

Each child owned a plate and a spoon. Notice all the smiling faces.
Children loved to have their pictures taken.



We were always looking for children who needed special attention, who showed signs of malnourishment.





Upper left:
Sister Ann Catherine with baby “Maria”
– A name I gave her.

*“I can do everything through Christ who
strengthens me.”
Philippians 4:13*

March 20, 1980 Thursday

Lord, the horrors of war. Life seems to be taken so lightly. Where are we going?

What hope is there except in you. As the people live just to survive for a day, in the very simplest of conditions, I realize our eyes must always be turned to a much greater life – Your life. Help me to stay slowed down and treasure each moment in Your Presence, reflecting on the beauty and great dignity of each person.

As I now pray the office, my prayers have so much more meaning. My thoughts are lost in an inner stillness.

March 21, 1980 Friday

How I really love my work here!

Lord, this is really like a retreat! Presence – we give the people a sense of caring, of hope, of trust and concern.

Trust – only You can do all things

Faith – You have a meaning for all this

Love – smiles – the joy of the little children

Peace – taking one day, one hour at a time

Openness – anything is subject to change

Community – how close we grow to our people

Prayer – my thoughts are continually to You

Patience – how I hope to carry with me the new values of life I learned here – what really counts in life?



Sister Ann Catherine in the midst of all her children.

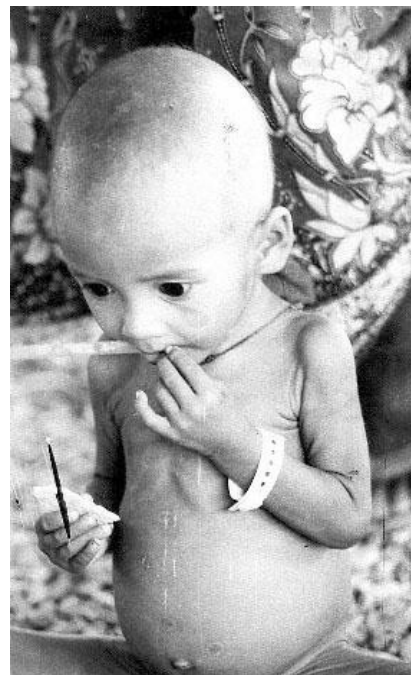
March 22, 1980 Saturday

Lord, Somehow I want to draw back from this mission for all conditions seem so unstable, war, rains. My energy seems low but then the Sacrament of Presence is expressed. I feel jealous of the others doing so well but then it is your work not mine and who really knows who is doing best.



March 23, 1980 Sunday

Lord, my thoughts are blank for there are the same sins as all over among this suffering people – people pushed from their homeland over 5 years already. I see selfishness, stealing, etc. but then also hear so many sad stories – people who lost their families, who are utterly alone, who have such blank sorrowful looks.



March 24, 1980 Monday

Lord, the trip to and from the camp is an adventure in itself!

How will I ever forget our bumpy rides in the back of the Toyoda, the water buffalo and cow herds, the dusty roads, the dry barren land turning so lusciously green after the big rain fall, our waits at the pharmacy, at Samet village, the greetings of hundreds of children – “ok” – “bye-bye”, the “for-sale” sign knowing we are just about home, the unbelievable whizzing of traffic – there are no laws – the pot holes which just never got fixed, the very poor villages, yet some nice homes along the way.

