

Reaching The Unreached

G. Kallupatti, Near Batlagundu, Theni Dt. 625203

Happenings of February 2017

Dear Well-wishers,

Greetings from RTU.



This month was a remarkable one for us to have a supporters group from RTU-UK who spent a week here seeing all of our various programmes and visiting their sponsored children. Mr Baptiste Leseigneur from Enfants De L' Universe in France also visited our organization along with eight sponsors. Cultural programmes were organised for them at Anbu Illam by our children. All the sponsored children were very happy indeed to meet their sponsors.

Childcare in our Children's Villages and Hostels

NITHYA came to us in 2007 as an orphan along with her brother and two sisters after both her parents died. Her grandmother and uncle tried to raise the four children but they were too poor to provide for them on their meagre income from laboring work. In her 12th standard exams, Nithya scored high marks and went on to study an Engineering degree. Now she has been selected for the Siemens Scholarship Programme because of her talents. This scholarship means many things to her and to her juniors at RTU. As well as getting a scholarship for all her college, hostel and book fees, she will have a mentor and will be able to attend Career Development Courses in different parts of the country during her semester holidays at Siemens' expense. It seems that a job is assured for those who perform well in all these developmental courses. She will be leaving for Mumbai on 3rd March to receive this award and attend the program for two days. Unfortunately, none of us could accompany her but arrangements have been made for her safe travel.



She has to earn this scholarship every year by securing first class marks in all her exams. She is confident and capable of doing this. Let us wish her all the best and hope that St Peter's Higher Secondary School produces many more Nithyas in the years to come.



During this month the following children have joined RTU's Children's Villages and started continuing their school studies in our schools. Kaviya, who is 15 years old, had to discontinue her school studies for 2 years to nurse and care for her father and mother who have now died of AIDS. Her relatives did not help her but one of them phoned Childline, in Periakulam which is run by our friends at Jeevan Jyothi Hospice. Childline referred her to us and she is now living in Velankanni girls' hostel and continuing her studies in 9th standard.



Aathavan aged 5 and his sister **Kaviyadharshini** who is 15 are both HIV+. They lost their father two years ago due to AIDS and then Kaviyadharshini had to stop going to school to look after her mother and her three brothers with the help of neighbours. Our friends at Arogya Agam, which runs an AIDS hospice, then arranged for one of her brothers to be looked after by another NGO and admitted her mother and another brother, Aathavan, to the

hospice because they were terminally ill. After a month her mother died and they helped with her mother's cremation. The mother's death hit her extremely hard and, after few days, Arogya Agam brought them to RTU. They came on 7th February and are now living in Sirumalar Children's Village. Now Kaviyadharshini is back at school and studying in 8th standard in St Peter's Higher Secondary School. She remembered the day of her mother's death and on that day she got up early and took her brother to the nearby temple with her new foster mother. She remembered her mother and cried loudly. She has asked us to bring her other brother to RTU so that they can live together again as a family here.

We also have a new foster mother who has joined us this month. **Robiya** is 35 years old and has a son who is 15. After she lost her husband, she went to live in Madurai with her mother but found it very difficult living and working there. So she decided to become a foster mother and has joined Miriam Children's Village.

Four of our senior girls' wedding was held during this month.

1. Dr Packia Mary married Mr Louis John Durai on 6th February. She came to RTU at the age of 5 with her younger brother and sister in 1990 as both their parents had died. With the help of RTU, Packiam studied to become a doctor and is now working in a Government Hospital. Her brother, Amalraj, joined a battalion in the Indian Army and married one of our girls Ms Devi who is a staff nurse. They have a beautiful daughter. Her sister Shanthi Mary became a Holy Cross Nun.

2. Ms Muthumary married Mr Britto Alwin on 2nd February with the support of both the bride and bridegrooms families. She came to RTU in 2006 with her younger sister as her father died of AIDS and the mother was living with HIV. She did her General Nursing and Midwifery Course at the Claudine School of Nursing, Batlagundu and she is now working as a staff nurse in Leonard Hospital. Fr Utha Bosco



officiated at the marriage mass at St Thomas in Batlagundu. Our staff members attended this mass and blessed them for a happy married life.

3. Ms Arockia Kousalya married Mr Pradeep (both were working at Leonard Hospital) on 2nd February. She came to RTU at the age of 10 with her younger sister as her parents were very sick. Now they are living a normal life and arranged her marriage. She also did her General Nursing and Midwifery course in Claudine School of Nursing, Batalagundu. Her sister did a 2-year auxiliary nursing course and is working in Chennai.



4. Ms Rekha married Mr Cyril on 25th February with the help of the Daughters of Mary Sisters in Marthandam where her father, a leper, lives in the Leprosy Colony. She came to RTU in 1995 and did a 1-year pre-school teaching training course after completing her studies at our schools. She has three sisters who are under the care of the Daughters of Mary Sisters. Her younger brother, Sampath, is seven years old and he is living with us in Miriam Children's Village.



Schools and Education



On 13th February Sports Day was conducted for the children in our schools in a grand manner and they enthusiastically participated in the sports events. Winners were honored with awards and certificates. Mr. Kennedy, Manager of the State Bank of India in Genguvarpatti and RTU-UK supporters honored the winners. In the same way, Nirmala Middle School over on our Bodi site also celebrated Sports Day on 16th February. Bodi Lions Club members Ln Pandian and Ln Naveen inaugurated the sports events and honored the winners.



A traditional Food Festival was celebrated with children from 1st to 5th standard. The children learnt about the richness of traditional food in different forms and joyfully tasted them. All the teachers honoured the celebration by their presence.



On 11th February, 5th standard children from Nirmala Middle School visited the water purification plant at Bodi, Kurangani and also visited Ayyanar temple. They received awareness on how to save water and the importance of drinking pure water for maintaining good health.

Medical Department

CD4 testing for three new children was carried out at the ART Centre in Theni during the month. The doctor prescribed ART tablets for the children for a month and the children are now taking ART tablets regularly.

Community Development

During this month, with the help of the Horticulture Department in Periakulam, we organised a one-day training programme on Azolla cultivation and how to identify good yielding cattle for our Self Help Group members in Ranganathapuram village. 38 women members from the Self Help Groups in Velayuthapuram village and Ranganathapuram village took part. Since Azolla feeding improves the health of the cow and boosts milk yields, our members were encouraged to use Azolla so that they can earn extra income.





An internal audit was carried out by senior staff during this month. After proper auditing, department managers presented their audit report and expressed their comments. Their valuable suggestions were taken into consideration for running the programmes successfully.

The visit of RUT-UK supporters and the sponsors from *Enfant De L' Universe* encourages us. We are encouraged and supported for marching ahead with stupendous achievements and

accomplishments in terms of reaching out to many more children, their families and communities. Thanks for holding our children into your loving and tender arms.

May God bless you all!

Yours fraternally

Fr. J. Antony Paulsamy, OFM Cap.

Secretary.