



August 9, 2019

Dear Confreres, Benefactors and Friends,

Last night at 22:30 the heavy rain made me have a walk to check the water level in front of our school. I advised some our staff families and guests at the ground floor of our guesthouse to get ready for some water may enter in their ground floor rooms. The level of the water on the main road in front of our school started to rise and in a matter of few minutes it was overflowing the dam-wall we just build to prevent flooding.

I took with me the one year old baby, Mary, as the parents were busy to prepare their room for eventual flood.

I went to my office while water was already entering the door in front. In a matter of few minutes the water was over half a meter. I started to put all laptops and relevant papers as high as I could find a place in my office. Meanwhile the water outside was one meter high while in the office at lower level as the doors were closing the full entrance to the water. Students came to my office knocking at the windows and door asking me to move to the first floor of the nearby academic building. The pressure of the water on the door was so strong that students could not manage to open the door. We had no choice than to go out through a small counter window connecting my office to the secretary office. Mary was happy to hug her dad. Students were very attentive helping to secure remaining things to any higher water level. We transfer all property papers and relevant documents to the first floor of the nearby building and moved away from the office.

The water flowing from the main road destroyed the fence wall, flowing fast to the opposite side of our campus and demolishing the gate leading to the small road from the hotel side. No ground floor of our buildings was spared by the flood.

Thanks to God no one was hurt during this calamity. The houses of our teachers and staff were flooded as well. Some of them are now living in our school as they have no place to stay and asked us for shelter.

The damage is huge as all the workshops (Mechanical, Welding, Automotive, Electrical) machinery and equipment have been under water and mud. The Salesian community together with staff and students all are sharing the same hardship while experiencing something we never expected.

Being one kilometer from the sea beach, one cannot expect such a high flood. The fast rampant development with construction of hotels, shopping malls, residential skyscrapers disregarding infrastructures and nature are making everyone else paying the toll.

Canals and streams have been obstructed by reducing their original sizes in order to exploit the land on their banks. Garbage thrown everywhere blocking the already

small drainage system. Deforestation on the hill sides is one of the main causes of flash floods happening in Sihanoukville as well.

It is too early to estimate the damage but I presume it will be closed to one million US \$.

We are happy to see many Salesians, past-pupils and friends ready to help and encourage in this difficult time here.

Thanks to all of you for your prayer and sympathy. The good Lord will inspire generous Benefactors to help us in replacing the damaged items and solve in the best way to preventing future floods.

Thanks you.

Roberto Panetto

Brother Roberto Panetto
Economer of Delegation of Cambodia



Road inside along the Administration building during the flash flood



Flash Flood along the streets of the city



Flood level in our School Canteen



Facade of the our Church after the flood subsided



Marks of Flood level inside our Church



Marks of Flood level on our wall painting in the Church



Mud covering our wooden flooring inside the Church



Mud inside our Salesian Convent ground floor



Our Covered Court after the flood



Entrance of DBTS SHV



Garage