



# Friends for Street Children Association

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## Yeu thuong

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"Yeu thuong" means "love" in Vietnamese. We often use this word at FFSC wishing that children grow up with abundant love.



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### Preface

Due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, all students were allowed to be off from school from February to May. Until May 11th, after successfully repelling the pandemic, students were delighted to be back in school. The centers actively encouraged students to attend school fully and settle in, and promptly implement the academic plan of Semester II, which will last until July 31st, 2020.

Besides, the centers also pay attention to monitor the health of the children. The recent pandemic has caused many people fears and difficulties in both career and business. However, the children are also somewhat more aware of ways to protect their health and the community's. Everyone learns to share, support, and unite together to fight off the disease to get balance in life soon.

During the pandemic, the program was given some food, rice, noodles, hand sanitizer gel, face masks ... by the benefactors. The FFSC continues to look for benefactors who would like to support the children's educational activities and help families facing economic difficulties.

On behalf of the students of FFSC, we would like to send our deep thanks to the volunteers and benefactors who have accompanied us through the pandemic.

I wish you good health and success.

FFSC Executive Director  
Le Thi Thao

Let's join hands for children's future

## JOIN HANDS TO FIGHT AGAINST COVID – 19

As is known, the COVID-19 pandemic broke out and spread rapidly across many cities and provinces in the country. To avoid infection, in the past three months, schools and public places have had to shut down activities. People seriously implemented social separation in accordance with state regulations.

Facing that situation, many poor working families have been facing difficulties when services, companies, and enterprises temporarily stopped production. Life seems to have turned upside down, jobs became scarce, leading to unemployment and families being unable to find income. FFSC with the support of benefactors such as Mr. and Mrs. Phil-Frances Maclaurin, Premier Oil Company and employees, Mr. Stephen Morrell of Trainor Company has supported 3 months of food for 331 poor households and 1-month rent for 92 households. For some families who are facing more difficulties to pay rent, two months of rent assistance will be provided.



Beneficiaries include families of students of FFSC Centers, families of students in the program's scholarship group, and some disadvantaged families in other districts in the city. The total funding for this support campaign is 505 million VND.



In addition, students from Binh An center received some gifts generously offered by some philanthropists.



FFSC would like to thank our benefactors for helping us. Hopefully, together, we will unite in our determination to fight against the pandemic so that the students can return to school soon and everyone can settle down.



## JOY OF GIVING

During the Covid-19 pandemic, beside those stocking for themselves and their families, there are those who opened their arms to help others with hardship. Ones of those were Mr. Thanh Tú and his co-workers from Ho Viet Tieu company. On April 11th, 2020, they visited Binh Tho Center and gifted the students there and their families with various necessities helping them through the pandemic. Those gifts transcend the material level, they showed that people cared.

Hopefully such kind acts will continue to spread. We wish you all happiness, health, and success.



## SCHOLARSHIP PRESENTATION-2020



In the afternoon of June 14, 2020, the Friends for Street Children (FFSC) association held a meeting for recipients of the FFSC scholarship at Binh Trieu Development Center. Other participants of the meeting were Sr. Le Thi Thao - program director, Mr. Phil, and Mrs. Frances Maclaurin - sponsors of the scholarship.



The meeting was organized for the students to share experiences and learn from each other. To start the

meeting, Ms. Nguyen Thi Hoa from the Worldwide Orphans Foundation (WWO) spent 90 minutes sharing with the students about “EMOTION REGULATION AND MANAGEMENT”. This topic is necessary for students to learn how to identify and to manage their emotions, to regulate and express their emotions, and to make negative emotions positive. Students need to have a healthy lifestyle that won't affect their studies as well as other life aspects. Ms. Huong, FFSC's scholarship manager reported the result of the 1st semester of the 2019 - 2020 academic year and granted gifts to students with good academic results.

Moreover, Mr. Phil shared his experiences on how to control and to manage his emotions to get success in life and as the leader of a company. On this occasion, Mr. Phil and Mrs. Frances also granted scholarship to 44 students.



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Sr. Le Thi Thao - FFSC executive director - motivated the students to try their best in studying and in life so that they would not disappoint their benefactors and those who helped them. On behalf of the LEON organization, Sr. Le Thi Thao has also granted scholarships to 5 students.

