



Beyond Mission



Vietnam is a country experiencing rapid and impressive growth. With a population of 86 million, 94% of the population can read and write, however many Vietnamese students still lack the financial resources to study after secondary school. Access to university education and vocational training provides an opportunity for the young leaders in Vietnam to realise their potential and ensure that Vietnam can escape the poverty trap forever.

The Mazenod Old Collegians' Association ("MOCA") was established in September 2010 to build the relationship between Old Boys, the College and the wider Mazenod College community in Victoria. One of MOCA's long planned ideas was to establish ties with the OMI Vietnam Mission through a scholarship program.

MOCA approached MAMI to work in partnership with this project. Together they are making it happen.

Oblates in Bình Dương on the outskirts of Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) run an orphanage and support 30 children between the ages 7 to 15. This group of children consists of 10 actual orphans and over 20 specially selected children from poor families in the

highlands of Vietnam. Children with family are allowed to visit their family during school holidays or on special occasions. Had they not been housed in the orphanage they would most likely miss schooling and be working from an early age to support their families.

The scholarship program now supports 10 of the brightest students from the orphanage and covers all their educational essentials. These expenses are approximately AUD\$124 per annum and cover tuition fees, study material, school uniform, food and health care.

The uniqueness of the program is that it tries to educate students on the importance of being socially responsible citizens. As a result, the program requires students to spend time each week volunteering in the community for a cause or purpose. The student is at liberty to choose the activity as long as it is beneficial to the community or within the orphanage.

The program supports the children with career aspirations by paying university fees, apprenticeship, certification and/or training costs.



ACTIVITIES

- 1** Discuss ways in which MOCA may help you remain in contact with the Oblates and your school friends after you leave.
- 2** Draw a flow chart showing how education can lead to future development.
- 3** This program was an initiative of a group of Mazenod (Vic) old boys. When you are an Old Boy, suggest how you might contribute to the Oblate mission.