

### Time to Move in a Different Direction

Dear Friends of the A Call to Vietnam Ministry,

With Sister Agnes Ly Thi Le's death in September 2024, we Holy Names Sisters realized the need to re-evaluate how we could best continue our A Call to Vietnam ministry, partnering with the Sisters Lovers of the Holy Cross to engage with and support poor students, handicapped children and adults, and so many others living on the margins in Vietnam. Sister Agnes Le was the anchor for this ministry.

She worked tirelessly to stay in touch with many of you; together with Sister Kay Burton (RIP, 2022) she researched the greatest needs and sustained the relationships with the Lovers of the Holy Cross. Other Sisters and many generous donors helped in these endeavors, but now we Sisters are fewer and older than when ACtV began in 2004 – and we see that Sister Agnes Le's leadership was irreplaceable.

With trust in God and with the knowledge that many other groups now serve the poor in Vietnam and provide opportunities for students, we have decided to receive donations for the ACtV ministry only through December 2026. At that time, we will turn over any remaining funds to the Sisters of the Lovers of the Holy Cross of Hué to distribute in keeping with the mission of this ministry, including our commitment to existing scholarship students until they complete their university education. As always, 100% of the funds you contribute go directly to Vietnam.



*A Call to Vietnam Leadership*

Holy Names Sisters will continue to consider the needs in Vietnam when making funding distributions from our general SNJM Ministry fund. We anticipate remaining in touch with the Holy Cross Sisters as we continue to assist LHC Sister-students learning English. (See following article.)

We know that there are still great needs in Vietnam, and a need for those of us in the United States to be enriched by sustaining cross-national relationships. We hope you will be able to find a new avenue to relate to and receive from our Vietnamese brothers and sisters. We count on your continued friendship and prayers! Our Lady of LaVang, pray for us!

**Blessings,**

**Sister Linda Riggers, SNJM,  
Community Liaison with the Sisters of the Holy Names**

**Sister Kathleen Hilton, SNJM,  
English Language Program Coordinator;  
Liaison with the Hué LHC Congregation**

## WHERE ACTV FUNDS HAVE GONE

In addition to the funds reflected here, the Sisters of the Holy Names are committed to funding future education for 21 current scholarship students, a total of \$12,000. In 2034, the current 8th grader will be the last to earn a bachelor's degree.

Since fundraising for the *A Call to Vietnam* ministry formally began in 2003, generous donors have provided over \$300,000 to support the institutional ministries and social service work of the Lovers of the Holy Cross of Hué. Funds for special, one-time needs have provided wheelchairs for the LHC infirmary, improvements to orphanages, wells for safe drinking water and the expansion of a remote health clinic for which the recipients are most grateful.

### Distributed Donations - Over \$300,000 raised!



## English Language Program

Almost twenty-five years ago, on their second exploratory trip to Vietnam, the then Superior General of the Lovers of the Holy Cross Hué, Sister Therese Nguyen Thi Hoan, asked Sisters Agnes Ly Thi Le and Kay Burton to offer language classes to her Sisters. A collaborative project from its inception, Kay and Ly worked with several of the LHC students to structure a useful two-week summer English program.

Between 2003 and 2020 when COVID prevented travel, Sisters and Associates from across the Province as well as volunteers conducted the program in Vietnam each summer.

The content and structure of the program were adjusted as needed. However, as anyone who has learned to use a foreign language knows, interacting with native speakers is invaluable so pronunciation and conversational English remained a priority. Another focus was content aligned with the LHC Sisters' ministries. For a few years, this meant offering materials and instructional support for those assigned to teach English language classes which enhance the attractiveness of the community's pre-school/



Margy Ames, Associate with her 2005 English program students

kindergartens. Some prepared for university study in English-speaking countries. The program now consists of once-a-week Zoom classes that will culminate in a November 2026 session in Hué.

Language, at its best, bridges between people, inevitably impacting more than just the way one's words sound. Teachers' and students' recollections are remarkably similar. Teachers experienced warm hospitality, Patrici Lewis recalled, "The Sisters welcomed us with such grace and kindness that they became more than hosts; they became guides and friends." The first thing former student Huyen Le thinks of is "the Sisters' enthusiasm, joy, friendliness and warmth." Learning was also mutual. Students valued the opportunity to inter-

act with native speakers and were motivated to continue learning. “As the Sisters learned English, I learned from their presentations about family life, Vietnamese holidays and culture.” (Ann Regan, SNJM) “I still teach some of the songs and lessons I learned from the program.” (Quynh Dao, LHC) Among the lasting impacts are enduring personal connections and inter-Community bonds. For Margy Ames, Associate, the experience was both personally and professionally life changing. She

went to Vietnam as a high school P.E. and Theology teacher and returned “motivated to teach English to people who wanted and needed to belong and be successful in another culture.” She earned TESOL certification and finished her career teaching multi-lingual middle school students.