The meeting ended successfully and happily with heartfelt performances from students and children from the Binh Trieu Center as a special gift for Mr. Phil's birthday.



## SOME THOUGHTS AFTER A HOME VISIT



I was lucky and grateful to experience for one morning the distribution of free food to several underprivileged families in HCMC (District 8) that benefit from FFSC to send their kids to school. We were warmly welcomed by all families. Their very precarious housing conditions unfortunately came as no surprise to me as I previously experienced central Africa for several months. However, I had never been able to witness the intimacy of disadvantaged people until this event occurred. Thus, it felt heartbreaking to listen to some parts of their stories. For example, a boy with a permanent eye injury caused by a bird, or a young teenager who lives as HIV positive due to her drug-addicted parents. Also, a 70-year-old lady who is looking after her 2 great grandchildren as her children and grandchildren fell into using hard drugs. This woman goes every day to collect plastic bottles and plastic bags from garbages in order to earn an estimate of 50,000 VND/day (1,95€) i.e. 60€/month. To this end, her expenses



include the rent of a 12m<sup>2</sup> home, electricity, food, and basic needs.

Most of the kids that I encountered expressed large smiles and behaved with endless cuteness and energy. A 5-year-old girl offered one sweet to each of us.

Despite my sweat due to the heat outside, I came out speechless and thoughtful. Thoughtful as where to start to build sustainable improvements to these fragile

families.

Education is one of the pillars to escape from this vicious circle of poverty. Hence, my respect for the Catholic sisters of FFSC is even more strengthened. The inspiration that they generate due to their hard work and for dedicating their life to serve the weakest no matter what religion they believe in.

**Vincent Brochart, *FFSC guest***

## REFLECTING ON THE AFTERMATH OF COVID-19

**T**he Covid -19 spread has caused much trouble. It is a great concern for the society, especially teachers and students who are off from work and school. Here is what teachers and students at FFSC think about this pandemic.



*Foreword: Ms. Nguyen Thi Suong is a teacher at Binh An Center. After 4 months of school closure due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the center has reopened and she is able to return to her students. Below is her reflection on the significant changes she has gone through during this historical moment.*

The first day after the long absence due to the Covid-19 pandemic, I was elated to see all the familiar endearing faces of the family at Binh An Center.

Looking back, it was as if life slowed down. Everyone's world turned upside down. Schools were closed. No one left home unless it was absolutely necessary. The quarantine took away a lot but at the same time, my family had grown more cautious in our routine, transport, mask wearing, and handwashing. The slow pace of the quarantine routine helped me realize what I might have missed before in the midst of a bustling rat race.

I have witnessed how kind people can be, helping, empathizing, sharing the burden with each other. The pandemic-brought loss of income had a good side to it, incentivizing everyone to spend on what was essential.

The pandemic also brought a unique opportunity for families to be around each other, making up for all the missed meals and failed promises.

I am now more aware than ever how valuable and what a privilege being able to teach once again is. I will try harder to teach the children all the necessary skills and knowledge to better themselves. And above all, I want to teach them to value what the Sisters and teachers from Binh An Center have given them and not to take it for granted.

I will never forget the happiness I got and the friends I gained at the place named "Peace" (Binh An).

### **Duong Ngoc Phuong Vy (Grade 5, Binh Trieu Development Center)**

The first infected cases of Covid-19 were found at the end of 2019. The pandemic spread wildly and rapidly in many countries at the beginning of 2020.

The disease spread in lightning speed. There were thousands of contagious cases within a short period of time. Airlines companies and amusement parks were closed due to the pandemic. The workers needed to stay home and we could not go to school. The economy has been affected significantly. However, it was at this moment that I could feel the communal solidarity among people to fight against the pandemic. Free rice and face masks for those in need were given as an act of benevolence. I missed my school, staying home. I am now back to be a different person, being more friends and everyone.



for those in need were given as an act of benevolence. I missed my school, staying home. I am now back to be a different person, being more friends and everyone.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the benefactors. I wish our country is clear of the virus so that we can finish the final exam well.

