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EDITORIAL

CHIEF EDITOR

Fr. Mathew Chennakudy SVD
St. John's Mission Seminary,
Changanacherry, Kottayam Dist., Kerala
Mob: 9446649696

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Fr. Luvis Ronald Pereira SVD
National Mission Secretary, India Sub-Zone

LAYOUT, DESIGN & DISTRIBUTION

Fr. Anthony Swamy SVD
National Communication Coordinator
India Sub-Zone

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ARTISANS OF HOPE!

More than ever, perhaps never known before, we are placed in a position of complete vulnerability!

The day after the first lockdown (March 2020), all of us found ourselves without the daily routine, often without physical movement, meetings and assemblies. Life changed in an instant. Families developed fresh problems, people became jobless, and migrants got stuck on the way. Some of our institutions responded immediately by resorting to virtual communication platforms. Others found themselves navigating in new uncertain scenarios: dealing with a whole new intangible world.



What does God want us to do at this time in history? The life of an SVD missionary has certain unique characteristics. Among them is that we help build God's Kingdom by working for justice and peace (JPIC). We contribute to developing a social conscience so that we and others can perceive and assume responsibility for social justice. Pope Francis says we model ourselves on Jesus: Moved by his example, we want to enter fully into the fabric of society, sharing the lives of all, listening to their concerns, helping them materially and spiritually in their needs, rejoicing with those who rejoice, weeping with those who weep; arm in arm with others, we are committed to building a new world.

And the SVD General Team feels that the poor and needy, wounded by life and excluded at the margins around the globe are our priority in our apostolate.

Although the impact of a missionary's efforts at making the world more just and peaceful may seem minimal, there is strength in numbers. As the SVD teams up with other religious communities, it will have a direct bearing on issues related to social justice, development and ecology. Jesus reduces it to one criterion: how did you treat me in my need.

In our pursuit of JPIC, we inevitably come face-to-face with the significant role that POWER structures play in our life and mission, as well as in our vision of the world and hope for the future. It calls for a structural transformation that involves the Spirit. In a painful mix of hope and desperation, this transformation also involve embracing those countless people who risk their lives to escape persecution, poverty and natural disasters. As it also means caring for our common home, caring about the future of our planet effectively is significant.

In this process, we can learn only from our Lord how to look at the realities of the world... And in our acts of kindness to the hungry, the thirsty, the sick, the poor and the imprisoned, take comfort that it is the Lord himself we are helping. And what we do not want to hear is: In so far as you neglected to do this to one of the least of my brethren, you neglected to do it to me.

WORDINDIA, the SVD India sub zonal magazine shares with you our life and ministry; we want to relate to you our friends and benefactors very personally. Together let us continue to respond to the call to be artisans of hope in our blessed and broken world!

Fr. Mathew Chennakudy SVD

Editor



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SAMMAN BHOPAL

Simon James SVD & Alwyn Misquith SVD

SAMMAN (Social Animation of Marginalized, Migrants and Nomads) is working since July 2005 for the integral development of waste pickers, domestic, marginalized and migrant workers living in the slums of Bhopal city.

Through our efforts great numbers of lives have been touched and transformed in the urban slums of Bhopal who now live a dignified life with an identity in the society. However, there are large numbers of people who are vulnerable and live a very poor and pathetic life. Since SAMMAN wants to see a wholesome

development in the lives of such needy people, different activities and programs are organized either in their slum or in our office.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Tailoring Classes

During the year 2020-2021 as many as 98 trainees have been trained in 8 batches. The Tailoring course was offered in the SAMMAN office for the four nearby slums Ishwar Nagar, Meera Nagar, P.C Nagar and Indra Nagar aspirers. It was helpful for the girls and the household women as they have started



self-employment and initiated to bring in additional income. "I am so happy that I could learn a new skill and it has helped me to earn my livelihood with the help of SAMMAN NGO. Now I train students in tailoring which gives me immense joy and satisfaction. I am deeply indebted to SAMMAN NGO", Said Preeti Sahu from P.C Nagar Slum.

Assistant Beauty Therapist Course

During the Year 2020-2021 there have been 48 girls in four Batches, each comprising of 12 trainees for the period of 4 months. The trained apprentice were so grateful for the meticulousness of the course which otherwise was unimaginable for a lower middle class group of students due to heavy fees being charged on them. This training has helped them in terms of self grooming as well as earning a decent income, says a trainee.

Computer Coaching

Along with the other vocational trainings, 96 students have completed their Basic Computer Coaching. SAMMAN offers the Coaching for the duration of 3 months in 2 batches of twelve. They are taught Paint and Typing Master, MS word, PowerPoint and Excel, Multimedia along with the use of the internet.

Driving Classes for Youth

As many as 24 youth from 8 different slums, Nehru Nagar, Jawahar Chok, Gandhi Nagar, Bairaghad, and all the nearby slum were trained in driving, and we helped them to get the Driving License. A good number of youths are involved in the private sectors. They are now employed, happy and satisfied. They are grateful to SAMMAN for their career.

Community Computer Coaching Program (Digital Education Learning Platform)

Corona has severely affected the school education of children and digital education has become the new platform of learning. SAMMAN is working with

children who belong to very poor families and cannot afford smart phones or laptops. Hence SAMMAN has decided to provide children with community computer coaching classes in which one instructor carries 10 laptops in the field and sets up a small computer lab daily and the interested children can attend the classes in their community itself. The class takes place in all 15 selected slums and the instructor travels all these slums every day. The children are very happy and excited about the entire curriculum and they give their best in learning the essentials in Computer which wasn't in their reach in the locality.

AWARENESS AND TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN, WOMEN AND YOUTH

Tuition and Bridge Course Centre

Regular Tuition classes are conducted in all the 15 centers for more than 450 children in the target areas with the help of the local field animators along with the tuition teachers. It monitors children's regular attendance in the schools and keep a record of their improvement in their studies. This provides an opportunity to the students to develop their talents in extracurricular activities. The children

are also given value based education.

