

# Marist Mission Ranong



## Compassion in the Shadows

Those who suffer the most do not often have their stories told. This month we share about our Health Team and a patient suffering from HIV AIDS. It is a story of a very poor man and his family experiencing dignity in his final days.

Sometimes the more shocking the poverty and suffering the more deep is the experience of compassion and bringing the love of God. Because of your support we have the privilege to serve and be friends with 75 HIV AIDS patients and their families living with HIV AIDS in Ranong on the Thai Burma Border.

## Htet Aung and Cho Thae's Story

One of our patients told us about a family in their neighbourhood who needed care. It was flooding when she brought us there to visit the place. There we found a man lying on a very old and rotten sofa outside the house.

His whole body was soaked with his own urine and body wastes. Bad smells and flies were around. Inside the house was his wife with a 5-day old baby. She was sick and still recovering from surgery. The husband chose to stay outside the very little room the whole night, even though it was raining and cold, to make a space for his wife and new-born baby.

Htet Aung was the name of the husband. He was very weak and obviously dying of AIDS. He was a fisherman. He spent much time in the sea for many months without knowledge that he was infected with HIV. He was not able to get education on HIV. He was not able to get any medication or treatment from the hospital until he became very sick.

He came back home to be with his pregnant wife. But became very sick and was too late for treatment. Cho Thae, his wife, came to know that she was HIV positive when she was eight months pregnant.

The health team visited them every day to clean and to care for them. We rented a room next door for the husband to make him comfortable. We supported them with nutrition, formula for the baby and other basic needs.

On the day that Htet Aung was dying, the health team was there to support him and his wife. The wife was able to talk to him in his last moment. It was also a very moving moment that he was able to see and touch his baby before he died. We gathered around him and, after the prayer of a friend on the phone, he died.

It was a moving experience for the health team that deepened their commitment to work for caring the people living with and dying of HIV AIDS.

His wife, Cho Thae, shared her testimony during the monthly Self-Help Support Group meeting. "It was the worst situation in my life. There was nobody there for me, no family and friends. My family is a complete stranger, but the Health team were there to support us."



## A migrant student story: 'I want to be educated'

I am Chit Wai Aung. I come from Myanmar but I live in Ranong for six years already. I want to be educated and be a good teacher. I believe that if I have better education I can improve my life with my family from poverty. As a teacher, I want to help other children to have a good education. I don't want other children to suffer as I suffer of poverty because of no education. I am very happy to study with Marist Asia foundation. I hope to finish the 4 year secondary education programme despite my family and financial difficulties.

My family and I experience suffering because of poverty. I was separated with my parents as a child for seven years. I stayed with other children with my grandmother in Myeik, Myanmar. In Myeik I walked for two

hours everyday to go to school. Before and after the classes, I helped my grandma to sell flowers from our garden.

My mother and father arrived in Ranong, Thailand 25 years ago. My father died 10 years ago when I was 7 years old. He was killed with other 12 fishermen while doing fishing in Myanmar water. I arrived in Ranong, Thailand on 2009 to be with my family.

I need to work to help my family income. My mother and younger sister (14 years old) are working in octopus factory but the income is not yet enough to meet our basic needs. I go to school during the day. But I work also in octopus factory in night time from 10:00 pm to 1:00 am during the weekdays and a whole day in the weekends for four years already.

I believe that the school of Marist Asia foundation can help to achieve my dreams in life. After finishing my education, I hope to go back to Bang Non Learning Centre to teach the small children there.



Want to read more? We've collected stories of change recently to share with our Friends and Supporters. Click here to read [Marist Asia Foundation Stories 2015](#)

Thanks for your continued prayers and support.

From the Marist Team.

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