The program, during which 33 teachers and 580 students crossed multiple cultural and linguistic bridges, has enriched many lives in ways we can all celebrate.

## Letter of gratitude from Dong Ha Home of Charity, 2025–2026

Dear Benefactors of the Holy Names Congregation and the *A Call to Vietnam* Program,

I am Sister Maria Bui Thi Le Diem, currently in charge of the Lam Bich Home of Love, a ministry of the Lovers of the Holy Cross of Hué.

On behalf of all the children in our care, I would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to you for your generous support throughout the years, especially through the *A Call to Vietnam* program. Your kindness has brought hope, love and new life to the orphans and the less fortunate individuals whom we are blessed to serve.

I would like to briefly share with you the activities of our home over the past year:

- We are currently caring for 42 children, ranging from newborns to university students.
- At the beginning of the 2025–2026 academic year, we welcomed four new children from extremely difficult circumstances, along with two newly orphaned babies (one 8 months old and one 2 months old).
- Due to strict government regulations concerning thorough legal documentation, we were sadly required to return some children to their families, despite their challenging situations.
- In addition to caring for the children, our home also reaches out to support elderly people living alone, those suffering from chronic illnesses in the community, and especially provides



respectful burials for abandoned unborn babies through the “Graves of Love” mission.

- Each week, we also prepare and distribute free meals to poor patients at the Quang Tri Provincial General Hospital.

*Left: Preparing to swim at a local pool.  
Right: Going out to school*

Covering the costs of food, education and daily care for the children is a constant concern for us. Your recent financial support has greatly eased our burdens and allowed us to continue this mission of love.

We sincerely ask for your continued prayers and support, so that we may keep walking alongside the orphaned and the most vulnerable, helping them grow up with dignity and hope.

May the Lord, through the intercession of Our Lady of La Vang, bless you abundantly with His peace, grace and love.

**With deepest gratitude and prayers,**

**Sister Maria Bui Thi Le Diem  
Lam Bich Home of Love  
Lovers of the Holy Cross of Hué, Vietnam**

## Thank You from Current Scholarship Recipient

Dear Sisters of the Holy Names,  
Dear Benefactors of the *A Call To Vietnam* Scholarship Program,

My name is Nguyễn Hoàng Hồng Anh, a fifth-year student in Pharmacy at Huế University of Medicine and Pharmacy. I feel so blessed and grateful to be one of the students chosen to receive this scholarship and to have been supported over the past few years. Today, on behalf of all the scholarship recipients, I would like to send you my deepest and most heartfelt thanks. We are truly touched by the trust, love and care you have given us as we continue step by step on our journey of learning.

As the new school year 2025–2026 began, I was overjoyed to hear that we will continue to receive the scholarship, even though the current economy is still facing many challenges, and especially during this time of sadness as Sister Agnès Lý has just been called home to God. This makes us treasure even more the love and companionship that you, dear Sisters and Benefactors, have always given us. For us, the scholarship is not just material support – helping to ease the burden of tuition for our parents and ourselves – but also a precious spiritual gift. It gives us strength and encouragement each day, a source of comfort whenever we feel tired or discouraged by the pressures of study and life. We always feel your genuine love, your quiet sacrifices and your strong faith in us. These have made us stronger and more determined to study hard and live well, so that one day we can be of real help to our families, society



and community. We promise to always be diligent in our studies, to keep our values and to live in a way worthy of the trust and expectations you have placed in us – becoming both “capable and virtuous,” just as the spirit of the program inspires.

Finally, I wish the Sisters of the Holy Names and the Benefactors of *A Call to Vietnam* good health, peace, joy and success in all that you do. May God continue to pour out abundant blessings, protection and guidance for you in every step of life.

Once again, please accept our heartfelt gratitude from the bottom of our hearts.