Formation of Children Parliament

Children's parliament consists of 24 children in each group. They discuss and make decision on the issues related to their localities on their own. The children are gradually becoming capable of resisting child violence and responsible for protecting their rights. These children cope with the knowledge of CRC and Child Protection so that they can easily handle the problem and develop child friendly environment in the slums. SAMMAN animates about 45 Children Parliament in 15 Centers consisting of over 950 children.



Youth Groups

Under this project, there are about 22 youth groups spared in 6 different localities. There are about 52 youths belonging to the age group of 16 to 25. The aim of forming the clubs is to bring changes in the



society through the youth. Therefore they need to be nurtured accordingly with knowledge, skills and right attitudes. The human resource in the community need to be developed properly as modern technology and social media are ruling the roost and distracting them enormously. There are also a number of Training Programs being conducted.

Educational Exposure Visit to Regional Museum of Natural History

We organized an Educational Exposure Visit for the Bridge Course and Tuition Center children along with Animators and Teachers. There were about 200 children from across the centers participating in the Exposure Visit. They were advised to take responsibility for preserving the Natural History which is our rich inheritance. There were inputs on controlling the various pollutions and this influence the Plants and animals. Children were also made aware of the deadly Chemical Composition of Pesticides through videos which make all the living beings sick and damage our nature. Children took note of all the relevant aspects as part of their learning. The entire Visit was productive and very significant.

Street Plays and Road Rallies

Children and Youth actively participate in performing street plays and road rallies on different social issues like child trafficking, abuse of children, child labor, human rights, etc. Children are not only participants but also conscious of the social issues in their own locality.

Awareness Programmes on Cyber Crime in Cyber Cell

We organize awareness programmes on Cyber Crime in Cyber Cell Bhopal. There are about 60 Youth from 6 different Centers taking part in the awareness programme. DIG of Cyber Cell Bhopal and his Staff explains various relevant aspects of Cyber Crime. They mainly focus on Positive and Negative sides of Cyber Crime with case studies related to Slum Youths. The Cell expounds how to file the FIR and the Procedures. Safety Measures for the use of Mobile and Social Networking Sites are meticulously explained. The Awareness Programme is very informative and appropriate for all the Youth.

Awareness Program on Health and Sanitation

Regular awareness program on health and sanitation are organized once in three months for women, youth and children. They include seasonal diseases, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, cancer, etc. The beneficiaries are constantly made aware of hygiene to keep



themselves and children sanitary. These activities are conducted with the help of trained and experienced doctors and nurses in collaboration with the government hospital and health centers.

SELF HELP GROUPS

We engage in the empowerment of women who are the most vulnerable in the society. Formation of Self Help Group is one such means through which we create a habit of saving among women, and the exposure and friendship they get within the group makes them confident and strong enough to fight injustice. Hence, SAMMAN is also promoting Self Help Groups in all the selected areas.





SARVA SEVA SANGH, MUMBAI

Jose Arayathel SVD

Sarva

Seva Sangh, a registered Charitable Trust, is an initiative by the Society of the Divine Word (a Congregation of SVD Priests & Brothers). This charitable Trust is set up for the social causes and committed to the empowerment of marginalised people and underprivileged children, by operating five social projects: 1) HIV Medical, Educational & Nutritional support, 2) School Dropout youth Project, 3) Street, Slum & Special Children Project, 4) Substance abusers Recuperation and rehabilitation Project, 5) Migrant ministry.

Main Objective of HIV programme is to improve care and support services to children living with or affected by HIV/AIDS. We have adopted 142 families affected

by HIV/AIDS spread over entire Mumbai region. We conduct medical Camps on fourth Saturday of every month and distribute nutrition kits/ration for each month. We also pay the school/college fees of their children.

School Dropout youth Project aims at the Empowerment of the Disadvantaged youth through work related, skill - based and life coping education leading to gainful employment, thus making a qualitative difference in the lives of the urban poor, in collaboration with local industrial establishments and potential employers. To achieve this end, the Trust conducts a Community College offering courses on Basic and Conversational English & Personality Development and various Computer diploma



programmes which are recognized and certificates are awarded by Maharashtra Knowledge Corporation Ltd (MKCL).

Street Children Project has unique programmes for early childhood development. Through this project we respond to the challenges of providing pre-school education on one hand and remedial and special education to special needs children.



We began a special education Centre in June 2019 in a modest way. The goals of special education are the same as those of education for normal children—to teach each child up to the level of the child's abilities. As the days passed by, we noticed the plight of poor families having a special child. Educational facilities for special needs children are limited and expensive and thus inaccessible for people of low income groups. We cater to the special needs of Autism or ASD (autism spectrum disorder), ED (emotional disturbance), Intellectual Disabilities (mild, moderate, or severe), SLD (specific learning disability). Our services are for the economically backward at a concessional rate as well as free, depending upon the financial condition of the parents and need of the special children.

The Project of Substance abuse & Recuperation and Rehabilitation is carried on by providing counselling and conducting everyday meetings of Alcoholic Anonymous (AA) & Narcotics Anonymous (NA) groups.

A special mention ought to be made regarding the continuous meetings of these groups started from June 2020 and continuing till date.

Another important project is the Migrant ministry which is geared towards taking care of the pastoral, social and educational needs of the Catholic migrants from northern India, mainly people hailing from Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, U.P, M.P., and the North Eastern States.

Social Activities during COVID 19

In addition to the on-going social projects, the Covid-19 pandemic necessitated swift action and immediate response to the plight of the poor people. Lockdown came into effect on the midnight of March 25, 2020 in India. With each passing day, the concern for daily food grew grim for the daily wage earners, construction workers, auto-taxi drivers and above all the pavement dwellers.

By networking with like-minded NGOs coupled with the assistance of Littoo On-line Kitchen, we launched food-packs distribution. When we wound up the food packs distribution by May 3, 2020, we have distributed a total of 24,390 food packs.

We did not limit ourselves to food packs only but also distributed food grain hampers, face masks, fresh vegetables, immune boosting drinks and hundreds of vials of Arsenicum Album 30C homeopathic medicines. We also contributed some amounts in cash to many people who walked in to Sarva Seva Sangh, narrating their poor and pathetic plight of not having some bare necessities in their houses. Cash amount was limited to Rs.500=00 per family.