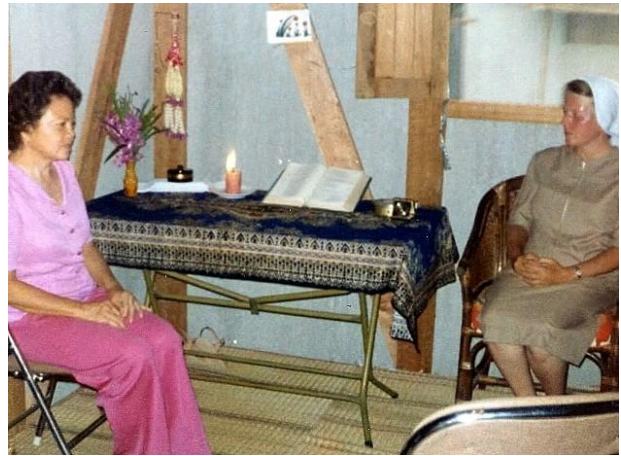
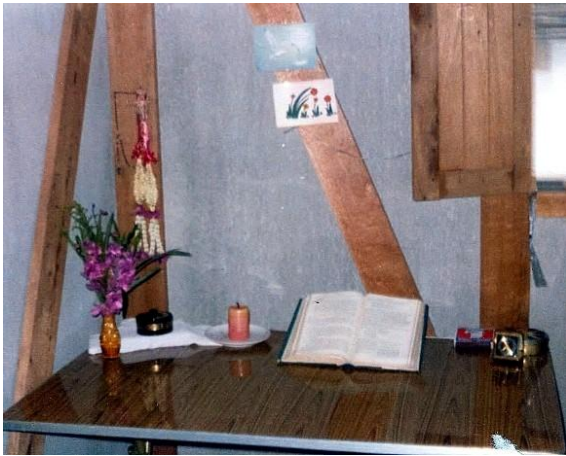


March 25, 1980 Tuesday

Lord, thank you for the gift of a day of prayer – silence – and renewal of vows with over 30 Daughters of Charity from US, France, Spain, Japan along with their Assistant General, Sister Hilda. The Mass, the supper, the Spirit was like being with my own Sisters. What is the future of these people? Will the Daughters stay permanently as they already have a house in Aran now?

Sr. M. Louise reminds me of our Sr. Louise in France. This remarkable woman worked with our Sisters in Laos and is well known all over Viet Nam and Laos. She was the one who made the plea for Sisters to serve in the camps.

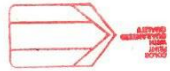
I loved the French singing, guitar playing and recorder.



L - R → SR. MARY NAGAROTY, SR. MARY A. PIZAR
 COC, M.D., PAT HOOPER, MIKE BULLAN, M.D.
 JAN ANDERSON, JON BENNETT

L - R → GINNY (MANNING), MARY BARTH, SR. ANN CATH.

1980 700



WATTANA NAKON, THAILAND
 THAI-KAMPUCHEAN BORDER
 JULY 1980
 AMER. RED CROSS VOLUNTEERS

March 26, 1980 Wednesday

Lord, the people of the Camp (Very hot today)

Most of the children seemed so happy, but malnutrition and some sad faces, the babies in maternity hospital absolutely darling, the plump bellies, the little boys running around naked, no shoes, the woman always dressed fully and extremely modest, how they loved when we held their babies, the soldiers who seemed just like kids, the many greetings, smiles, handshakes as I walked the market place each day, the gentleman so lonely whose wife was at Khao I Dong and he was caring for the four month old baby.



Sister Ann Catherine visits many in the camp.

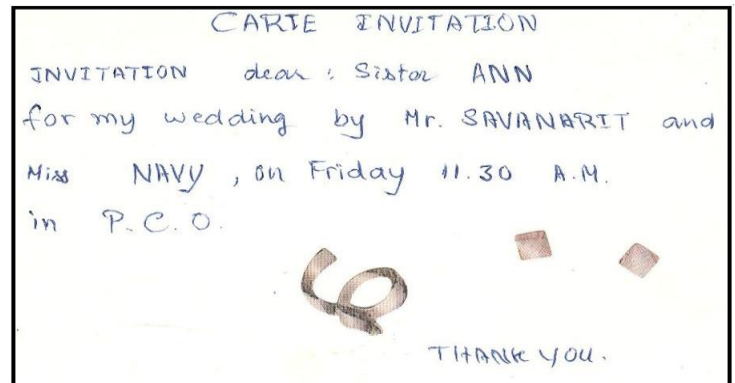


*"Let the children come to me and do not stop them, because the Kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."
Matt. 19, 14*

March 27, 1980 Thursday

Beginning a new nutrition clinic

Lord, we were caught in the middle of fighting. As I heard the gunshots, I only think of all our Viet Nam men and the constant terror they must have experienced. I felt frightened at times. The Khmers are now going armed into the Thai Villages and robbing the people. If the Khmers do not hold back, they may be forced out of Thailand for the Thai people have been quite generous with them so far. What a contrast: as we were waiting in the peaceful green fields, there was sudden gunfire, tanks, spotter planes. Our life is merely on a thread!



