

# Fr. Ray

## School for Blind Children

**Nickname:** Ji

**Sex:** Male

**Birth Date:** 1997.03.16

**Birth Place:** Rayong

**Arrival Date:** 2000.07.31



### Family History and General Information

Ji was brought to the School by his parents who are from Rayong, a province about 75 Km from Pattaya. At the time of arrival he was just a little over three years old, weighed 12 Kgs and was 101 Cms tall. He appears to have suffered from over-care by parents and relatives and seems completely helpless.

### September 2000

After little over a month at the School, Ji is still, in spite of much encouragement and help, not able to stand or even to sit up. He crouches on the floor, has to be fed and have all his sanitary requirements attended to.

He is now assigned to Entry Level 1 for intensive training in all aspects of self-care. His age and the manner in which he had been raised at home indicate initially it will be a long road to progress, but it is still early to allow for any judgements or evaluation to be made. Constant monitoring and training will be maintained over time to better understand his possibilities.

### September 2001

Ji was making good progress in the school, and his mother expressed herself very pleased with his achievements in self-care. One day in July, however, she came to take Ji out of the School for a medical check-up and vaccinations. At the time he had been weighed and measured at 14.5kg and 107cm. He was not brought back although his mother assured us he would be. (NOP)

### August 2006

At the beginning of this school year in May, to our pleasant surprise, Ji was brought back to our School to resume his training and education. As he had been away for so long, training in attending to his personal routine daily self-care was once again required. Since he has grown older and appears to have received some training at home while away from the school, Ji is making good progress and as at this writing, he is capable of attending to his needs adequately with some help from his friends and teachers occasionally. Ji is assigned to the 3<sup>rd</sup> entry level and is being trained also in reading and writing Braille so that he may proceed on with the formal schooling once he has mastered Braille. He is strong and healthy and his weight is 20 kilograms while his height is 134 centimeters. (NS)

### February 2007

Ji is now 21 kilograms in weight and 137 centimeters in height. He is enjoying good health through active participation in sports. Goal-ball becomes his specialty and his favourite game. Ji can now attend to all his personal routine daily needs independently inclusive of personal hygiene. Concentration is predominately in training him in fluency in reading and writing Braille. Ji participates well in all School activities which also includes the following:

*The School's annual traditional sports day, February 8, was a grand event in which all students participated, even those students with multiple sufferings in addition to being blind. The competing sports for all students included football, volleyball, goal ball, swimming, and other contests classified to be under track and field events. This year the School was honored as the event was chaired by the head of the local authorities led by the Chonburi Provincial Vice-Governor, and attended by many foreign as well as local Thai dignitaries who are the School's regular guests and sponsors. The grand event ended with the award presentation to all athletes and a fabulous luncheon was attended by all.*

In honoring H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Royal visit, on February 15<sup>th</sup>, the full band accoutrement of 24 girls and boys consisting of 7 pieces of our Thai classical music group, 7 pieces of our Ankhlong Thai woodwind music group, 7 pieces of our Thai classical musical percussion section, and 3 girl students performing Thai classical dancing, performed for the Princess.

- 10 of our girl and boy students took part in the presentation of many varieties of our manual handicraft work which is achieved under the close supervision and monitor of 7 of our teachers. Samples of these handicraft productions were presented to Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, as souvenirs of her visit.
- There were 3 girl and boy students participating in a display of Braille reading, writing, and typing also under the close supervision of 3 teachers.
- The remaining students sat on both sides of the walkway, waving flags welcoming Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn to their School.
- A highlight of the visit was when Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn humbly and graciously sat to play the bass gamelan together with the other blind Thai student classical musical players.

The Grand Ceremony, after awarding a group of those local people who have rendered great service and support, and giving generous sponsorships to the School as well as to the blind students, ended with the Crown Princess honoring the School and its staff, by laying the foundation stone for a new 6 story building scheduled to be completed in 2 years, which will be devoted to Vocational Training for blind students. (NS)

#### September 2007

Ji is now in his 3<sup>rd</sup> entry level with his weight and his height is pretty much the same as those measured previously. Ji appears to be doing well in his reading and writing Braille. He does not show very much interest in sports and music, as he likes to spend his spare time playing and talking with his friends. Ji appears to be enjoying good health and makes every attempt to comply with his teachers' requests to attend to his daily physical exercises. He participates in all of our school's activities, which include:

26<sup>th</sup> June 2007 - The annual *Wai Kroo* is a traditional ceremony where the students pay respects to their teachers. The event starts with the presentation of floral decorations, each one designed and made by the students over many hours. Performances by the students in classical dancing and traditional songs entertained the teachers and the event closed with many students receiving awards for outstanding achievements during the school year.