In conclusion, Sarva Seva Sangh, Mumbai continues with the socio-economic educational and developmental programmes in right earnest despite the trying times of the pandemic and Lockdown.

“This is not a time for forgetfulness. The crisis we are facing should not make us forget the many other crises that bring suffering to so many people”

- Pope Francis





REACHING OUT TO THE UNREACHED

Alwin Mascarenhas SVD

Over five decades of presence in the Hyderabad province, the poorest of the poor have made us aware of the day to day struggles of our sisters and brothers. Commitment to justice challenges us to seek the transformation of social and political situations which are the cause of human misery, whilst also seeking to meet practical needs in a compassionate way. They are not optional but essential in living the 'Word of God' and a true Christian way of life! In so doing, all our choices are marked by the Gospel values.

Janssen Social Centre, Edullabayaram

This is an interior mission situated around 350 Kms from Hyderabad. Predominantly it is a tribal settlement

where the tribals move from one forest settlement to another. The mission undertaken primarily is developmental work and primary evangelization. The confreres work here in close collaboration with the diocese.

The mission began with a remedial school for school dropout children and child labourers. They were from different hamlets of the forest settlements. The boys stayed in our hostel and studied in different Government schools. The Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy took care of the girls with the support of the diocese. The remedial school for the girls was discontinued in the year 2007 due to lack of funds. Therefore, many boys from the same families also discontinued their studies in the remedial school. At present, we have



tribal children from economically and socially poor background attending the school.

The social centre is primarily involved in pastoral and direct evangelization work. Regular medical camps, drinking water programs, moral education classes, social awareness programs, income generating programs, and housing projects are being implemented with the direct assistance of the diocese.

Jeevodaya Social Centre, Pregnapur



The primary work undertaken by Jeevodaya Social centre is community based rehabilitation of the differently abled children, production and distribution of Herbal medicines, welfare programs for farmers and welfare of women.

Physically challenged children are well taken care of under community based rehabilitation. They are helped in obtaining the disability certificate in order to get all the Government welfare schemes including monthly pension. They are helped in education, medical care and income generation programs. They are also helped in obtaining wheelchairs, hearing aid, artificial limbs and physiotherapy. They are also given clothing, nutrition, stationery items and health tonics.

Herbal medicines are produced and distributed for partially supporting the Jeevodaya ministries. Regular awareness programmes in the form of street plays, group meetings, seminars and classes are conducted in the villages to educate and empower the farmers, especially the women.

Asha Jyothi, HIV/AIDS Care and Support Centre Pregnapur

Asha Jyothi was started in view of reaching out to the people suffering with HIV/AIDS. We have a 20-bed care and support facility to treat the HIV and TB patients. We reach out to them in counselling, nutrition, nursing care and medical care. We have both in-patient and out-patient treatment facility.

We are also taking care of HIV infected orphan children. At present we have 26 boys in our orphanage Arnold Children's Home, which is duly registered under CCI. They are well taken care of in all the aspects. They are sent to Government school for their studies.

We are also involved in outreach awareness programmes. We conduct medical camps, public meetings and street plays besides health awareness programmes in villages, schools and colleges. The centre is able to raise partial funds for its needs from local people, schools, parishes, industries and other organizations.

St. Antony's Leprosy Centre, Jogipet



The primary aim of this centre is to rehabilitate the leprosy affected people. The centre takes

care of the leprosy patients with utmost care with medical support and nutrition. The centre also runs a general clinic every Sunday and conducts medical camps and general health awareness programmes on regular basis. Regular eye check-ups are done during clinic days, and spectacles are distributed to the deserving people.

A separate building is being renovated and made ready to accommodate the HIV infected girl children from Asha Jyothi. Now there are 20 HIV infected orphan girls being well taken care of in all aspects at the centre.

Arnold Bala Vikasa Ashram, Nizampet

This is another mission for school dropout children and the child labourers. Most of these children are from tribal background, economically and socially weak. Most of their parents are migrant agricultural labourers. They move from place to place looking for daily labour.

They are accommodated in our hostel which is duly registered as a Child Care Institution. We have two

separate buildings for boys and girls. The sisters of St. Anne's of Catechists congregation are helping in this mission to look after the girl children without taking any remuneration. They also partially support the residential expenses of the girl children.

The confreres are doing their best in their particular missions in spite of financial and other constraints. Periodical training in their area of work will enable them to be more effective in their respective ministry. At present there is no proper training in the field of specialized ministry, and if there are more formally trained confreres in their respective field of work, the efficiency of their work can be enhanced. However, the hard work, dedication and commitment of the confreres is well appreciated.





CALLED TO SERVE

Susan Noronha

As a kid, I grew up watching my father dressing the wounds of a leper in my little village. My job was to pass the cotton swabs to him. For me, my father was a hero and my hero left me soon after I celebrated my 10th birthday. My mother was a teacher in the parish school, and she knew almost every family in the village. She was a kind-hearted giver as well, and I continue to experience the fruits of my parents' generosity in my village. She too left me and joined my father soon after I finished my graduation. God took them before I could say a proper goodbye.

"Keep breathing"—that is what I told myself when I started living in a hostel, buried under fears, trauma

and rejection. Days, months, years passed. My strength came from lifting myself up every time I was knocked down. I waited for wisdom.

Finishing with my studies, I started working for a corporation and married a wonderful man, Leo Chettiar. He is not only my husband but also my best friend. It was around the time of our wedding that I realized what I had to do. I understood that my parents had left their imprint on me. I wanted to be a missionary!

In 2012 I quit my secure job and joined Divine Word Missionaries' lay partners group, Disciples of the Divine Word, in the Mumbai Province of India. In 2015, I was elected president of this group.

Inspired by her parents, Susan Noronha is a lay missionary in Disciples of the Divine Word (DDW).



Disciples of the Divine Word identifies itself with the Trinitarian and missionary spirituality of Divine Word Missionaries. This motivates us to be rooted in communion with the Word and committed to Christ's mission. Our regular meetings, recollections, retreats, visits to remote missions and other programs are



geared to build us up as a community alongside and with Divine Word Missionaries. We seek to emulate Jesus' ministry through compassionate service and sharing the Word with others.

