

THAILAND Retired nun serves kids, elderly in Bangkok slum

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SISTER JOAN EVANS, an Australian missionary, lives in Rong Moo (slaughterhouse), a slum community in Bangkok's congested Klong Toey area. Every day, she sets out on foot, visiting and offering help to residents here, especially children and elderly people. "Sometimes I have to take people to the hospital very late at night," she said.

THE NUN from the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary congregation has been working in the slum since 1992, after she retired from teaching in Australia. Now in her seventies, she lives alone in a simple rented wooden house in the area.





UNCLE PIA, 67, is one of many in the community Sister Evans helps. He had a brain operation a few months ago after suffering an accident while working in a factory. The nun usually brings him adult diapers because he suffers from urinary incontinence. She also follows up on his treatment.

UNCLE PIA now cannot speak. He also cannot move the left part of his body but can only listen and nod. The operation left a curved scar on the left side of his head, and he often has an empty gaze.





THE SLUM'S many children have benefited from Sister Evans's lone ministry. "Most of their parents are laborers. Sometimes they can only send one child to school," she shared. So she supports the kids by paying their school fees and providing them with uniforms, socks, shoes, bags and books. "Last year, I gave out 600 uniforms," she said. She also pays their school transportation costs, as well as breakfast and lunch. "If their stomachs rumble, they cannot study," she quipped.

"THESE CHILDREN and young people need to be helped so that they can help themselves," the nun said, noting that some of the slum children do not live with their parents. One or both parents may be in jail or dead. Parents could also be separated. Some children live with their grandparents.





SISTER EVANS has also launched a project to give milk to children twice a month. Staff from the Australian Embassy in Thailand and other foreigners support her in this project.

THE NUN was a secondary school teacher in Western Australia until she retired in 1990, according to her website (<http://www.sisterjoan.info/>). After her retirement, she studied the Thai language for eight months before moving to Klong Toey.



<http://www.ucanews.com/2009/04/28/retired-nun-serves-kids-elderly-in-bangkok-slum/>