March 28, 1980 Friday

Was really happy to receive Fr. Francis's letter.

Navy, one of the first nurses I trained, very quietly came up to me and said she was getting married next Friday. She expressed sadness because neither her or his parents would be with them – Navy seemed so alone! Of course we are invited to the wedding – it was cute for he wanted it at 4pm and she at 12 so all of us could attend. I think she won. She is marrying the secretary of one of the quarter leaders and they will have a home of their own. My heart was happy and sad for her.

March 29, 1980 Saturday

Beautiful Palm Sunday Mass – indeed we are on a mission to give continuous love and compassion to a war torn people. We are guests in their country and they deserve utmost respect. Lord, Your passion is so evident here in these suffering people. Yet, there is much in a greater life through your Resurrection.



March 30, 1980 Sunday

Lord, I still want to do great and fanciful things. Help me do my best but accept each day as it comes with the energy you have given me. It is Your work through our Presence and you can do all things as I well know. I soak in Your Presence and richness of each moment.

March 31, 1980 Monday

Almost an auto accident – Lord, I trust You will save us!
Lord, what a great reward to see mothers showing much interest in their children as they are well fed now. These are beautiful women. It is a nice sight to see them spontaneously breast feed their children. How I love the babies, to hold, hug and kiss them. “I have much more milk since I started coming here” said a mother who would not breast feed several days ago. The children seem to eat better in a quiet atmosphere. My heart breaks to see children alone – and to see teenagers and adults working so hard and utterly alone!



*Sister Ann Catherine
with her mothers and children
in the camp feeding center.*

Come to Me and rest.

*"Come to me, all of you who labor
and are burdened, and I will give
you rest. Take my yoke upon you
and learn from me, because I am
gentle and humble of heart; and
you will find rest. For my yoke is
easy, and my burden light."*

Matt 11, 28-30



*It has always been my dream to meet some of "my" children someday!
The mothers took such great pride in their children.*



Photo by Ted Mazza



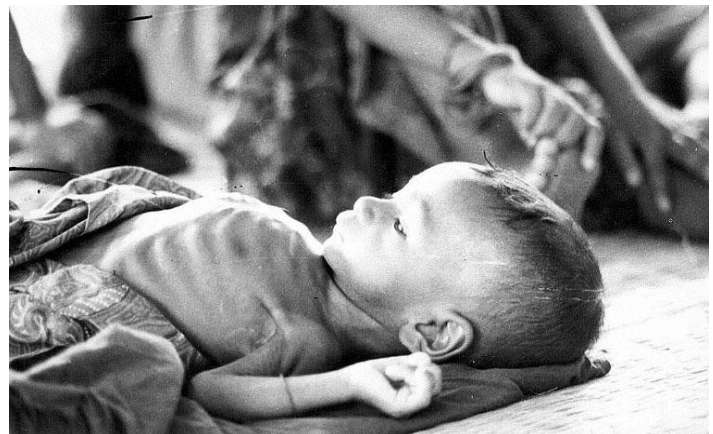
The children came together – so much brotherhood and sisterhood!

April 1, 1980 Tuesday

Lord, a little orphan was brought to me today – three months old. We fed the baby by bottle because now it is extremely malnourished. We took the baby to the hospital where they started an IV and tomorrow if the baby is stronger, a woman will begin to breast feed him. You loved him into being, now watch over him and many others like him. There was another orphan like this and many severely malnourished children on the streets. This baby may die, many others die daily – 10 year old died of pneumonia last pm, but they will enjoy a much greater life I believe. This little orphan had a woman friend with him continuously.