Through the years, Disciples members have learned to appreciate the wonderful ways God worked in the life of St. Arnold Janssen and in the Divine Word congregation. In this communion of mind and heart, members have discovered God's gifts in their own lives and have generously shared them with others.

From my India subzone I was chosen to attend a lay partners' workshop in Nemi, just outside of Rome. During the workshop, we cherished the value of interculturality. We were people from diverse cultures, languages, and nations celebrating this richness through liturgy, songs and fun-filled conversations.

This workshop gave me immense enthusiasm to continue my mission work with the spirit of St. Arnold Janssen and as a member of the Arnoldus family. It was an opportunity that was given to me by my group members and my province's leadership team. In 2018 I was selected from the Asia-Pacific Zone to attend Divine Word Missionaries' 18th General Chapter that ran from June through July in Nemi. This was the first time a general chapter had a representation of four lay partners from Divine World Missionaries' four zones participating throughout the whole chapter.

The lay partners were invited not only to make a presentation on their collaboration with the religious missionaries but also to take part in the agenda of the general chapter in the fullest way possible, with the exception of the voting. From attending all the chapter sessions, to the outings, pilgrimages and watching World Cup soccer, we were received by the confreres as members of the Arnoldus family.

A Missionary's Call

The lay partners publish a newsletter thrice in a year in two languages, English and Spanish. I am the editor in chief, and my editorial team consists of Matilda Anim-Fofie from Ghana, Laura Inés Díez Bilbao from Spain, Fabian Pagaduan from the Philippines, Gianini Sahagun Becerra from México and Sophie Wego from Germany.

A call to be a missionary is a call from Christ to deepen our own faith and share it with the people around us. Being a disciple is a challenge. Collaboration is not always easy—sometimes among other lay partners and sometimes with Divine Word Missionaries. Keeping the dialogue channels open has helped us in overcoming the communication and relationship blocks.

What has helped us is the strong faith that together we can do much and that in times of difficulties an answer always emerges. To quote Superior General Paul Budi Kleden SVD: "Let us help each other to be true to our name, Missionaries of the Divine Word, because our name is our mission."





VIKAS DEEPTI

Rasal Xess, SVD

Vikas

Deepti is an organization working for the people with disabilities, and for leprosy patients and their dependents since 1995. The organization has reached out to many children and persons with disability and brought forth positive changes in their lives. Initially it began with Institution Based Rehabilitation (IBR) programme for children with disability, but later the centre realized the importance and need of Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Programme. Since then Vikas Deepti is active in the 5 blocks of Bargarh district in Odisha.

Institution Based Rehabilitation (IBR)

Vikas Deepti is an institution for the rehabilitation of differently abled children situated in Tora, Bargarh, in

the state of Odisha. It started functioning from 29th June 1995. It has a building measuring 22,000 square feet plinth area. It has five dormitories, a physiotherapy unit, an orthotic & prosthetic workshop, kitchen, dining hall, etc. A student normally stays for a period of 5 years in Vikas Bhavan (Home for the differently abled children). Vikas Deepti started Institution Based Rehabilitation (IBR) work in 1995 at Vikas Bhavan. Vikas Bhavan is a home for the differently abled (CP and MR) children. We admit them in the age group of 5 to 14 and try to rehabilitate them through physiotherapy, corrective surgery, ADL (Activities of Daily Living) training and providing aids and appliances to those who are in need of it.

The Centre has a well-equipped physiotherapy unit with a trained physiotherapist. It also has orthotic and



prosthetic workshop with two technicians where it fabricates child friendly light weight appliances. They study with other children in normal schools as we promote inclusive education. During this period the students are given excellent facilities for physical and psychological rehabilitation and primary schooling. They are provided with physiotherapy every day.



Children are also provided disability correcting aids like calipers, crutches and splints manufactured in our orthotic workshop. Corrective surgery is performed in the Catholic Mission Hospital situated close to Vikas Bhavan.

The students of Vikas Bhavan do their primary schooling in an inclusive and integrated school with able bodied children. The concern, care, affection and acceptance they receive in the institution help them cope with their problems of social ostracism and sarcasm. The spontaneous smiles which light up the faces of the children amidst so much of physical suffering bear eloquent testimony to the level of psychological rehabilitation achieved in Vikas Bhavan. Many children who come to Vikas Bhavan are hardly able to move but after their corrective surgery and physiotherapy many are able to walk. Presently we have 50 children with disabilities for their rehabilitation and education.

Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR)

Looking at the success of Vikas Bhavan and the enormous help it does to the children with disability in and around the district, the Director and the staff realized that a larger society is deprived of the same facilities available in Vikas Bhavan. Hence in order to cater to the needs of the less privileged ones, Community Based Rehabilitation was thought of, and

today we are working in 5 blocks of Bargarh district, namely Bargarh and Bheden, Attabira, Barpali and Bijepur.

The activities are spread through 260 villages. They include special schools, children's parliament, home based education and therapy, admission to formal schools and promoting inclusive education, formation of SHGs for PWDs, networking, vocational training, conducting health awareness camps, organizing training camp for CP & MR children and their parents, surgeries & post operative care, obtaining government facilities for the PWDs, and supply of aids & appliances.

The magnitude of the problem posed by leprosy patients with disabilities and their rehabilitation is highly challenging and is expected to pose a heavy burden on the community as well as unprecedented strain on the PHCs managed by the government. The health planners should rethink on future strategies in such a manner that human rights of the downtrodden patients suffering from the "neglected disease" of leprosy are not sidelined. However, the society today has the capacity to eliminate hunger and poverty, and



establish peace.

Concern for people with disabilities was one of the prominent notes of Jesus's earthly ministry. Whether it was a person born blind (John 9) or the individual with the withered hand (Luke 14), Jesus was moved with compassion whenever he encountered PWD. Healing was one of the prominent manifestations of Jesus's ministry. In Matt. 21:14 we read: "The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them." (Matt. 15:30-31) Therefore, the call of JPIC for care and concern for lepers and persons with disabilities is a personal, communitarian, congregational and societal responsibility.



