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Dear Friends,

One measure of success for any organization is its ability to withstand the loss of one of its key members. This is especially true for an organization as small as the Lingap Children's Foundation. One of the questions I am frequently asked is, *"What will happen to the Lingap Project if something should happen to you?"*

My update letters are always about the kids - what they're doing, their education, their successes and so on. Today however, I thought it might be helpful if instead of talking about the kids, I answered your questions about future sustainability and succession (continuity) planning for the Lingap Project in general.

I am absolutely delighted to share that the Lingap Board of Directors has been considering this question for some time. As a result, Fr. Geoff Rose, OSFS, has been officially designated as my successor in the event that something should happen to me. Fr. Geoff is uniquely qualified to manage the Lingap Children's Foundation. He has served as a member of the Lingap Board of Directors since 2018, so he is familiar with board decisions and how these decisions impact the children, the staff and our supporters. Since 2013, he has served as the President of the St. Francis de Sales High School in Toledo, Ohio. Prior to this, he was the chaplain at Lumen Christi High School in Jackson, MI for 12 years. As you can see, the majority of his career has involved youth, education and school administration. You will recall that one of our top priorities at the Lingap Center is education!

Fr. Geoff has a true passion for foreign missions. He serves on the Board of Directors for IsleGo Missions, an inter-denominational organization that specializes in week-long mission experiences for high school students, primarily in the Caribbean. IsleGo teams have done everything from building houses to visiting people in nursing homes. They have even done reading-glass clinics to help people determine what glasses they might need to be able to see better! Fr. Geoff is also a director and chaplain for Catholic Heart Workcamp which has also provided service opportunities to over 10,000 youth in 40 cities each summer. In addition to all of the above, he is a very close personal friend.

Over the years, Fr. Geoff has traveled with me to the Lingap Center numerous times. Consequently, both the children and the staff know him well. Additionally, he is well known in the greater Toledo City, Cebu, Philippines community, which is critically important since the Philippines tends to be very 'relational.' As good community citizens, positive relationships at all levels and cultural understanding are very important. He is also known by the Lingap Children's Development Center, Inc. Board of Trustees (*since we are incorporated in both the U.S. and the Philippines*). In short, there is no one I can think of that I would rather entrust the Lingap project to than Fr. Geoff.



“Foreign missions have been a passion of mine my whole religious life. For a few years I happily raised funds and awareness about the Lingap Center, but after my first visit there with John in 2010, my life was changed! I have been so blessed each and every time I have returned and have deepened my relationships both with the Lingap Center family and in the Filipino community, as a whole. It is my honor to serve the Lingap Center in any capacity and I look forward to our future.”

– Fr. Geoff Rose, OSFS

While I’m sure that there would be many changes should Fr. Geoff need to step in, I can assure you that much of it will remain

the same. Fr. Geoff would assume this role on a part-time basis, while continuing his work at St. Francis.

To ensure that things remain as much the same as possible, the Board has established a permanent “Founder’s Seat” on the Board of Directors. This means that in the event that something happened to me, a member of my immediate family will always have a seat on the Board. This was done to ensure the continuity of our vision for the Lingap project as well as to ensure that our mission and values remain the same. This includes our commitment to donors that 100% of all contributions we receive will always go to the benefit of the children and that we remain a non-denominational organization committed to helping as many children in need as we possibly can.

I believe that our U.S. Board of Directors and our Philippine Board of Trustees are among the finest and most qualified individuals we could ever hope to have. They are extremely dedicated people who have a true passion for helping the less fortunate. If you would like to read more about them, their bios can be found on our website at: lingapcenter.org. Just click on the tab entitled “About Us.”

I recently found a quote from Anne M. Mulcahy which sums up a future transition very well. She said,

“One of the things we often miss in succession planning is that it should be gradual and thoughtful, with lots of sharing of information and knowledge and perspective, so that it’s almost a non-event when it happens.”

While I’m not planning to go away any time soon, I am very pleased to know that the Lingap kids, staff and the overall project will continue on for many years to come. I am very happy to be able to share this information with you. Again however, this announcement does NOT mean that I am retiring! Not yet! But when the time comes, we will be ready.

Sincerely,

John Drake