

Ted Olbrich Update May 2010

Dear Friends and Family,

"1623 weddings to go; 1623 weddings.
What do we do when one of them's hitched? 1622 weddings to go;"

Why is Pa Thom (Me) smiling? In the US the tradition is usually that the bride's family pays for the wedding, but with 1621 daughters, I don't think that's gonna happen! Fortunately, in Cambodia, the groom has to "Buy" the bride. Now that's good news for me. With all these beautiful daughters, I should be rich! But, alas! No respectable Cambodian Buddhist family will allow their child to marry an orphan. They consider them cursed. So, since I am the "parent" of 3000+ kids with few options other than marrying another orphan, I'm stuck with the bill on both ends of the wedding spectrum. Thankfully, one of our kids married our surgeon's daughter, and the doctor paid for the wedding! Hallelujah! Actually, we're on a roll! Last week, Kris Warner, one of our staff, married Naomi. Now, all I need is another 1621 of you to show up within the next few years, and my problems will be over. Hint! Hint!

Easter Sunday was a big deal for us this year. We've always put our energy into Christmas and due to the proximity with Cambodian New Year, Easter has been largely ignored. Then Peter (our national church president) got the revelation that the reason Jesus came at Christmas was to restore relationship through Easter. We held hundreds of special Easter services around the country, and two in Phnom Penh. The evening service had to be held outside in order to handle the crowd.

[Hundreds decided to follow Christ](#). As a special gift we gave each new believer a set of "Comic Bibles". That might as well have been the end of the service, as they spent the rest of the night reading. [Click here](#) to provide more Bibles for orphaned children and new believers in Cambodian churches.



Cambodian New Year is by far the biggest holiday of the year. It is a time of honoring and blessing your elders, and also deals with the cleansing of sin, from a Buddhist perspective, by washing with water. (This has turned into one huge three day long water fight in the provinces, with thousands of people lining the roads with plastic bags filled with water and pelting all passers by. Happy New Year!) We know that cleansing from sin is what Jesus accomplished on the cross, so we decided that it was time for the church to be proactive and co-opt the tradition of the ritual washing for a Christian commemoration of what Christ accomplished, along with honoring our elders. [I think we have a new tradition?](#)

The New Year celebration lasts at least a week and just about destroys any functional purpose for business transactions in the month of April. Prices for travel and goods are double for a week each side of the holiday. Usually, everyone travels to their homes. Phnom Penh is deserted, the shops are all shuttered. You could do 80 km/hour down Monivong (Main Street) and never hit your horn. It can get a little quiet for the orphans because "Home" is their orphan home, which is not too exciting unless something special happens, so, we try to do something at each home to help them. This year, we brought the Cham Chao and Prochentong kids to our house. There were maybe 130 kids and staff so, you would think that 240 large hot dogs, 70 pounds of chicken, with chips, ice cream, and 384 cans of soda would be excessive. **Nothing was left!**



We are so grateful for all of your gifts and support to help us provide for 3000+ orphans and widows, but it is at least 30% less than what we would need if it were not for the food and support items we receive from donors all over the world. From beds in Switzerland to apricots in California, clothing from Hong Kong, and recorded Bibles from China, those just scratch the surface! Your gifts are appreciated!

Distribution is something we take very seriously. Most of our supply efforts are coordinated through Warm Blankets Orphan Care, Int. They have found that supply of necessities is a huge problem after a disaster and there is great need for a good infrastructure to handle massive deliveries. Warm Blankets Orphan Care works through local churches and in Cambodia we operate a fleet of about 20 trucks just to keep things moving. Two five ton trucks do the heavy hauling and then dozens of smaller vehicles do the local delivery. To all of you who give, thank you!



This past year we have taken pastor training to a local level. What began out of tight financial circumstances has really turned into a blessing! We gathered a group of former orphans that had just entered ministry, deemed them the "Young Lions" and put them on the road to visit local churches, where they introduced many new believers to Christ. All of this made the younger orphans jealous, so they said, "We want to do that!" So, they took the name, "Young Tigers". **The Lions and the Tigers are tearing it up!** At least twice per month they are off to a new destination and they are leaving new "Chapters" of local Lions and Tigers in their wake!

You are already invested in this new generation of church leaders! To give to support leadership and pastoral training, visit <http://www.warmblankets.org>

We do appreciate teams! Teams came from the US , Singapore , and Hong Kong , this month. All did significant service and are greatly appreciated. Remember, the best thing you do is not measured in physical results, or project expense, but in what it does in the heart of an orphan child that is told by their culture that they are cursed. When a foreigner comes from thousands of kilometers just to serve and be with them it does more good than anything money can buy! You all deserve a big "High Five" on a job well done. Thanks!

The rice is planted! Whew! After dealing with difficult planting conditions (bad soil, seeds, water, and plenty of pests) the rice is growing! Praise the Lord!!

**Thanks to all of you who help and pray! Blessings!
Ted (Pa Thom), Sou (Mak Sou), and the people doing all the work!
The Cambodian Team!**

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