SARVA SEVA SANGH, PUNE

Mathew Koratty SVD

Shabnam

Rahim Shaikh, a young girl, came in contact with Sarva Seva Sangh (SSS) in 2005 at a point when she, along with her family, literally had come on street after her father's death. She was placed in a hostel by Sarva Seva Sangh (SSS), where she completed her X standard with 72% and XII with 55% marks and was further supported to study General Nursing in the Holy Spirit hospital, Mumbai. In August 2018 she completed Nursing studies and began to work in the same hospital. She got a starting salary of 17000/- Rupees a month and began supporting her family financially from that time.

The idea of social outreach, conceived by the scholastics of Divine Word Seminary, Pune in mid 1970s began to be actualized from the year 1977 -

78 reaching out to the needy children and youth of Wadgaonsheri, Pune. Sarva Seva Sangh became a legal entity in January 1979. Initially it took up educational and skill building activities like balwadies, tuition classes, English speaking, type writing, tailoring and embroidery for the vulnerable children and the youth. As time passed, reading the signs of time, from mid 1990s Sarva Seva Sangh began to reach out to children at risk, especially street and working children affected by HIV/AIDS and children of women in prostitution. In 2003 Sarva Seva Sangh branched out to Mumbai, which later became a separate entity. The empowering presence of Sarva Seva Sangh, Pune transformed the lives of several thousands of children at high risk and their parents in past two and half decades with its various interventions.

It is not an easy task to touch the lives of street



children living in high risk situations. Therefore, Sarva Seva Sangh initiated various activities from time to time, providing temporary hostel facility for girls and boys, mobile doorstep school, midday meals, children's parliament, balwadies and the like. Constant accompaniment through counselling, home visits, life skill education, art and craft activities, mental health activities, etc. help the integral development of these children.



While promoting child rights, our focus has been on formal education of the less privileged children. Along with rehabilitation and empowerment efforts, SSS also conducts various public awareness programs on child rights, HIV/AIDS, female feticide, child beggary and child abuse through rallies, street plays, poster exhibition and banner display. Hundreds of stakeholders like Railway Protection Force, Government Railway Police, Pune City Police, teachers and wardens were trained on child rights

and child protection in the past few years.

During the Covid 19 pandemic, SSS reached out to several hundreds of needy families with ration kits, face masks, hygiene kits, immunity boosters, livelihood support, and psycho social support. A number of marginalised children were also helped to prevent drop-out from schools by linking them with schools, providing mobile data, conducting tuition classes and by helping many children to get enrolled in schools during the pandemic years. Webinars too were conducted at Pune level, Maharashtra state level and at national level on prevention of Covid 19 infection, child protection, child labour and HIV/AIDS (Prevention and Control) Act 2017. SSS also actively engaged in public awareness on prevention of Covid 19 infection, and public awareness on vaccination by developing, distributing and displaying various IEC materials such as posters, banners and handbills.

Sarva Seva Sangh initiated two NGO networks in Pune, namely, HIV Pune NGO Network (HPNN) and Pune Network for Children bringing together several NGOs in order to address issues of children and people at higher levels.

In the recent times, Sarva Seva Sangh has also started efforts to strengthen families of children at high risk, and to train parents and youth in order to promote leadership qualities among these vulnerable people and youth so that they may begin to assert their rights.





WALKING WITH THE MIGRANT LABOURERS

Babu Kakkaniyil SVD

Such a title would certainly bring alive images of the migrant labourers walking home, treading thousands of miles, with their families, children and households fighting the heat and hunger all the way during the COVID 19 Pandemic. But this article is not dealing with the trauma and horror experienced by the migrants, but the newly begun intervention of the SVD – India Mumbai Province, called Sarva Seva Sangh – Kerala, intended to accompany the migrants during their stint in Kerala.

Guest labourers in Kerala

If you care to walk out to the streets or markets on a Sunday or in the evenings of any day, in any town in

Kerala, you will be surprised to hear people speaking a variety of North Indian Languages, like Hindi, Bengali, Assamese, Oriya and a multitude of dialects, giving an impression that you are walking through a North Indian village/town. This is no story of a few towns or cities in Kerala but of any village or town or city across the length and breadth of Kerala. The estimated number of migrant workers in Kerala is around forty lacs today, though official sources may disagree, and they constitute nearly twelve percent of Kerala's population.

By any yardstick of human and social development, Kerala is ahead of most Indian states. Its labour policies are progressive, minimum wages reasonably high, perhaps the highest, especially for the



unorganized and even unskilled workers than in any other state. Healthcare and education are good, and there is no dearth of opportunities especially for low-end work, which pays well and is a sustainable long-term proposition. All these factors have made Kerala India's most attractive destination for the lakhs of rural poor from the North and North East India.

Kerala government currently uses the term guest labourers for these migrants. The idea then had been to commemorate the 3.5 million plus migrant labourers in Kerala and honour them for their contributions to the state's labour force. The Government is taking many pro-active steps for the welfare and well being of the migrant workers. Some of the schemes have been commended for being the first such in the country. From January 2018, the government has given effect to a unique

Nine years, I was assigned to Kerala with a mandate to begin any new humanitarian intervention in Kerala. After reasonable study, discussion and deliberations with both the government offices and the stake holders the Society decided to cater to the migrant workers in South Central Kerala through a unit of Sarva Seva Sangh situated at Kanjikuzhy in Kottayam. Though the inauguration of the centre took place only in October 2019, I had begun interacting with these migrants in their own workplace since 2017.

Help desk for guest laborers

As a religious congregation committed to reach out to the last, least and the lost and those at the periphery, the Society of the Divine Word is making an effort to reach out to this huge chunk of population for their empowerment and development. The project hopes



health insurance scheme for migrant workers called 'Aawaz', the first-of-its-kind scheme in India which provides the worker free medical treatment up to Rs 15,000. Along with health insurance, the worker gets accident death claim coverage of Rs 2 lakh. Another scheme of the Kerala Government, 'Apna Ghar' aims to provide good quality, hygienic and safe living space at affordable rent.

