



Supporting Life Newsletter March, 2009



Supporting Life, SOS Children's Village Ben Tre, 12th February 2009

I am so glad the ANZ Nutricia team had the opportunity to visit the SOS Children's Village in Ben Tre, Vietnam. All of us could see what a wonderful organisation we have partnered with.

The Vision of the global SOS Children's Villages is that *Every child belongs to a family, Every child grows with love, Every child grows with respect, Every child grows with security.* Ben Tre village seemed a place where the vision was being lived and it was a pleasure to visit.

The village is located in the delta of the river Mekong about 80 km south-west of Ho Chi Minh City. It took us over 2 hours by bus to reach the village, the trip would have been much longer but luckily in January a new bridge was built so we did not have to do the final section by boat.

We arrived at 11.30am and we were greeted by the SOS Children's Village Director Huynh Cong Binh, his staff and all the children, they were waiting for us by the gate and a huge banner was outside welcoming us!!

What a wonderful greeting! we did not expect such a fantastic welcome and the children were so excited clapping and waving flags.

SOS Children's Village Ben Tre consists of twelve family homes, staff accommodation and the necessary administrative buildings. The Village has SOS aunts (SOS mother trainees and helpers who support the SOS mothers). There is an SOS Kindergarten which is attended by children from the SOS Children's Village and by children from the local community.



We distributed gifts to the mothers and the children which we had organised from Australia and 170 gift wrapped bags of goodies organised by Kim Low locally in Ho Chi Minh City. They loved the gifts and were excited to see what was in the bags. We also gave the Director of the village Christmas card packs and calendars that we developed from their paintings that they sent to us in November and they loved them!

The children are so well looked after; they are happy, confident and talented! They put on an afternoon of entertainment and fun for us and we were in awe!

After the fun we were put into groups to visit the 12 houses and each house had typical Vietnamese dishes cooked for us so we could eat with our individual SOS families, each SOS family were really excited with our visit.

I would like to thank Rachel Bennett from SOS UK and Huynh Cong Binh from the SOS Village Ben Tre who helped me organise this truly memorable day. Huynh contacted Joost the next day to say thank you, but we owe the thanks to them for this truly memorable day. Thank you!!



Sue McGarry
Supporting Life Ambassador

