

# Reaching The Unreached

G. Kallupatti, Near Batlagundu, Theni Dt. 625203

## Happenings of November 2015

Dear Well-wishers,

The heavy rains in northern parts of Tamil Nadu especially in and around Chennai left the capital paralysed. People in Chennai incurred very heavy losses due to continual rain and all the transport facilities including flights were affected and cancelled. In our area we had good rain but I cannot say we had enough rain. Due to heavy rain on the hills, the Manjalar River is flowing with water and the water table in our area has risen up. Our area is very safe and so far no damage has been reported. Flood or famine has become routine in our life. We express our sympathy and solidarity to all those who lost their lives and possessions in the rain.

This month two big celebrations were held namely Diwali and Children's Day.



Diwali (the Festival of Lights) was celebrated in the Children's Villages and Hostels with a lot of preparation and special food. We ensured that all the children received new dresses, either from relatives or from us. Some harmless fire crackers were also given to the children. On the day of Diwali (10<sup>th</sup> November), a special meal was prepared to make the children happy.





Besides this Mr Ramesh gave new clothes to all the boys at Michael Boys Hostel, and Mr Kesavan and Mr Balamurugan to all children at Nirmala Children's Village and doubled the joy of the children. We sincerely thank them for their sacrifice for the children.



Children's Day was celebrated at RTU on four separate occasions. On 17<sup>th</sup> there was a celebration here for the children from the neighbouring schools around Kallupatti. 611 children from 63 schools participated. The enthusiasm of the children taking part in the various competitions we organised was boundless. On 20<sup>th</sup> there was a celebration for the children in our own schools. There



was very tough and healthy competition between the RTU schools. The children practiced hard and presented well. On 27<sup>th</sup> there was a celebration for the neighbouring schools at our other site, at Bodi. 120 children from 11 schools participated in the function. The children were very happy to get the opportunity to show their talents.



Besides these celebrations in the schools, there were also celebrations in the Children's Villages. During the month of March, the children celebrate Mother's Day where the children themselves organise the programme without the involvement of the foster mothers. (The 8<sup>th</sup> class children take the lead). Now it is the turn of the foster mothers to make their children happy. Could mothers become children? Yes, they could and did

become children. Words are not enough to express the unconditional love that exists between our mothers and the children confided to their care. THEIR Children's Day provided an occasion for the mothers to celebrate the children in our four Children's Villages.

All the mothers performed splendidly. Most of them are excellent dancers, actors, orators, poets, comperes and what not! Their hidden and unknown talents came to the fore. They occupied the stage from the beginning until the end. Each child was called to the dais by his/her respective foster mother and a few words of appreciation on the child's special talents were acknowledged. The children felt ten feet taller. All that the foster mothers did to make them happy, feel loved, accepted and recognised thrilled the children. They were surprised and stunned, and many cried tears of joy.

The children were glued to their seats as they could not believe their eyes - they could never have even imagined what was happening in front of them. Even the best orator among the children struggled to find words to thank the mothers. Their cries of joy were the only way of thanking their mothers for those outstanding presentations. What an experience to have! Thus our foster mothers made the children understand that the strongest and complex bond is the most powerful connection. Long live our mothers!!! All together I attended 7 Children's Day celebrations last month. What a privilege and joy!



### **Child care in our Children's Villages**

P Murugeswari who was brought up by us from the age of 3 years got married to Mr Nagaraja on 29<sup>th</sup> November. She completed her General Nursing (GNM) and received a placement order from the Government just two days after her marriage. We wish her all the best in her new family life and in her new career.

### **Our schools**

Sarika from class 11 attended the Tamil Nadu state level essay competition in Ramnad, 175 km from RTU, having come first in the zonal and district level competitions. Although children from RTU have competed at this level for dance, drawing and elocution, it is an honour for us as it is the first time any of our children have competed in the state level essay competition.

A Maths Mela (exhibition) was held at St Peter's Higher Secondary School. There were a number of puzzles which made the students apply all their mathematical knowledge. The Maths teachers and the students were very efficient in arranging and presenting the puzzles to the students.



### **Housing and Water**







19 houses have recently been constructed in Thoppupatti, Kottur and Genguvarpatti. Nine students and two staff from LEAPNOW, USA were here for two weeks constructing 5 houses. They were very impressed starting the work from scratch and giving the beneficiaries a completed house in this short time. As with our other volunteers, they were very dedicated to the hard labouring work which they were by no means used to.

The Executive Board of RTU gathered on 14th November to review the activities of RTU. It was well represented and we had a good discussion. Dr Oza, the President and Fr Arumainathan, Provincial of Capuchins, were here for a few days to encourage the staff and the children. We thank them for taking some time to spend with us.

Although the number of celebrations we have at RTU keep the staff very much occupied and demand a lot of work, they do this happily in order to give the children new experiences and joy. Restoring the smile in the faces of the children is one of the prime duties of our dedicated staff. All your support contributes so much.



We, the staff and the children wish you *Merry Christmas and the showers of blessings for the New Year 2016.*

May God bless you!

Yours fraternally,  
Fr J Antony Paulsamy, OFM Cap,  
Secretary and Director.