Sarva Seva Sangh reaches out to the migrant labourers

After having worked in Sarva Seva Sangh, Pune, for

to work as a mediator between the government through the labour department and these laborers, by helping the people to access the government schemes intended for their welfare and also by taking their concerns to the government. The Government is looking up to the civil society groups for help and support to reach out to these people. In this context, Sarva Seva Sangh aims to function as a help desk, a place where in the migrants could easily walk in for guidance and direction. Since no task among these groups can be done in isolation, we hope to network and collaborate with organizations and



the government in every way possible through the district labour officers. The Pandemic brought many opportunities for networking and collaboration.

Pastoral services to the Christian migrants



Since 2017, we have been providing pastoral service to the migrants which is now spread across eight dioceses in South Central Kerala, namely, Changanassery, Vijayapuram, Kanjirappally, Pala, Kothamangalam, Idukki, Kochi, and Kottayam. Masses are offered in Hindi and Odiya at Sixteen different places across these dioceses every month where in they get an opportunity for the sacrament of reconciliation and holy Eucharist. Nearly 800 people attend these masses every month.

Survey and study on the migrants

Currently a study is being undertaken by Sarva Seva Sangh-Kerala on the life and livelihoods of these migrants. This will really throw light both on the pull factors and push factors for their migration to this land and on the difficulties and hurdles they face in their work place.

Monthly meetings and gatherings of migrants and need based support

Through Monthly meetings and gatherings of migrants where we meet and interact, we get to know their stories of struggles and joy. When we come across a case where our help would be handy or necessary, we reach out to them with help. A few months ago I received a call from Rourkela regarding a girl who

was very critically admitted in a hospital. I networked with the company and the hospital and made all arrangements to reach her body to her home after her death.

Our support during the Pandemic

We did play a positive role and extended support to the migrant labourers at the onset of the pandemic both by way of conscientisation and awareness building. We also provided financial support to tide over the unprecedented crisis. We held many sessions about the pandemic, the precautions to be taken, the need for vaccination and helped them access the nutritional kits and travel passes from the government.

We help the job seekers find placements as well as get their accounts opened in banks. Since this has been a project in the process of evolution, we are exploring the possibilities of all kinds of interventions for their welfare.



"We are called to respond to this pastoral challenge of migration with the four verbs welcome, protect, promote and integrate" - Pope Francis





SHALOM

Ivan Vas SVD

SHALOM (Northeast Regional Justice Peace and Development Society) is the Social and Development wing of SVD Northeast Region for Leadership, Empowerment and Social Transformation. SHALOM has become the platform for growth in the Northeast SVD developmental interventions, especially for building the support structures for the development of the tribal people in the remotest places.

SHALOM envisages a progressive, peaceful & holistic society. Rooted in the Divine Values and attracted by its motto: “Inspire, Involve, Transform”, SHALOM strives to promote human dignity of all with a special focus on the poor, the vulnerable and those in the peripheries

who are small and defenceless; and upholds Integrity of Creation through an empowerment process of education, animation, participation, dialogue, capacity building trainings, community sensitization, advocacy and networking with Government and Non-Governmental Organizations.

One of the major interventions in the recent years has been freedom from slavery project for the Puroik tribes in Arunachal Pradesh. Puroik Tribal Children in slavery at Chayangtajo communities – First generation Learners

This project aims to educate the tribal children of Puroik tribe who are living in slavery for several decades in Arunachal Pradesh. Education and possible



basic amenities of life are being deprived to them to keep them under subjugation. They have no rights whatsoever. No ownership of land and resources and no family life of their own. They are bought and sold from different owners like any other commodity for an exchange of an animal popularly known as Mithun. Even an Old man can buy a girl of 10 year and abuse, produce children and again sell that child to another. That's the disturbing reality difficult to digest. They live in thatched roof huts built in the masters land or

social set up of slavery system, where they have to only work and live for their masters. Due to the lack of education, people are not able to perceive the truth and continue to live and remain in deplorable condition.

Education can play important role in bringing changes. Together with the support of the local leaders and government administration, we are slowly but surely changing this reality. We have already taken the first



forests. Live on forest fruits and palm tree products. Every house has this Puroik slave tribe to do all their household chores to farm work. Slavery is free labour and income for the masters. If anyone dares to escape or attempt to run away, they are either killed or caught and punished by tying the heavy log of wood on both legs till the time they surrender and vow to remain with them forever and remain a slave. It takes sometimes months and years to free from even the log of woods. Even to go for their needs like toilet they have to drag the wooden barrier and go. Bygone centuries have imprinted in the Puroik tribe that they are born slaves. God has punished them. Dominant tribes too have passed on this story to imprint in the minds of Puroik slaves that their ancestors owe them financial debt that cannot be repaid even another hundred years. They are caught up in the existing

step of picking up a good number of children and educating them together with the children of the master tribe in our schools and hostels in Arunachal Pradesh to teach them cohabitation and learn to show respect, honor their rights and change the mindsets. They are first generation learners. We do not just build school but free them from slavery through education and community sensitization programs. Our schools not only provide knowledge, but build bridges across tribes, creating platforms to live in harmony, and enable people to learn to respect each other's rights, dignity and recognize the worth of every person. So that one day this slavery becomes a thing of the past. Therefore our schools have become a launching pad for the future of the next generation. Our interventions and commitment to their cause of

freedom and upliftment has given a ray of hope to the aspirations of many Puroik people.

Instilling New Spirit in the urban slums in Guwahati



In all developed city's backyards, we find struggling lives. So does with Guwahati city. Many live in slums in Guwahati. Living in slums put enormous social and economic burdens on households which lead to intergenerational poverty. The shortage of adequate investment in quality education and basic services like health, sanitation and skill training made their lives miserable. The SHALOM society reaches out to these poor and needy as the hour demands. The society found that there were really hardworking and intelligent students who were forced to drop their studies merely because of financial difficulties.



Leadership training programe at Kamranga

Today's youths have tremendous energy and potentials in them. Youths are very vulnerable group in the society unless they are guided properly. In order to tap their potentials and harness the youth power through right channel, the SHALOM conducts regular leadership training program for the youths. Youths from Kamranga, Janthum, Lalchori, Bagmara, Champak Nagar, Kamlacherra, Katalutma, N.G. Para attended the leadership animation programme at Kamranga.



