

# Badjao Tribal Mission

P.o. Box 335

Cebu City, 6000

PHILIPPINES

Cell: 4255338612(USA)

Email:vercueil@yahoo.com

KoreanEmail:deborachoi0420@hanmail.net

"a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb" Rev 7:9

We want to start first by wishing you a wonderful New Year. We pray that you will experience God's blessings in a new and wonderful way this New Year.

## School Project

We are very happy with progress that the school is making this year. We struggled in the past to keep most of the new students from dropping out, but this year we have lost only 3 or 4 students. One of the reasons for this success is your prayers for the ministry, the teachers and the students. The other reason is all our teachers that are working hard to make the school a success. This is the first year that we have children asking to join the school mid year through the school program. The reason was that the sister of this student enrolled in our school at the beginning of the school year. Now six months later she can read and write. Her sister enrolled in the local public school and was already in grade 3 but still could not read as well as her sister who has only been with us for 6 months. When we started the school in the new location after the fire a year ago, we experienced lots of opposition from the people in the subdivision. But now some of the neighbors have asked us to enroll their children also in our school. But we had to decline the request because our focus is on the Badjao people and we also do not have the facility or the funds to open the door to others. We are thankful to God for the affirmation of work well done that we have received through these two incidents.

The school experienced a major tragedy in the school a few months ago. The mother of Gary, a grade 2 student, went begging with some other Badjaos. They usually go in their small boats alongside the big passenger ships and then dive for the coins that the passengers will throw down from the ship. During this process their boat came to close to the moving ship and capsized and Gary's mother was killed by the propeller of the big ship. It was a very traumatic experience for this family and for our church and school and even the whole Badjao community. But God carried them through and Gary still continues with school even though they lost one of the main bread winners in the family. This incident encouraged all us and all of the teachers to do our best to provide a way out of the poverty cycle through education.



January is the start of the last quarter of the school year in the Philippines and is the most difficult time to keep students in school. Many drop out during this time. Please pray that the students will continue to study and that the teachers will have the grace to continue to encourage the students.

I want to use this news letter as well as the next newsletter just to introduce our teaching staff to you. We had two teachers that joined us during the summer to be part of our teaching staff.

Teacher Geraldine joined us from another School of Tomorrow in another city where she has been teaching for 5 years. Geraldine became a Christian



at a young age. She then went to Silliman College, the biggest Protestant college in our region on the neighboring Negros Island, where she completed her bachelor degree. After graduating she married a man who was a security guard for one of the mayors. During one of the elections the mayor was shot and died and her husband went missing during that time never to return. Even today she still does not know if he is alive or dead. Geraldine was only a few months pregnant when this happened and returned home to her parents when her husband did not return after a few months. A few months later she gave birth to a healthy boy that is now 10 years old. During this time at her hometown she started to teach in a Christian school the uses the School of Tomorrow materials. Since she joined us during the summer she has been taking over the administration of the school as well as teaching the oldest group of students. She is doing a wonderful job of leading the school in our absence.

## Church

The church has been going through some difficulties as other missionaries have tried to come in and start another church with our members. This has caused some distrust between the leaders in the church and the pastor. Pray for pastor Bogel as he is trying to work through this problem.

Two years after the fire the Badjao community still live in tents on the road or other temporary shelters as they wait for the government to secure the area for them to transfer. It has been very discouraging for us in working with the Badjao because almost two years after the fire there is still no improvement in their situation and we do not know what the future will bring for them and for us.

## Farm

We have started the work on the farm but due to a few problems we had to slow down things. Our biggest problem is that we still do not have water, though we have drilled at three different places. We had to stop at the last place where we were working because of a lack of funds but I believe that we can find water if we can just drill a bit deeper. Because of the lack of water we also had to reduce the number of workers on the farm. Another big need is a tractor to help cultivate the land. I recently read this verse during our family devotion and it really reminded me gain of our need for a tractor:

Prov 14:4 Where there are no oxen, the manger is empty,

but from the strength of an ox comes an abundant harvest.

## Family Update

In the last newsletter I mentioned that we were attending a mission seminar for long term missionaries in Seattle Washington. We attended that school and really enjoyed it. It was a really good for our spiritual renewal. Our supporting church here in America asked us to take one year of for our furlough or home assignment since we did not have furlough for the last 7 years. We also planned to use this time to help our two oldest children settle in college. Anna enrolled in Pensacola Christian College and Johan will enroll in college in September. He is just finishing of his last few subjects for high school. During our stay in the US I am helping part time with our supporting church which is a Korean Church by doing visitation and having Bible studies for the non Korean people that attend the church. We also plan to visit other churches to share about the ministry but the doors are very difficult to open for that since I have very few contacts here in the US. I have been back to the Philippines once in October last year and will visit again this March. We keep close contact with the ministry in our absence as we still need to support also the students, teachers and farm workers. Pray for God to guide us as we try to seek his will for us also during this time.

God bless  
Petrus & Chunghee Vercueil