Respectfully,  
Nguyễn Hoàng Hồng Anh

### THE PRESENCE AND EXPERTISE OF THOSE WHO TRAVELED TO TEACH SUMMER ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSES

embodied the collaborative spirit of this ministry in Vietnam. They have helped the LHC Sisters speak more confidently, prepare for university programs abroad and teach English to many children. We honor you: Kay Burton, SNJM (RIP), Mary Ellen Robinson, SNJM, Maleada Mary Strange, SNJM, Susan Dougal, SNJM (RIP), Ida Van Hoomisen, SNJM, Margaret Ames, Associate, Patrici Lewis, Associate, Anne Bosserman, SNJM, Karen Conlin, SNJM, Phuong Thanh Chu, Janet Ryan, SNJM (RIP), Mary Annette Dworshak, SNJM (RIP), Rosalie Anderson, SNJM, Kathleen Hepner, SNJM, Ann Regan, SNJM, Barbara Pavlic, SNJM, Janine Rocheleau, SNJM, Cathy Leamy, SNJM, Connie Harrington, SNJM, Linda Riggers, SNJM, Mary and Robert Smith, Andrea McCabe, Veit Le and Cindy Nguyen, Donika Mithoug, Lindsey Boyd, Eileen Brown, SNJM (RIP), Kathleen Hilton, SNJM, Agatha Emanuel, Associate, Ebony Brown, Alejandra Cruz

## The Story of A Call to Vietnam Benefit Dinner-Auctions

An anchor activity for the A Call to Vietnam ministry has been the annual dinner-auction, held from 2005 until the 2020 pandemic. These dinners connected Vietnamese-Americans with Sisters of the Holy Names, SNJM Associates and friends. They were occasions not only for fund-raising, but community building and sustaining the vision.

Contacted to share their memories, chairpersons of these dinners recalled working with the planning team. “We had a diverse group with different personalities and working styles, but everyone was respectful, engaged and appreciated each other’s talents,” commented **Tram Weller**, now living in San Jose, who continues to volunteer with church and programs for youth in Vietnam. “We were not just planning team members but friends,” said chairperson **Sharol Klise**, noting that everyone tapped into personal networks to broaden the support base. **Theresa Pham** named the gift each team member brought to the planning group, from no-tetaking to flower arranging! **Theresa**, who continues to lead multiple charitable efforts, commented, “Everyone needs to feel a part of the mission.”

Memories of the galas themselves evoked smiles and great anecdotes, from dessert dash mishaps and technology glitches to generous bidding and delicious food. Many recalled the guests’ joy and pride, inspired by the opportunities the event created, as well as Sister Ly’s excitement when goals were exceeded.

Chairperson **Dung Nguyen’s** deepest satisfaction



*Kim Dung Huynh, LHC,  
Kathleen Hilton, SNJM and  
My Dung Nguyen, LHC*



was his role as host, registering and seating over 250 guests with similar names and requesting last-minute changes! “I became involved with ACTV when I was a college student,” **Dung** shared, “and now my oldest child is in college!”

New volunteers surfaced from these dinners, like **Sharol**, who became involved after attending a dinner and learning that 100% of the funds raised went to those in need, so different from many organizations she’d experienced. Yes, the dinners raised funds (over \$300,000!) but they also strengthened commitment and fostered a sense of solidarity.

We honor and thank each person who organized these dinners, volunteered at the event, provided gifts for auction and attended. May blessings return to you, heaped up and overflowing!

**THE SISTERS OF THE HOLY NAMES OF JESUS AND MARY** are dedicated to the mission of education and within this mission promote justice and create community. In 2004, they heard a call to collaborate with the Huế-based religious community of the Lovers of the Holy Cross in Vietnam to support ministry to children with disabilities, children unable to afford an education, and others living on the margins, and to assist the LHC Sisters in acquisition of English language skills.

Both the SNJM and LHC communities, daily give thanks and ask for God's blessings on the donors who have so generously supported them in this ministry.

## A Call to Vietnam Leadership Groups through the Years

### Các nhóm lãnh đạo Tiếng Gọi Từ Việt Nam qua các năm

#### Ban lãnh đạo Tiệc Gây quỹ/ đấu giá hàng năm cho Chương trình Tiếng Gọi Từ Việt Nam

#### A Call to Vietnam Annual Dinner/Auction Leadership

Với lòng biết ơn sâu xa, chúng tôi trân trọng vinh danh những người đã đảm nhận trách nhiệm lãnh đạo cho các buổi tiệc tối và đấu giá thường niên của ACTV. Chính nhờ sự dẫn thân, tinh thần trách nhiệm và tận tâm phục vụ của quý vị mà những sự kiện gây quỹ quan trọng này đã có thể được tổ chức và duy trì qua các năm.