Housing support at Tezpur

Mr. Niral Munda and Mrs. Jusphina Munda belong to the Tea Tribe of Assam. Husband and wife work hard to earn their livelihood. They feed themselves and their children on day today basis and hardly there is any saving for the future. Though they have been working in the tea garden for longer period of time, yet their earning is bare minimum.

Mr. Niral and his wife approached us for help to build their house. He was given financial assistance for house construction. The construction work is progress and nearing completion.



Giving is not just about making a donation. It is about making a difference. - Kathy Calvin

NEWS BRIEFS

SUPERIOR GENERAL TO VISIT INC AND INE PROVINCES



Rev. Fr. Paulus Budi Kleden, SVD, the Superior General has announced his plan to visit INC and INE Provinces. The Provincial Council has sent a welcome letter and Fr. Budi has confirmed it. As per the schedule, Fr. Budi will be in INC from April 19 to April 27 and in INE from April 27, 2022- May 06, 2022.

NINE FRATRES ORDAINED DEACONS IN DWS, PUNE

On 16th January 2022, Most Rev. Dr. AAS Durairaj SVD, the Archbishop of Bhopal, ordained nine SVD fraters and two MSFS brothers as deacons in Divine Word Seminary. The SVDs, SSpS Sisters and the MSFS Fathers and brothers attended the meaningful celebration. The Archbishop highlighted the importance of deacons in the Catholic Church and also emphasized the meaning of diaconate ministry. He called on all the deacons to render their service generously to the people of God and prepare well for the Priestly Ordination. After the liturgical celebration a colorful yet simple felicitation program was organized in the refectory for the newly ordained deacons and newly installed Archbishop of Bhopal. It was a very meaningful and grace filled event in the calendar of Divine Word Seminary, Pune. Now, we are in his disposition 'To Witness His Love and Serve His Mission'.



APPOINTMENT OF FR. JOHN PAUL SVD AS THE DIRECTOR OF SEDOS, ROME

The Superior General and his team has nominated the name of Fr. Dr. John Paul Herman SVD as one of the candidates to be appointed the Director of SEDOS, Rome.



With the letter dated January 15, Fr. Peter Baekelmans, the present director of SEDOS informed the General about the appointment of Fr. John Paul as the Director by the SEDOS Executive committee. SEDOS, a research organization is an Inter Congregational Center.

We congratulate Fr. John Paul for this important appointment and wish him God's abundant blessings. He will have to reach Rome in April, 2022.

REACHING OUT TO THE KASHMIRI MIGRANTS

A group of 161 families comprising of 900 plus people from Kashmir have moved to Mumbai and set up a temporary camp near the Bandra Terminal for the past one month due to various problems especially the extreme climate conditions. Under the guidance and direction of His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias and the support of Bishop Allwyn D'Silva, the Mumbai Migrants' Commission in collaboration with the diocesan Centre for Social Action and many parishes has reached out to the migrants and have supplied them with good amount of provisions. The entire operation was effectively carried out by the Unit Head, Fr. Cosmos Ekka, Urban Community Development Centre (UCDC), Bandra by initially conducting a camp survey and then supervising the entire operation. UCDC serves as the base for the said operation.



CHOTANAGPUR YOUTH AND MIGRANT MINISTRY IN GOA

The long-awaited migrant ministry in Goa began some 3 months ago. Apart from the Masses at different parishes, youth groups have also been formed in different villages. They are linked under the common name: 'Chotanagpur Youth Group- Goa'.

Meetings are held at different places where issues facing the youth are discussed. Efforts are on to work with the local government to procure documents such as election ID and passports as some of the migrants have been living in Goa for the last 25 years or more. Some youth are being helped to get jobs on the ship and abroad. The family visits brought to light some

couples whose marriages need to be either solemnised or rectified, and the birth of children registered. The lack of birth certificates and other relevant documents are hampering the admission of children to schools and hostels. Arrangements are being made to place children in hostels where they can get better education and other facilities free of cost. The immediate aim of the migrant ministry is to help our migrants to come up in life and to help them integrate with the local community. Right now the ministry is limited to South Goa, but there have been already enquiries from the migrant youth in North Goa for guidance and help.

OISO BANI SOCIETY DISTRIBUTED BLANKETS

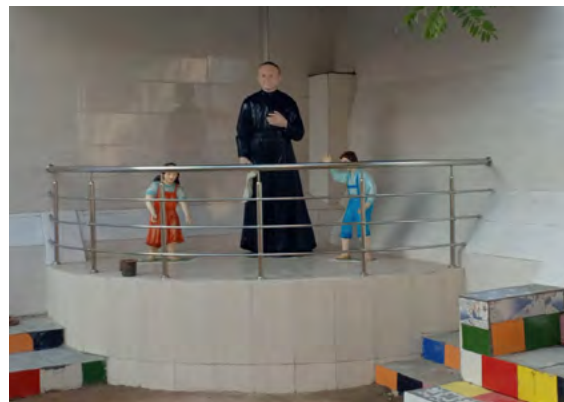


On December 19, 2021, the Oisho Bani Society (OBS) of Ambassa, a registered NGO of SVD in collaboration with the Catholic Church, Ambassa, distributed blankets, bedsheets, and shawls to one hundred poor people in the winter season. The governing board members of the registered Society bought these items in the wholesale market in Agartala. However, the winter this year had started earlier than other years. Therefore, the NGO foresaw that those poor people would not purchase these blankets because of the cash crunch.

A list of beneficiaries was provided by the leaders of the villages of Dumjakhrai para and Tangboul para. In these two villages, the OBS society leaders distributed the blankets. Fr. Ivan D'Silva SVD, the treasurer of the Society and the parish priest, addressed the beneficiaries about cleanliness and hygiene. He said, "As the new variant Omicron is fast spreading, all have to be cautious about masks and sanitization to protect you." The leaders of the villages thanked the OBS Society for reaching out to them.

