



CHRISTMAS 2021

Dear godmothers, godfathers and friends of Le Sourire,

A large number of the children followed by Le Sourire are of Hmong origin, a mountainous ethnic group living in the north of Thailand bordering Laos. In recent years, we have noticed that more and more Hmong women living in Laos are immigrating to Thailand in the hope of living a less harsh and above all freer life. Among the Hmong, polygamy is recognized and a man can marry several women according to his wealth. The age difference is not a problem - a 30 year old man can marry a 13/14 year old girl, who then becomes his second or third wife. To escape their servile fate, these women increasingly try to find their happiness in Thailand, an adventure that is often illusory.

Families are torn apart and it is the children who pay the highest price. Born in a nest surrounded by relational, social and economic problems, they are pulled from all sides, abandoned or even sold, which causes stress, anxiety, emotional blockages, relational difficulties, etc.

The story of Surachai * (fictional name) reflects the reality. Surachai's grandfather lived in Laos with two wives. After a very complicated and hard life, he died. With his first wife he had five children. Four of them died due to lack of care and malnutrition. His wife decided to leave for Thailand with her remaining baby boy. In order to give her son a better future, she remarried! The second wife had only one son, who was deaf and dumb, and after the husband's death, she followed the example of her "ally" by also moving to Thailand, remarried and gave birth to a daughter.


The deaf and dumb boy went bad. Not only did he use drugs, but he became the village thief. Despite this disorderly life, he married a Hmong woman, also a deaf-mute. It was probably an arranged marriage. Two boys and two girls were born. The oldest is now eight years old, Surachai, whom we welcomed to the home this year. Before he came to Le Sourire, his father used him and his younger brother to buy drugs and introduced them to stealing from the villagers. Now Surachai's father is in prison for drug trafficking and murder.

The son of the first wife has also started a family. The father of a girl and a boy, he entrusted his son to us for schooling. Realizing the tragedy of the four children of this evil individual, he realised that their mother was unable to provide for her offspring. The family was lost, without any papers, so he decided to fight destruction with love by taking them away from the village

to give them a proper education. This is how Surachai came to us at his request. The two cousins are very close and generous and have adapted very well to life in the home. Surachai's integration into the school is a little more complicated - a lack of education and great difficulties with the Thai language require a lot of supervision. As soon as his brother and sisters are old enough to go to school, we will make arrangements to reunite the siblings at Le Sourire.

Following a drawing competition at the home - theme "life in the village" - the young people have chosen one of the works to express once again our enormous gratitude for your loyalty, your trust and your love towards us.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The signature on the left is 'Barbara' and the signature on the right is 'Prapapone'.