded our service to ethnic people in Gia Lai, Kontum. Our main concerns are training catechists and providing

opportunities for young people to continue their education. In addition, we provide health care services and micro-credit programs to support unemployed women to improve the quality of their family lives.



Sister Bich Ha - Empowering women in Kontum



Sister Kim Phuong and the project to lend fertilizer to farmers in Gia Lai

➤ **Health ministry:** working at the hospital, visiting and caring for leprosy patients in the village, nutrition program for children.



Sister Madalena visited a leper woman



Nutrition program for children in Quang Lam community

➤ **Youth ministry:** accompanying young people, especially Catholic students, on retreat occasions.



➤ **RNDM Associates:** The RNDM Associates have been invited to share the Charism of Our Lady of the Missions either in prayer or apostolates. Before 1990, some lay people had already collaborated with VNM Sisters in teaching catechism, visiting and evangelization in remote areas. Every three years, the Associates' Assembly is usually held in Thu Duc so that the Associates in the whole province can connect closer and revitalize the spirit and desire to live the gift of RNDM Charism and spirituality in order to collaborate with RNDMs more effectively in mission.

Today there are around 300 members who participate in various areas such as actively involve in local Church's activities, assist the sisters in visiting and distributing food to the poor and the lepers, collecting recyclable stuff to raise funds for charity, accompanying immigrants, teaching catechism, evangelizing and so on.



➤ **Care for our common home:**

Responding to the congregation's invitations expressed at the General Chapter in 2008, 2014 and 2020, the Sisters became more aware of environmental protection. The sisters have different initiatives to take action and raise awareness for those around us to act together to care for the earth - our common home. Specific activities are responded to by communities such as:

- ✚ Turning off electricity for 1 hour weekly.
- ✚ Recycling and reducing plastic use
- ✚ Planting more trees.
- ✚ Saving water.
- ✚ Cleaning up the surrounding area to raise public awareness on caring for our environment

✚ Making compost for plants.



Pray for the earth month



Cleaning up the surrounding area



Cleaning up the surrounding area



Planting more trees



Making compost for plants



3. Contact

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