ST. ARNOLD'S GROTTTO AND GARDEN AT DAHOD

By the grace of God, St. Stephen's School at Dahod has blessed and inaugurated the grotto of St. Arnold and St. Arnold's Garden on 16 January 2022. Fr. Paul Raj SVD reports 'It is right time to thank God for his immense providence and love that shadowed upon the St. Stephen's school, Dahod. It was a dream come true for having a space for leisure and enjoyment. The grotto was blessed by Fr. Sania Surain SVD soon after the feast day mass in the presence of Fr. George Bhuria SVD the parish priest, Fr. Maria Paulraj SVD the principal, Br. Jose M.J SVD, Sr. Euphrasia SSpS the Headmistress and all the parishioners.



STUDY COMMITTEE FOR SHIFTING THE PHILOSOPHATE TO PUNE

The SVD India Sub-Zonal Formation Board following up on the earlier recommendation has constituted a four-member committee comprising of following confreres Fr. Thomas Malipurathu (Formation Board Secretary), Convenor of the Committee, Fr. Ronald Luvis Pereira (INE), Fr. Roy Thomas (INC), and Fr. Lawrence Bose (INH) to study the viability of shifting the SVD Philosophate from Bhopal to Pune. The committee is entrusted with the task of conducting the viability study within a year and present the report to the Governing Board. The study is necessitated mainly because presently our Philosophate in Bhopal is not affiliated to any of the ecclesiastical faculties and Jnana Deepa is soon to make it obligatory for the students seeking a degree in theology to have a degree in philosophy.



EVALUATION OF THE FORMATORS

The SVD India Sub-Zonal Formation Board following up on the earlier recommendation has decided to conduct the evaluation of all the formators during the next academic year (2022-2023). The Formation Secretary, Fr. Thomas Malipurathu is requested to contact the persons in-charge of formation in each Province/Region and carry out the evaluation with the help of the format given in the Formation Manual.

HANDING OVER OF KPRT (ASHTA)

As per the recommendation by the last Provincial Chapter, and at the request of Archbishop Durairaj SVD, after 14 years of service, the administration of the Khrist Premalaya Regional Theologate, Ashta will be handed over to Arch Diocese of Bhopal on April 09, 2022. The priests of Arch Diocese of Bhopal will administer the Theologate for the MP-CG Region. We appreciate the confidence the MP Bishops' Conference placed on the Society to form the clergy for the Dioceses. We thank all the SVD formators of the past and present who rendered their selfless services to this institution.

LIVE IN SEMINAR

A Live in Seminar was organized for the confreres of INC Province to foster fellowship and community spirit age wise in two batches as recommended by the last Provincial Chapter 2021 from January 17-23, 2022. The first batch comprised of confreres of age group 55 plus and the second batch below 55 years of age. About 70% of the confreres of the province participated in the seminar. Fr. M.C Abraham, a noted counselor and Psycho Therapist was the resource person. He dealt with key areas of our personal life stressing on the need to live an integrated life. The seminar began with gaining insights on how to expand our horizons by making our boundaries flexible, the process of finding meaning in one's life, how to co-construct new paradigms to greatness rather than being a mediocre. To the senior group, he stressed the aspect of gracefully aging and the need to grow in reflectiveness and wisdom.



India Central Province 2nd Batch
Animated by Fr. MC Abraham CSC
21 to 23, JAN 2022



15TH SSPS GENERAL CHAPTER

Sr. Miriam Altenhofen SSpS is elected as the new Congregational Leader of the Congregation of the Sister Servants of the Holy Spirit. She replaces Sr. Maria Theresia Hörnemann SSpS, who led the Congregation for two terms. The other members in the Congregational Leadership Team (CLT) are Sr. Mikaelin (Indonesia), Sr. Jana Paula (Slovakia), Sr. Tressa (India), Sr. Mariana (Argentina), and Sr. Kreti (Chile).

In her first message as Congregational Leader, Sr. Miriam said, "Our Congregation is worldwide and very diverse in the different parts of the globe. But wherever we are, we try to serve, especially those at the margins whose voices are not heard. Maybe God wants to enter and speak to us from these margins." These very words confirm and attest to the challenge expressed in the theme of the Chapter, Immersed in the life of the Spirit, Transforming the world with compassion."

Fr. Superior General Paulus Budi Kleden presided over the opening Mass of the 15th General Chapter. He also celebrated the solemn Holy Eucharist at the end of the Chapter. In addition, the members of the General Council joined the Arnoldus Family Day during the Chapter and shared essential facts about the SVD.



INDIA SUB-ZONE ONGOING RENEWAL PROGRAMME

An Ongoing Renewal Programme for the ordination batches of 1986 to 1992 was held in Arnold Seva Sadan, Indore Feb.28-March 1, 2022. The two days' workshop was given by Fr. Gregory Pinto. Fr. Luis Ronald Pereira, the Mission Secretary for India Sub-Zone organized it to everyone's satisfaction. Fr. Maxim Rodrigues, Chairperson of Provincials Governing Body was the main celebrant at the opening Mass and Fr. Joemon James, Provincial of INC on the next day. During the sessions Fr. Gregory Pinto guided the floor to look back and go forward in their religious and missionary commitment with an attitude of gratitude.

They were also encouraged to develop a healthy personal spirituality centred on the person of Jesus believing that the best is yet to come. The session on two halves of life was an eye opener for them to move on from the adult critical and idealistic first half to a more compassionate, loving and graceful second half of life. It was also a time to visit and revive the old memories of Indore life, and the Provincial Fr. Joemon helped all who needed assistance. Everyone felt happy with the entire programme, and they ended it with the suggestion to increase the number of days of renewal from two to four.



COVID-19 -INH

Taking note of the plight of the poor people of our area, the Arnold Social Service Society, a registered social service society, under the INH province of SVD in India, intervened in the struggles of the people by carrying out relief work. Our project proposal sent to the SVD Generalate had distribution of grocery and food items to 600 families. We extended educational help to 100 students and distributed masks and sanitizers. We conducted awareness programs on the importance of health and hygiene.



Building the **WORLD MISSION** Beyond **DECADES**



St. Charles' Seminary
Trichy
1961-2021



St. John's Seminary
Changanacherry
1962-2022



St. Peter's Apostolic School
Kirem
1960-2020



Divine Word Centre
Chennai
1997-2022

DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

CONGRATULATIONS

Proclamation of the Gospel is the best expression
of love of one's neighbour - St. Arnold

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