

## He Lasan, 2012

Let's see...where to begin...oh! I'll start from the very beginning. I was a short little 3 year old, sitting in my mother's van, not knowing what was going on. She drove me to a place I've never seen before. She opened the door, picked me up, and took me towards a white house, with many flowers and decorations all around it. A woman opened the door. She looked so...strange. Her clothing seemed very plain. But her eyes were lit up and she had a huge smile on her face. She and my mom chatted for a while, and she turned to me. She motioned for me to come towards her, and she took me to a room. All I can remember about the room was that it was cave-like, with no lights, no chairs, no windows. There wasn't even a door! This room was what would become first a classroom, then a computer room where the older students would create yearbooks. Now, back to the story; we'll get back to this later. During this time of what I would later call "Bé Lên Ba", I met many people. Some of which I haven't seen since then, and some I'll always call my family.

There was a year when I wanted to finally become a "big kid". I wanted to be able to do pottery, woodshop, and harder artwork. But when that time finally came, most of the Nuns and Freres that taught those classes left. The classroom that was once what I called a cave turned into a computer room. And the art room where I had the best times of my life became a classroom for the younger kids. The woodshop and pottery area became a stage. Everything changed in so little time. As time flew by, things became smaller and smaller. Combination classes started to form. Even a tiny TV couldn't fit into some of the classrooms.

I finally enter the 6 & up class, soon to become only 7 & up. Everything seemed so much harder. The Ca Daos and Kinh Thánh's got longer. We had to write more. The movies started to change. Last year, we didn't even get to watch the Phim Cổ Tích at all! We also had to turn art into study class. I'd rather call it detention. This year I am an 8<sup>th</sup> grader. I'm one of the very best gimp editors there are in 7 & up. I'm friendlier with the older kids, the TAs, the teachers. I know about almost every single hiding spot there is at Lasan. I've stolen my teacher's shoes and hid them. I've helped washed cups. I'm "advanced" at singing Lasan's songs and reciting the bible quotes and ca daos. I've helped teach the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders how to swim correctly. There have been so many changes in my life, and Lasan is one of them. This year, Lasan will start reconstructing and turn into "The Lasan Community Center". So many things will be gone. The

burnt carpet with the iron mark, the cramped old chapel, the classrooms, everything that I've lived with since I was a little 3-year-old. I'm going to miss this Lasan so much. But hey, maybe change is good. Maybe they'll expand the pool. Maybe they'll add a dance studio, so we can learn dance instead of debate and study. Maybe they'll buy more supplies for art class. Or maybe they won't change anything at all. Maybe they'll just rebuild the classes and their interior. Nobody knows for sure. But I, I will never forget everything I've learned at Lasan. I will never forget all my friends, my "family". Lasan is my home.

Phuong Uyen