With deep gratitude, we honor these men and women who assumed leadership responsibilities for the annual ACTV dinner/auctions. Without you, these major fund-raisers would not have been possible.

<i>Margaret Ames</i>	<i>Sarah Havris</i>	<i>Dung Nguyen</i>	<i>Thao Nguyen</i>	<i>Eizabeth Steele</i>
<i>Shelene Currie</i>	<i>Sharol Klise</i>	<i>Ngoc (Paul)</i>	<i>Thersea Pham</i>	<i>Thanh Thuy Vu</i>
<i>Khue Dang</i>	<i>Tram Le</i>	<i>Nguyen</i>	<i>Denise Podner</i>	<i>Tram Weller</i>
<i>Monica Hart.</i>	<i>Anna Nguyen</i>	<i>Sindy Nguyen</i>		

We SNJMs who worked with you on these teams hold you in our hearts and pray for you with thanksgiving. Chúng tôi, các Nữ tu SNJM đã cộng tác cùng quý vị trong những nhóm phục vụ này, luôn ghi nhớ quý vị trong trái tim mình và không ngừng cầu nguyện cho quý vị với tâm tình tri ân.

*Sisters Charlyne Brown, Makiko Fujiwara, Anne Herkenrath, Kathleen Hilton, Linda Riggers, Mary Ellen Robinson, and Georgia Yianakulis.*

And from heaven: *Sisters Kay Burton, Mary Annette Dworshak, Celine Steinberger, and Agnes Ly Thi Le.*



**Hàng trên cùng, từ trái sang phải:** Các Trưởng Ban Buổi Tiệc: Teresa Pham, Dung Nguyen, Sharol Klise, Tram Weller (cùng người dẫn chương trình Rocky Weller). **Hàng dưới, từ trái sang phải:** Thanh Le đang cắm hoa cho buổi tiệc, và Sơ Agnes Lê Thị Lý bên cạnh Trúc Pham — một trong rất nhiều tình nguyện viên đã đóng góp thầm lặng. Không có sự cộng tác quý báu ấy, các buổi tiệc gây quỹ này đã không thể thành công.

**Top row, left to right:** Dinner Chairpersons Theresa Pham, Dung Nguyen, Sharol Klise and Tram and Rocky (emcee) Weller. **Bottom row, left to right:** Thanh Le arranging flowers and Sister Agnes Ly Thi Le with usher Trúc Pham, two of the many volunteers who helped at the event and without whom these dinners could not have happened.





**Từ trái sang phải:** Sơ Lý đang chào đón mọi người đến với buổi tiệc. **Ban hoạch định trước: ngồi:** Cha Trung Phạm (giữa), Makiko Fujiwara, SNJM (bên phải Cha Trung) và các thành viên của cộng đoàn Việt Nam ở Seattle trong dịp tưởng nhớ người đồng sáng lập Chương trình Tiếng Gọi Từ Việt nam Sơ Kay Burton, SNJM (RIP). **Đứng:** Georgia Yianakulis, SNJM, Mary Ellen Robinson, SNJM, Linda Riggers, SNJM, Agnes Lê Thị Lý, SNJM, Charlyne Brown, SNJM and Kathleen Hilton, SNJM.

**Left to right:** Sister Ly welcoming people at a dinner. The last planning committee: **Seated:** Fr. Trung Pham (center), Makiko Fujiwara, SNJM (right of Fr. Trung) and members of the Seattle Vietnamese community along with a memorial to A Call to Vietnam cofounder Kay Burton, SNJM (RIP). **Standing:** Georgia Yianakulis, SNJM, Mary Ellen Robinson, SNJM, Linda Riggers, SNJM, Agnes Ly Thi Le, SNJM, Charlyne Brown, SNJM and Kathleen Hilton, SNJM.



**Từ trái sang phải:** Các thành viên nhóm Hoan Thiện (“Các bạn trẻ”) cùng nhóm với group with Mary Ellen Robinson, SNJM, Linda Riggers, SNJM, Judy Ryan, SNJM, Georgia Yianakulis, SNJM and Kathleen Hilton, SNJM.

**Left to right:** members of the Hoan Thiện (“Young Adult”) group with Mary Ellen Robinson, SNJM, Linda Riggers, SNJM, Judy Ryan, SNJM, Georgia Yianakulis, SNJM and Kathleen Hilton, SNJM.