12<sup>th</sup> August 2007 - The country celebrated the birthday of HM the Queen on August the 12<sup>th</sup>, which is also National Mothers Day. As a mark of respect to The Queen, several older students travelled to Somdej Hospital in nearby Sri-Racha to donate blood. The day came to an end with a candlelight ceremony, and the singing of the national anthem to honor HM the Queen.

16<sup>th</sup> August 2007 - On the fourth anniversary of the passing of the school's founder, Fr. Ray Brennan, the teachers and students joined together with the students and children of his other projects at a Memorial Mass. To remember the man who gave them a chance of an education they lit candles and laid flowers on his grave. Khun Aurora, Principal of the school gave a short speech to the congregation praising the good deeds that Fr. Ray did for the blind of Thailand. (NS)

#### April 2008

Ji is 21 kilograms in weight and 141 centimeters in height. For his own benefit, Ji is to remain in the same class for the next school year, the 3<sup>rd</sup> entry level, to improve his fluency in Braille reading and writing. He likes being with his group of friends with whom he enjoys his sports in track and field. Ji expresses his preferences in joining the school chorus group as well as in the School band. He returned home to be with his family during the long school holiday. While being at our School, Ji participated actively in the School's activities, such as,

24<sup>th</sup> of November – Loy Krathong Festival. The annual celebration this year took place on the afternoon of the 24<sup>th</sup> of November. The celebration consisted of praying for oneself to do well in the coming year and the help to lead a good life. Beauty contests of representatives from different class-rooms, singing and dancing shows were the order of the day, and finally the celebration ended in a grand feast for all of the students and teachers.

Loy Krathong, or, River Lantern Festival, originated with the idea of water spirits and the

floating away on Krathongs of all wrongdoings and uncontrollable calamities that befell people of the north and northeastern parts of Thailand. Much of the north is a major rice-growing area, and also a place where superstitions have held on more strongly than in other parts of Thailand.

The earliest Krathongs were simple and constructed from natural materials. The trunk of a banana tree was cut for a base while the leaves of the tree were carefully folded into the shape of lotus petals and attached to the base. Finally, flowers, incense sticks and candles were added. People want to create the most beautiful Krathong and took great pride in designing and making their Krathongs.

5<sup>th</sup> December – H.M. the King's Birthday and National Father's Day-The celebration took place in the morning of the 4<sup>th</sup> of December consisting of poem reading, singing and praising and pledging to do good deeds in honor of His Royal Majesty. The activities for the day ended with musical pieces being rendered by the School's band.

The celebration continued the following morning, the 5<sup>th</sup> of December, when students and teachers joined forces and met with the general public of Banglamung District. The idea was for the students, teachers and public to meet at the Somdej Hospital in Sriracha District to donate their blood. Students ranging in age from 17 years of age and upward and weighing at the minimum, 45 kilograms were allowed to donate. Then came the high light of the day when all students and teachers lit candles in honor of H.M. the King.

7<sup>th</sup> December - Miss Caulfield's Memorial Day. Miss Genevive Caulfield, an American Lady, is highly regarded and respected as giving birth to the idea of giving education to the blind people in Thailand. The Memorial ceremony was held in the morning of the 7<sup>th</sup> of December.

25<sup>th</sup> December – Special Events with Television Celebrities-For the very first time in the School's history, 50 students ranging in age from 8 through 13, were invited to participate in a popular and well known television program. The whole event was pre-recorded a few days earlier while the actual program was aired on the 25<sup>th</sup> of December.

The program was performed by 5 schools, totaling 250 handicapped students. The event was filled with television celebrities playing with and serving goodies to the handicapped and disabled students, singing and dancing, gift presentations, and other fun-filled activities. Two of our students received 2 big awards – one being a full set of mini home theatre while the other received 40,000 baht in the way of an educational scholarship.

It was another fun and games day for everyone. The principal of the School told the students about Christmas and it ended up with much praising and wishing well to one another. The students then enjoyed games and raffles and the activity ended with a special luncheon served for everyone.

12<sup>th</sup> of January 2008 - the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the Year – The Country's Annual National Children's Day- The day started quite early, before sunrise actually, with people gathering around the football field at our Children's Home for the annual group picture taking. This consisted of all residents and personnel from all projects, followed by a hearty breakfast.