April 2, 1980 Wednesday

Lord, grant me the courage that these people have, to wear a continuous smile. I have become attached to my little orphan, Christopher, a “little Christ.” My heart breaks when I hear the stories of those who are alone especially the young men, the women and children. Some try to make an honest life yet are abused, laughed at by others. They get a few things to sell just to have a little money, yet never know where they will spend the night or get their food. I want to cry when they smile back at my smile. Please bless all young people who are hurting, wounded and alone. Grant them peace.





April 3, 1980 Thursday

Day of Prayer

Lord, thank you for this gift of a quiet day with You in the Blessed Sacrament here at the Daughters of Charity house in Aran. All must go through the Passover of life – help me stay very close to You so I may be Your support to others just as you sent others to me. Keep me quiet and patient with a heart filled with gratitude and praise for I deeply believe in Your love for all men and believe we will all experience peace together in the next life.

Grant me the grace to serve as you served and to look only to You for support.

Holy Thursday – Mass in Aran.

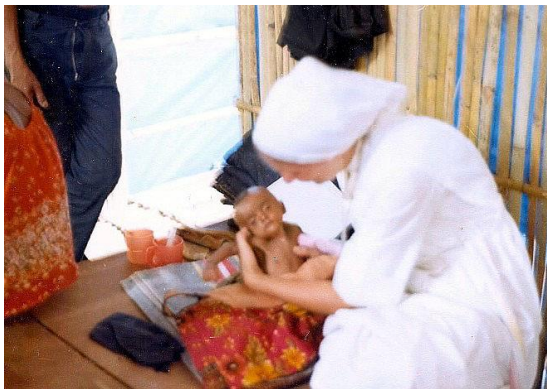
April 4, 1980 Friday

Navy's Wedding – What a day of contrast!

11:30am – A Vietnam 24 year old refugee desperately pleading to leave the camp with our help



12 noon – Beautiful, elegant Navy and her gentle husband – a lovely wedding and great reception in the midst of all this sorrow



2:00pm – To the hospital to see little Chris, his body in the form of a cross, now dying
Across the room is an old man found on the streets peacefully dying in comfort

3:20pm – On the way home, we saw a Thai funeral crossing our path – carrying casket and long procession

New life in a wedding, broken bones dying, death! Will never forget this Good Friday!

[I saw thousands of children and adults in the camp, but I trained myself to look at Faces and eyes ~ I wanted to see each one as an individual.]

April 5, 1980 – Saturday

A beautiful Resurrection

We met a little 10 year old with a deformed leg so used to walking on all fours.

We brought him man made bamboo crutches and within minutes he was running around the camp with them. A beautiful scene!

Evidently my Christopher died during the night for this morning he and his friends were gone – no sign of his presence.



April 6, 1980 – Sunday

Lord, this is really a special Easter to see suffering, death, Resurrection. My heart is struck at the smiles and waves of the people despite the misery they live in.

People see USA as a wonderland – if only we really appreciated our great gifts and freedom. How I wish these people could have peace in their own homeland.

April 7, 1980 – Monday

Lord, bless each of these people richly (Received big Easter eggs from Am. Red Cross)

I really cried to hear the people's stories. Seldom do they cry openly but today two cried with me. Oh the horrors of war. Then second case was two brothers, 17 and 19, whose family was killed. They looked so worn, had nothing; the older one had a bad cold. I sobbed with him – my first real crying while here. I hope they stay here at the clinic. I fed them well.

A mother's tender love – woman holding a beautiful, well cared for baby, but so weak herself, sobbing. She set up a little hammock for the baby, rocked it back and forth.



Photos by Ted Mazza

April 8, 1980 – Tuesday

Lord, bless your people!

Thanks for the addition of our feeding center.

My two friends are back. I got them a bucket of water and they took an hour to wash themselves. They were smiling today and looked much more alert – more energy.

We took a walk to the crippled boy's home – hundred of kids followed us. We encouraged him to always use his crutches so he was nice and straight like the other boys.

My little eleven year old at the hospital has TB but she is feeling much better, smiling, and stronger.



Dr. John & Sister Ann Catherine caring for a child in the clinic

We are trying to brighten up the clinic with calendars, mirrors and pictures. Lord, help me be patient with those who waste, those who are noisy. Bring the weak to us.

