

# Sarnelli House

NEWSLETTER

[www.sarnelliorphange.org](http://www.sarnelliorphange.org)

facebook.com/ sarnellihousenongkhai @lifeatsarnelli

November 2017

# MERRY CHRISTMAS

## A BLESSED CHRISTMAS TO ALL!

I feel like I just wrote a Christmas letter to you just a few short months ago! Time is flying by, and I just lost another classmate, Father Pat O'Brien. Pat and I sat at table in profession order, across from each other for 5 years in the seminary. It is getting obvious that, now in my 80th year, I need to really begin to show thanks to the Lord in prayer and gratitude before the Grim Reaper appears!

I remember a sentence written somewhere "They were the best of times; they were the worst of times". That could accurately describe this past year. In April, our girl with Down Syndrome, Muay became ill and died within 3 days. She was a delight; 16 years old, and her death really generated great sorrow among us. I baptized her in the hospital just a few hours before she died. In June, a viral brain disease took down one of our lads, "Gau". He was a really neat kid, and had many friends. He was living with HIV and took his medicine faithfully.



Several of our girls decided to leave us for boys who attracted them. We try to keep in touch to make sure the girl will be happy and safe in her new environment.

Another shock was when Fr. Ole was transferred from Sarnelli to the Redemptorist International school in Minburi, near Bangkok. One of our workers, Mrs. Pook, who worked in the sponsorship office, had a husband who was on drugs and was getting more and more paranoid. He began carrying a gun to kill Fr. Ole, and would show up in a threatening manner. I had to let his wife go so as to give him no excuse to bother the terrified office staff. We really miss Fr. Ole, but he comes up whenever we need him, and went to Ireland to preach at the Redemptorist Church in Limerick, for food and milk for our 15 babies.



We were blessed with two Redemptorist seminarians from the Denver province and one from Cebu in the Philippines. It was their



“Year of Exposure”; experiencing other work of the Redemptorists, and the kids just loved them, and I was really proud of the lads. They will be great priests.

We took in a lot of new kids this year. At first, it was a rush of young girls who were abused and molested, and worse, at their homes. Two little girls came to see me one evening, telling their tale of horror. I just can't get used to people doing evil stuff to children. Then, we had a rush of babies born of young people who learned of Sarnelli House, and came here to deliver their babies and then leave without them, to either continue their studies or go back to the sperm donors. The price of Pampers and milk is horrendous. Thank God we have people like you who help!

We had a real good rice harvest this year. We ran out of rice in late July, and that did not help with the food budget, but this year the rain was sufficient, and the fish ponds are filled with fish, and we sold young bulls and older cows. We butcher pigs every other week, and what with rice, pork and fish, we are reliant on what we raise. Our vegetable gardens will be planted now that the monsoons are over. We bought some land and a nice house which we call “Bennett Place” in memory of a great couple named Tom and Imogene Bennett. Our 12 rai project is about up and ready to go. We finally have electricity out there and have repaired the narrow road.

While I was home we had a great Ceboride for medical expenses for the children, and our “Barn Mass” helped keep the wolf from the door again this year. It was a great visit, and folks were kind, interested and generous. Friends of Sarnelli House in Holland are super active and generous. “FOSH” from the U.S., run by my brother Kevin and Laurel Bowar, and the trustees are indispensable workers who keep us afloat. Hilfe-Aktiv in Germany, plus all our other friends in various Foundations and funding agencies are a real blessing to these kids. We are grateful to ALL our donors and sponsors.

We, all of us, wish you a very blessed Christmas, and all God's blessings in the New Year!

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!!**

**Fr Mike, Fr Chuck, Fr Ole, Brother Keng, Kate, Brian, the staff and all the children**