The day consisted of a most fun-filled day for residents, personnel, and guests with sports,

shows, exhibitions, etc. being the main part of the day. Food and beverages were available to all throughout the day. The event continued on until late in the evening with everyone having a great time but being completely exhausted!

15<sup>th</sup> of January 2008 is the official day for the School's Anniversary. The celebration started with a blessing and prayers and chanting of the Buddhist priests who had come from the nearby Thai Buddhist temple. A delightful lunch was held for the Monks and the attendees and finally ended with fun and games for all. (NS)

#### November 2008

The 16<sup>th</sup> of May marked the opening of the new academic year for our blind students. Ji continues on with his academic study while enjoying good health with his weight and his height remain to be pretty much the same as those previously measured. Ji tries to help himself in attending to his daily personal routine needs as much as he can. He is attentive in his study, realizing that it is the only way that will allow him to progress. Ji likes to play goal-ball with his friends as part of his daily physical exercises. He participates in all of our School's activities. (NS)

#### June 2009

Ji advances to his 1<sup>st</sup> year in the primary educational level. Although he appears to be strong he is nevertheless not as healthy as he should be. Ji weighs 23 kilograms and is 145 centimetres tall. Under strict training and with help from his teacher, Ji is now able to attend to his daily personal routine needs, inclusive of those pertaining to his personal hygienic requirements with, of course, some help from his teacher from time to time. Ji enjoys the company of his friends with whom he likes to play goal-ball, when time permits, and with his teacher's encouragement, as it is a good form of physical exercise. Ji also enjoys singing. He is fortunate to have a good family to whom he can return to during the school's holidays. (NS)

#### January 2010

Ji continues on with his academic study in his 1<sup>st</sup> year under the primary educational level with the possibility to advance to the next higher level, 2<sup>nd</sup> year under the primary educational level, subject of course to the outcome of his school year-end final examination which is scheduled to be in the later part of February or the early part of March of this year. His teacher's evaluation is to be taken into account as well. In the meantime, Ji is enjoying his good health while his weight and his height remains to be pretty much the same as those previously measured. Ji is enjoying the company of his friends with whom he likes to play goal-ball. Ji also participates in the school's Thai classical musical group. This year in addition to the usual singing, Ji became one of the musicians who play a treble gamelan, a traditional Thai instrument. He returns home to be with his family during the school's long holiday. While at school he participates quite actively in our school's activities. (NS)

#### May 2010

Ji was able to pass the school's year-end examination, which took place in February, and with the blessing from his teacher, he shall advance to Year 2 under the primary educational level when the next school year starts in May. In the meantime, Ji is enjoying some quality time with his family during the school's long summer holiday. Ji is usually strong and healthy. He is found to be 24.5 kilograms in weight and 151 centimeters in height. Ji continues to enjoy the company of his friends with whom he plays and mingles with when they have free time, usually after regular classes in the afternoon. Ji participates actively in all of our school's activities.

(NS)

#### December 2010

Ji continues on with his academic study in which he is now in his 2<sup>nd</sup> year under the primary educational level. Ji is enjoying his good health. He is found to be 26 kilograms in weight and 151 centimeters in height. He can look after himself in attending to all his personal daily routine needs especially those in relative to his personal hygienic requirements. He can also help others in need as well as helping his teacher to care for those younger ones quite well. Ji like to spend his free time in reading to help improve his proficiency in Braille. He enjoys track and field sports, such as, dashing or broad jumping. Ji also participates in music by playing drum. Ji returned home to be with his family during the School's long holiday. While at school, he tries to participate in most of our School's activities. (NS)

#### June 2011

As expected, Ji was promoted to Year 3. It is also expected that Ji will have no difficulty in moving up to Year 4 when the next school year starts in May of next year. Ji in the meantime, continues to do well in his academic study as well as in his general behavior and conduct. He is enjoying good health and in the latest measurement, we have found him to be 31 kilograms in weight and 151 centimeters in height. Ji attends to all his daily personal needs, so well in fact that he is also capable of helping others, especially those who are still too young to help themselves. In his free time he usually indulges himself in computer skills. He also plays track and field sports with his friends as this is indeed a good way to get his physical exercise. In addition to being involved in sports, Ji also enjoys listening to music. Ji's family keeps close contact with him through regular visits while he is at school. He spent his school's long holiday with his family. While at school, he also attends all of our school's activities. (NS)