April 9, 1980 – Wednesday

Lord, I love my work!

- Put up some Easter decorations from wrappings we received on Easter eggs
- Blackboard and chalk – some teaching
- Balloons for decoration
- Mirrors – Increase self appearance and esteem
- Calendars, more posters
- Balls to play games with
- Exercises
- Some English books for my helpers
- Fireplace, good sanitation practices

My helpers are doing well – they look for the poorest and are serving the mothers well. The mothers are giving each other support.

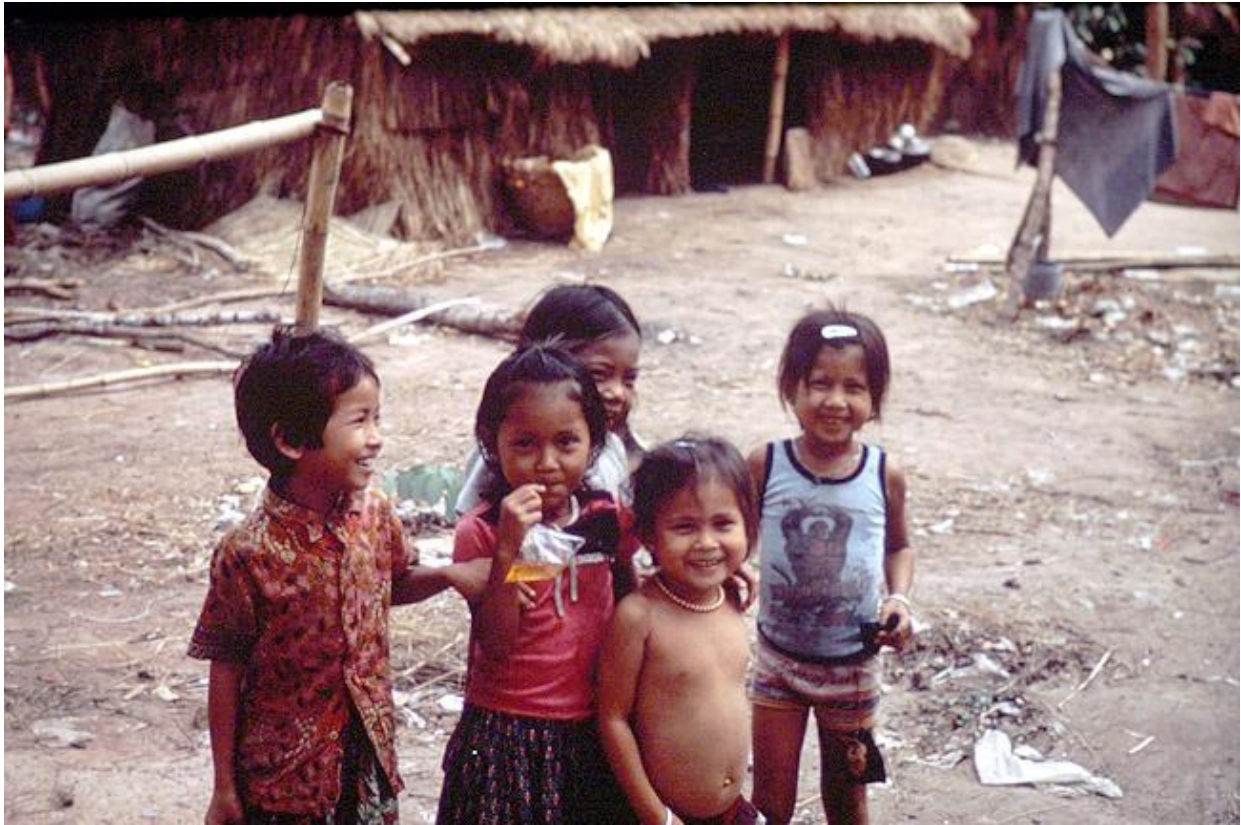


Photo by Ted Mazza

April 10, 1980 – Thursday

Lord, the heat is 110 degrees and it seems to be getting the best of me lately. Help me to maintain my strength and composure – keep my spirit gentle for I am working with a very gentle people who have suffered so much.

