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EDUCATION - The committee of the Jesuit Education Project is studying the possibility of starting an academic institution to serve the poor, especially the indigenous communities in the northern mountains of Thailand.

The Diocese of Chiang Mai, which covers the northernmost provinces of Thailand, recommended an 8.3-hectare of land some 20 kilometers from the Golden Triangle, where Thailand meets Myanmar and Laos and bordering a small river less than 10 kilometers from the major rivers of Kok and Mekong.

Most students will come from the mountainous areas of Chiang Rai and neighboring provinces. Most of our neighbors will be lowland rice farmers of northern Thai (Lanna) and Buddhist background.

The school land is located in Chiang Saen district of Chiang Rai, one of the four poorest provinces in Thailand, according to the 2014 UNDP Human Development Report.

The area also borders Bokeo, one of the poorest provinces of Laos, and in Myanmar, the area borders the home state of several indigenous communities.

The Jesuit tertiary-level school will offer a liberal arts education in college and will admit around 30 students annually for the first four years. Initially the college will serve as a residential

learning center and will not grant its own degree.

Instead, students will enroll at Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University for their bachelor's degrees. Eventually, the Jesuit college will become a degree-offering institution on its own.

Source: UCA News, June 22, 2015