

Reaching The Unreached

G. Kallupatti, Near Batlagundu, Theni Dt. 625203

Happenings of December 2016

Dear Well-wishers,

Greetings from RTU.



This month was a remarkable one for us to celebrate Christmas. As it is celebrated everywhere as a joyous family function, we too celebrated Christmas as a happy time with a gathering of all our children at our main campus on 24th December. We were blessed with delicious holiday treats, wonderful gifts for our students and the joy of each other's company. The Rev Fr Lawrence, Assistant Parish Priest in the local town of Batlagundu delivered a beautiful message of Love and Charity. Our little children of St Peter's Primary School made a crib and St Peter's Higher Secondary School students acted a beautiful nativity dance and drama. Santa too made a grand entrance in our campus which was packed with children. Their delight was uncontained especially as he brought out the gifts! In the evening, around 1200 children attended the Holy Mass at Sirumalar Children's Village including children from local families and other organizations as well as our own staff and children.

Swedish funding agency, SOIR IM, who have been helping us since 1988, had a valedictory



function on 10th December. They are winding up their support after it was decided to withdraw from South India. Beneficiary representatives from the various programmes they have been supporting such as OAPs, Self Help Groups and children from Anbu Illam Children's Village performed a

variety of cultural programmes and expressed their gratitude for all the support extended by SOIR IM. Fr Antony Paulsamy thanked the SOIR officials - Mrs Savitri, Director, Mrs.Dolma, Sponsorship Secretary, the Field Officers Mrs Sharon and Ms Nandhini - for their continuous service during the last 28 years.



Childcare in our Children's Villages and Hostels



On 8th December, seven of our children belonging to Catholic families received their First Communion during the Holy Mass in our Sirumalar Children's Village on the occasion of Immaculate Conception of Mary. The parents and relatives also participated to bless their children.

Seventy foster mothers from all our Children's Villages went for a picnic to the famous Paramashiva Temple in Bodi on 13th December. It was a graceful occasion to visit such a wonderful temple and also be together. That day was a full moon and an auspicious day for worshipping Lord Shiva. As a pilgrimage, they walked up the hill and worshipped the Lord, as well as exchanging their love with each other and the growth of their children in their care.



RTU Children's Camp 2016 was well organized from 25 to 28th December. On Christmas Day, Christmas was celebrated with everyone from all four of our Children's Villages, seven hostels, our residential and professional students, mothers and staff. Everyone enjoyed watching the colourful dances and nativity play performed by the children. Mrs Dhanalakshmi from Nirmala Children's Village and Mrs Sujatha from Miriam Children's Village who have completed ten years' service as foster mothers were honoured with 4 grams of gold rings by Br James Kimpton and he blessed them all. These two mothers have cared for 45 orphaned children between them during the past decade. This award was presented to them as an encouragement to the mothers and to honour their noble service to the children. Congratulations to them!

From 26 to 28th December, all the children were classified according to their classes and took part in a variety of activities including art and drawing, motivation, debates, songs, skit and drama. 9th standard students had a great opportunity to practice Tamil cultural dancing with the help of Shakthi Folk Cultural Centre, Dindigul and 10th to 12th standard students underwent sessions on analysis in film and media. High achieving students practiced vedic maths, aptitude and general knowledge questions, and logic with the help of Ms Nivetha one of our former students who completed a Bachelor Degree in Engineering.



Each evening throughout the Camp, all the children came together in Sirumalar Children's Village for tea and snacks followed by stage programmes. The final day was a valedictory one to greet and thank all the external facilitators and the staff who helped this Camp's success! We express our sincere thanks to Br Doss who arranged all the external facilitators, and the catering staff and Mr Ramakrishnan who organized thousands of delicious meals. We also appreciate and thank all the mothers, wardens, and other staff for their hard work during the camp. Mrs Latha,

Assistant Director, co-ordinated all the programmes to bring maximum fun and joy to the children.



Schools and Education



On 2nd December, St. Peter's Primary School staff and children conducted a Maths Mela. The fundamentals of Maths such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, omission, division and measures etc were brought out on the stage in a simple way. The children enjoyed the programme well and it was so informative.

On 12th December, CBA Bodi college students conducted a cadet parade in our Nirmala Middle School campus to encourage the young buds to join the National Defence Force in future. It was a rich experience for our students to know about the importance of national defence and to have a strong faith in our nation.



On 23rd December, all the Balwadi (pre-school) children participated in the Olympic Games and all won prizes in different events. Bro James Kimpton attended the Games and enjoyed the competition which were very well organised by various teaching staff.



From 25th December 2016 to 1st January 2017, 7 days were declared as half yearly holidays for all our schools. 10th and 12th standard students had two days of special exam preparation classes.

Medical Department

Dr Suresh, District Supervisor for all the primary health centres in Theni, visited our clinic on 23rd December. He also worked in an ART centre ten years ago. He gave a general medical check-up to 71 HIV+ children. He referred two children to an eye hospital and another two for chest x-rays. He also advised our children to take their ART medicines regularly.

Community Development

We have formed one new self help group in Poosaripatti village in Batlagundu block. All the 15 new members were invited to our RTU campus on 16th December for training on the SHG concept, rules, bye-laws and SHG's activities.

Home Support Programme



Camp Rainbow provides training and support camps for children who are HIV+ and their South Asia Regional meeting was held from 5th to 9th December at Bangalore. Kannan and Arockiasamy from RTU participated and shared our experiences of Camp Rainbow which we have organized at our RTU premises for the last three years. Other NGO's also exchanged their programmes. Training on the Funtranet website was organized by Serious Fun Children's Network.

Special training on motivation was organized on 31st December for 10th and 12 standard children from the Home Support Programme to encourage them in their studies and prepare for their exams. In total, 118 children participated in this training. They were also motivated to get more marks by answering all the questions without fear. Mr Arul Arockiam, MSc, BEd, a technical teacher from Yeshva Training Centre, Madurai was the facilitator for this training. At the end of the training children said that it was a great guiding session to help prepare themselves well for the public exams.



Housing and Water





During this month, five houses at G Kallupatti village were completed by 16 Australian volunteers from St Bede's College, Victoria, Australia. We thank these young volunteers for their tremendous contribution in helping to complete these houses within a short period of two weeks and appreciate their hard labour. It was a remarkable day for all the family members to organize the inauguration in the presence of these volunteers. With great joy and hope the family members entered into their houses. The people living in these houses expressed their sincere thanks to all the volunteers and to RTU for providing these houses.

We appreciate the help and support you have showered on our children and the poorest during the past year. With your unending love and affection, you have indeed made a difference to the lives of many children. We couldn't have done it without you. Thank you for your contributions and for a great year. All your guidance, and the way you encouraged us to serve the poor children are the special memories that we will always treasure.

May God bless you all!

Yours fraternally

Fr. J. Antony Paulsamy, OFM Cap.
Secretary.