What will happen to these people – they plan to move the camps and uproot all these people. The condition is so unstable – how anxious these poor people must feel.

How I love these mothers and babies – two wanted to give me their babies for they felt I could take better care of them. They have the same problems as USA – one husband left to marry another, the other's husband was killed in war.

April 11, 1980 – Friday

I am doing a little teaching and loving it!

Lord, my most difficult role is to listen to the people's stories – educated men who cannot go on to school, women alone with their children, young children and adults utterly alone. What really is the meaning of war?

I have found much renewed interest in my work since I have been teaching, for the children and adults are so anxious to learn, so attentive. Little Lee (the crippled) was trying to teach me Khmer but I am a slow learner. How rich we are to be free, to be able to learn. To teach them English would be a gift to them.



Phil, Irish nurse, and Sister Ann Catherine We taught this young boy to walk with crutches.

He came regularly to our feeding center.



Photo by Ted Mazza

April 12, 1980 – Saturday

½ day of work due to shelling –

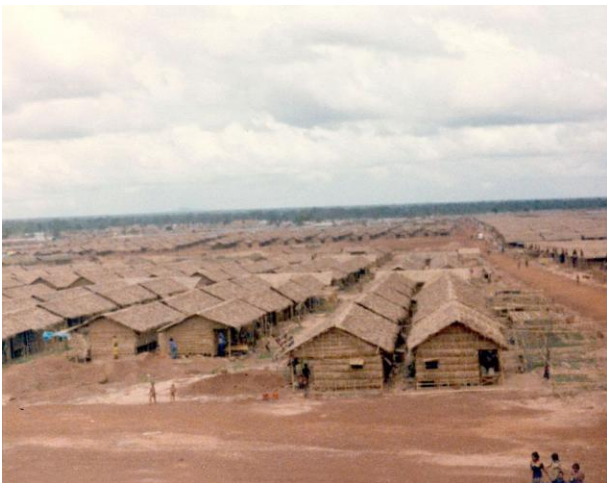
Lord, the horrors and meaninglessness of war. I have grown to love these people so much. I feel I am abandoning them when we have to leave. We can leave the war scene – they have to live in it constantly. What is the meaning – broken hearts and families, loneliness, tears, despair. The innocent are the ones who suffer.

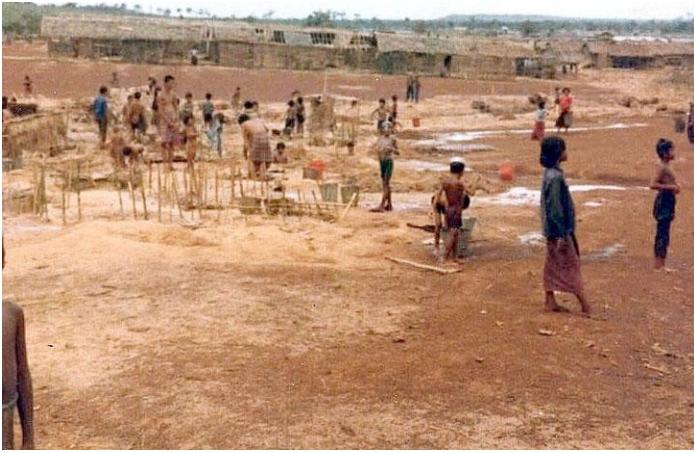
April 13, 1980 – Sunday

Lord, it was a wonderful New Year's celebration for the people at the camp.

This is my first visit to Khao I Dong – what an elaborate hospital set up – operating and x-ray equipment given by Italians.

These are photos of Khao I Dong showing the vastness of the camp. This camp was inside Thailand where the Kampuchean people lived while waiting to go to another Country. They usually had sponsors such as family members, loved ones or church groups, etc.





