

TRIBAL SCHOOLS UPDATE



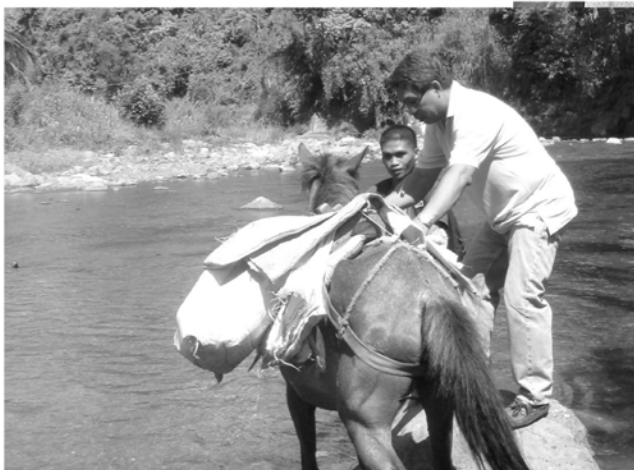
Sixth Graders Graduate

In an outdoor setting last year, on a bamboo and straw “stage” built just right for 19 children, they stand proudly on bare ground to mark passage to high school. They are among the 200 pupils in two schools in the town of Sta. Maria, Davao del Sur province, in the southern Philippines.

In March 2011, Mekong Circle adopted these remote elementary schools as its educational project. We have been sending cash donations and boxes of books and school supplies. Operated by a Catholic diocese, they receive no government funds and depend largely on donations.

Some 350 books have been shipped to the children as well as toys and clothing. In photo at right, children waved books and balls received in a shipment sent in September 2011. “One inspiring scene happened when the first box arrived in June 2012,” emailed Fr. Nestor Lisondra. “One kindergarten kid refused his bag of toys. Instead he cried and cried for one of the picture books. It made my day!”

From his parish post in Digos City, capital of Davao del Sur, he says his visits to the isolated schools are epic journeys “that can take three hours by jeep or a motor bike, then by horse and on foot.



It is quite muddy and slippery. Travel is easier during the dry season.”

Send your tax-deductible cash donations to Mekong Circle International, 1200 Bayhill, Suite 119, San Bruno, California 94006 USA. Tel. 650 589 3522. Fr. Lisondra can be reached at frneli22@gmail.com. His diocese office is at the Home of the Clergy, Aurora Extension St., Davao del Sur, Digos City, Philippines. This is the address to send your “balikbayan” boxes of books and school supplies. Telephone 082 553 5852