



The Camillian Social Centre in Rayong, Thailand has been home to children with HIV for more than 10 years. Children born HIV positive get the best possible medical care and education in the community. The following reading was written by an 11 year old girl living at The Camillian Centre,

My house had some sunflowers. When the sunflowers bloom I like to look at them very much because their petals are bright yellow and the inside of the flower are dark brown. The sunflower is very big. I see big and small insects come to the flower to drink. The insects are the same as me; I eat food to help me grow. The sun rises every morning, the sunflower turns to the sun and blooms. I had not seen a sunflower for a long time and one day I saw it at The Camillian Centre.

When I was young, I lived with my parents. One day, my father left my mother and I. I was only four years old at that time. After that my mother got very sick and I had to stay home alone. My mother then passed away, I was so sad. After my mother's funeral my cousin took me for a check up and then I was sent to The Camillian Centre. At first I did not know when I was here, but now I know that I am HIV positive. Father Giovanni at the centre told me I was HIV positive from my parents. Fr Giovanni took me in and cared for me like a second father. Now I feel that my life is not hopeless.

The sunflower is me. The first sun that gives me power is God. The second sun is Fr Giovanni who gives us love and hope. The Third is Mother Rita and our teachers who give us the opportunity to go to school and learn with other children. The fourth sun is the people that live in society. When they accept all people living with HIV/ AIDS this allows us to grow.

This heart felt story; written by an 11 year old girl who lives at The Camillian Centre resonates with this passage from The 1 Corinthians 13:

*'If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.'*