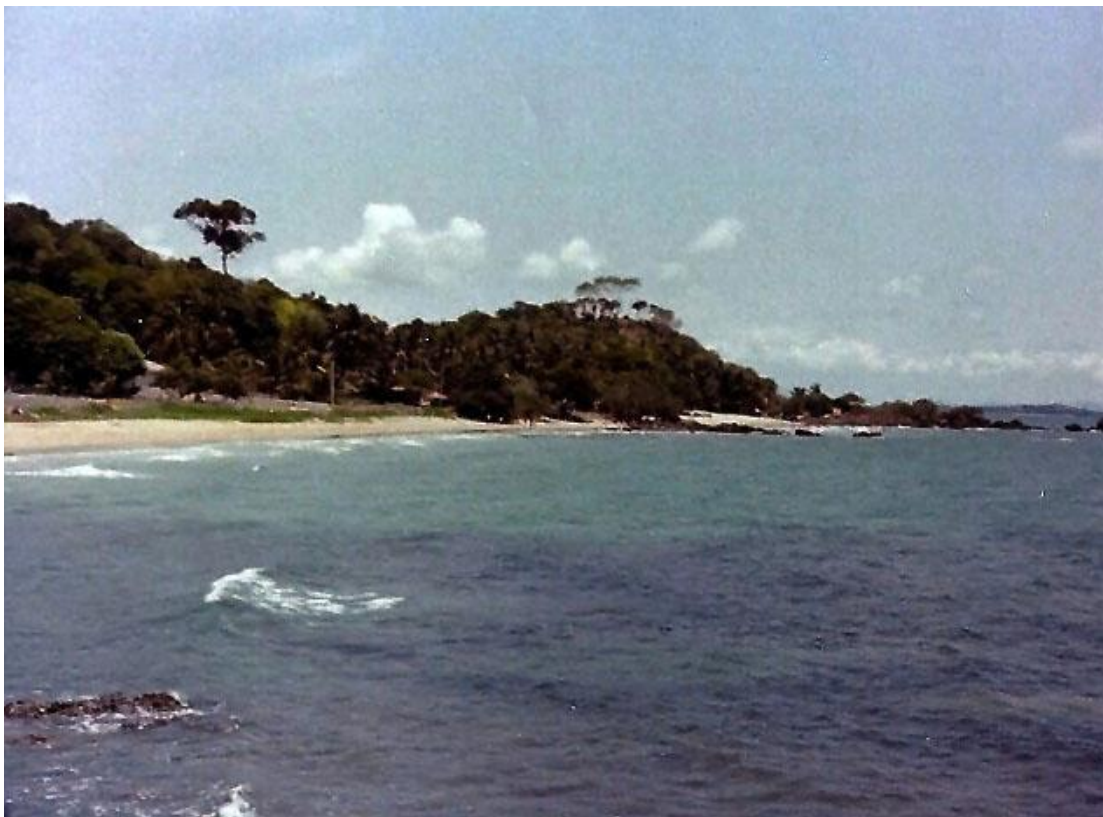
It was a lovely supper, beautiful decorations the New Zealand and British prepared for us – chicken, potatoes, salad, and fruit salad. Excellent!

April 14, 1980 – Monday

Lord, bless these four days of R & R. May they be an enriching experience. Wang Kaew

Lord, thank you for the gift of this trip. The mountains, trees and scenery are magnificent. The lake (Gulf of Siam) is like Paradise – so clear and blue, water warm like a bath, salty, clean beaches, and gardens.

As we look across the bay, we see Cambodia – here we are in perfect peace without a care and there they are with much suffering and unrest. You have created a fantastic creation – man, sea, land, nature, etc. But we, man, in our struggle to be gods, have destroyed and hurt so much.





April 15, 1980 – Tuesday

Trip to Pataya – magnificent scenery!

So sorry I could not find Lek's (my sister-in-law) family but at least now I tried.

Pataya is a small land, beach area, with a multitude of people.

There is lots of prostitution – many, many sad, lonely people.

Who are we to judge sin.

I was glad to get back to the quiet peace, tranquil ocean of

Wang Kaew. I enjoyed the authentic fishing village – many women

mending nets, fish drying, market place, the fishing boats. Fish of every

kind were being sold (all fresh). The air was very heavy with the scent of

fish – a peculiar smell.