### **Vo Hong Nhut (Grade 5, Binh Trieu Development Center)**



At the start of the 2020 academic year, students enjoyed their Tet holiday till February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020. Unexpectedly, the pandemic which was first found in China spread to many countries. It was so dangerous a disease that all schools were closed for a period of time.

My mother contacted my teacher to receive materials for my study at home during the pandemic. I sometimes called and texted my friends to check on them as well as to learn together. I feel that people were more caring and supporting during that period of time. Those who are more wealthy offered free rice and water to the poor. Everyone was all in to fight against the pandemic. Not being able to go to school, I missed my classroom, my teachers, my friends and I missed attending classes, shuttlecock kicking, and jumping robes. The long break has now come to an end and the spread has been reduced. Children are back to school, but everyone needs to put on a face mask, use hand gel and they must not share the same glass of water. In the class, each student needs to keep a distance and sit on a separate table. At the end of the first school day, I heard from my mother that even though the number of infected cases in Vietnam had reduced, that of other countries was still high. There is an increasing number of fatality due to the pandemic.

I hope that the pandemic will end soon so that everyone will live a normal and happy life and there will be no more death.



**My Lien (Grade 4, Binh Tho center)**

After returning to my hometown to celebrate Tet, I returned to Ho Chi Minh City to hear about the pandemic caused by Coronavirus. I was very sad because I could not go to school. During the break, I helped my mother do housework such as cooking, washing dishes, sweeping the floor, washing clothes, taking care of my siblings... In addition, I also worked part-time for a children's clothes shop for a few days.



I thought I was about to return to school when I was told I had to continue staying at home, I was very sad. But in the end, after a few months, I can finally go back to school now. I am very happy to see my friends and my teachers at school again. And I just hope this pandemic will soon come to an end.

**Le Gia Huy (Grade 3, Binh Tho center)**

During 2 months off from school because of Covid-19, I stayed at home to help my family. Due to the construction of a new apartment building near my house, during the pandemic, my family still sold meals to the workers working on the project.

Since my family sells meals, I have to wake up at 5 a.m. to help my grandmother. I know how to cook rice and boil eggs. My grandmother makes other dishes. My family starts selling at 9 AM and usually finishes at 1 PM. Afterwards, I arrange the tables and sweep and clean.



I couldn't go anywhere for two months at home. I also didn't get to see my friends so I was very sad. I just hung around the house and played by myself so I was very bored.

Ever since I heard the announcement of going back to school, I have been so happy because I am able to go to school and see my friends again.





**Nguyen Hoang Luan (Grade 5, Binh An Development Center)**

I think that I had a once-in-a-life-time holiday having months off due to Covid-19.

I did my homework when staying home. According to the social distance rule, I needed to stay home and could not meet up with my classmates.

I helped my mother to babysit my sister during this time.

I was happy to hear the news on TV that the pandemic was under control in Vietnam. I can gather with my friends now, but what's more important is that I can get back to school.



**Nguyen Van Long (Grade 5, Binh An Development Center)**

I feel sad not to be able to go to school to prepare for the level transfer exam due to Covid-19.

One thing that sprang on my mind during the break is the idea of dropping out of school and seeking a job to support my parents. A few days later, I realized it was not a good idea, so I decided to put a real focus on my learning. I was over the moon to hear that I could finally go back to school.

I hope that I could get these irrational thinking off my mind and try hard at studying when I am back to school.



## REFLECTION OF NGUYEN THI HUYEN

Ho Chi Minh city, June 22nd , 2020

I'm Nguyen Thi Huyen, Freshman English Literature Major of The University of Social Sciences and Humanities. June 14th 2020 was the first time I attended a meet-up with the FFSC Scholarship Group. Since I was a new member, I had yet gotten familiar with the group's members and activities. I had hung out with other clubs before but I found FFSC different.

Everyone was really enthusiastic and friendly, always greeting each other with a smile and warm handshakes. I did not have any difficulties making friends with others like I had expected. The more outgoing members helped me with blending in a lot. I was also impressed with the group's activities. The June 14th meet-up was about emotion regulation which was really useful for students. I truly liked how engaging the meet-up was organized with relevant activities and games. Not only was I able to easily comprehend what was taught but also learnt to work with others in a team - things which were essential to a student like me. In addition, I was really glad to meet with the benefactors, Mr. and Mrs. Phil, who sponsored the FFSC Scholarship Program. They were sincere, humorous, and passionate, always giving us the motivations to study harder.

I am grateful to be a part of FFSC Scholarship Group. Even though this is my first meeting, I have already felt greatly motivated. I have a lot of fond memories about it - a positive environment for me to meet new friends and learn from them. I am thankful that FFSC has given me the opportunity to be a part of the group. Knowing that there are people supporting me will, no doubt, helps me persevere with my study.



## THANK YOU LETTER

*Pham Gia Han (811/PVH) was adopted by Mr and Mrs. Bernadette in 2008 when she was 7 years old and in grade 1. Thanks to L'Olivier du Monde association, from France, FFSC came to know Mr. and Mrs. Bernadette. Olivier du Monde has been FFSC's donors and close friends since FFSC was founded.*

*Time goes by quickly. Gia Han now reaches the age of 18 and is in grade 12. She studies hard and tries her best in hope of entering her dream university.*

*Words contained below are extracted from Gia Han's letter to her godparents in great gratitude to what they have given her for the past 12 years.*

Năm 2020 chào đón thế giới bùng phát dịch virus corona thật đáng sợ. Con hy vọng mẹ và gia đình mẹ luôn bình an và thế giới có thể kiểm soát dịch một cách tốt nhất. Do dịch chuyển biến phức tạp nên con đã nghỉ học được một thời gian rồi mẹ à!

Mẹ biết không, mới đó mà con và mẹ đã đồng hành cùng nhau hơn 10 năm rồi. Thời gian trôi qua nhanh thật! Con vẫn còn nhớ như in lần đầu tiên mẹ và con gặp nhau, con nhớ cái cách mà mẹ chăm sóc con thật ân cần. Mẹ ơi! con cũng đã nhận được quà mẹ gửi rồi à! Con xin cảm ơn ba mẹ và các anh chị đã luôn dõi theo và giúp đỡ hai bà cháu con đến ngày hôm nay. Con thật sự rất biết ơn và trân trọng tình cảm mà mẹ và cả gia đình dành cho con trong suốt thời gian vừa qua. Có lẽ đó sẽ là khoảng thời gian đáng nhớ nhất trong cuộc đời con. Con sẽ cố gắng học tập để tìm được một công việc tốt, trở thành một người có ích cho xã hội. Con yêu mẹ!

As the start of 2020, the whole world has to suffer from the scary Coronavirus pandemic. I hope that you and your family can always stay safe during this time and that the world will have measures to stop the spread of the virus. Due to the complicated development of the outbreak, I have been on a break from school for a while.

Time flies so fast. We've known each other for 10 years already, Mom. I have always remembered our first meeting and the way you took care of me so caringly. I have also just received your present. Thank you for watching over me and helping me and my grandma throughout the years. This should be the most memorable time in my life. I will try my best in studying so that I can get a good job and become a useful person. I love you!

## PLAN FOR THE THIRD QUARTER—2020

MONTH	DATE	CONTENT	CENTER
July	1	Scholarship presentation from International School Sai Gon Pearl	Binh Trieu
	2	Scholarship presentation from International School Sai	Binh Trieu
	24	Closing ceremony of the 2019-2020 academic year	Binh Tho
	31	End of the 2019-2020 academic year	Binh An
August	15	End of the 2019-2020 academic year	Binh Trieu
September	4	Opening ceremony of the 2020-2021 school year	Binh An
	5		Binh Trieu
	9		Binh Tho

## FFSC PRODUCTS

What are you looking for from FFSC's products at this time? Let find out our new products are available at our shop.



### 1. Closet scent Sachet

Why not have your wardrobe welcome you with a pleasant scent whenever you open the door? Not only will these elegantly designed sachets keep your wardrobe fresh but they also add a nice subtle touch to the decoration.



### 2. Strap keychain:

Keep all your keys together or decorate your bags with these convenient key chains. Available multiple colors and embroidered letters.



### 3. MIYA wallet:

This minimalistic design wallet will be a nice gift to anyone. Use it to carry money, cards, or other accessories. There are many colors and embroidery to choose from.