



BHARAT KI JEEWAN

SSCC INDIA (BROTHERS)

Issue No. 8 / March 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Greetings of Joy and Peace!

On the feast day of our founder, Pierre Coudrin, I wish you all a meaningful and inspiring feast day celebration. Our Founder's feast day, usually, falls during Lent. This reminds me of his saying, "We are children of the Cross". He suffered under French Revolution as a new priest, later with other responsibilities, and ill health. All these suffering that he bore with an understanding that, only through cross we can resurrect. Lent is the season we are reminded of this Paschal Mystery.



Lent is the season for repenting and changing our lives. This year Lenten season is really a call for a change in habits and attitudes towards others, creatures and universe. Repentance is the basic theme of Lent-Repenting for not being good stewards of the universe. It's a radical call through the present Corona virus crisis. "Corona" (Bengali) can be interpreted "DON'T DO IT". Our government is asking us not to go out ; Holy Father is asking us "Do not fear"; corona...."DON'T DO IT", do not go out and do not fear. Let us do the right thing. Stay home and pray for the world.

Corona outbreak is talk of the world. WHO has declared the corona virus a pandemic. This new Covid-19 has appeared and spread extremely and quickly, making its way to over 100 countries since its discovery in China in December 2019. This virus is similar to MERS and SARS of the past. This covid-19 can cause anything from mild respiratory problems to pneumonia or death. Since the mortality rate of this virus is 3.4%, WHO has declared it a public health emergency. The best precaution is to stay away from others or infected person. According to Covid19 visualizer website, as of this morning there are 490,859 affected persons of whom 30,883 died and 142,361 are recovered. This data affirms that there are good possibilities of recovering from this sickness. The biggest challenge is to have enough hospital beds to accommodate and treat all those who are and will be affected by this virus.

During this difficult moment, Holy Father invites us to pray with him. Last Friday during *Urbi et Orbi*, he shared his reflection on Mk 4: 35-40, "Do not be afraid, have faith". He prayed for the whole world from "Salus Populi Romano" image of Mary and at Miraculous Crucifix (from St. Marcello Church). Yes, brothers and sisters, let us not be afraid but have faith. Here I would advise you to stay home and take care of yourselves and I am praying for you all.

"We shall overcome; we shall overcome one day with His help!"

- **Ajith Kumar, SS.CC.**
27th March, 2020

COVID-19 Lockdown: Church Network in India Quietly Helps Out Affected People

(In this section the “Bharat ki Jeewan” wishes to share information taking from other media outlets to keep you abreast about the current situation in India - how the Covid19 has affected India and how the Church tries to respond to the given situation)

By Verghese V Joseph –29 March, 2020-03-31 (Indian Catholic Matters)

Following the COVID-19 (Corona virus) pandemic and the subsequent lockdown across the country, the church and its institutions through their vast and effective network of education, healthcare, service-oriented organisations and parishes in India are quietly going about helping millions of the poor, marginalised and the most affected by providing food, medical and shelter support; while at the same time strictly following the government guidelines on nation-wide lock-down.

In the ongoing corona virus impact that has affected millions of lives across India, particularly the poor, marginalised and the displaced, churches across the country have stepped their efforts to mitigate the poor's sufferings to fulfil especially the Christian obligation of charity during this Lenten season.

Across the country, church-run hospitals are turning a part of their wings into dedicated quarantine blocks. Education institutions are providing support in various ways. Shelter homes are offering food and place for the poor to stay. Parish networks across the country are being drawn into many of these activities.



The Christian Coalition for Health in India (CHAI) expressed their willingness and offered their resources to collaborate with the government of India to fight the deadly pandemic. In a letter addressed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday, CHAI offered all facilities in Christian hospitals across India for coronavirus treatments. The Christian Coalition for Health in India (CCHI), apparently one of the largest healthcare systems in the country, expressed their

willingness and offered their resources to collaborate with the government of India to fight the deadly pandemic.

More importantly, these initiatives are being also activated at the parishes' Small Christian Communities (SCC) level to identify nearby deserving people who need support and solace

during this time of crisis. These actions are also an opportunity to fulfil Christian obligation of charity during this Lenten season especially the Year of the Poor.

The Archdiocese of Bhopal has distributed provisions for cooking (*dal*, oil rice, *atta* etc.) to the daily labourers who have no work, no earning and no food. The Diocese of Ajmer is helping over 200 people at a fixed location by providing essential items. Varanasi diocese has distributed food provision packets at several places in its region. In the North East region, Assam Christian Forum has launched 'Operation Reach-Out', to help one family (if capable more) by supplying to them with required essential survival rations for the next remaining days. The Ranchi Diocese too has chipped in with offers to help migrants by providing whatever need they may have in addition to sharing shelters, giving clothes, etc.

As the poor families, homeless and stranded persons are struggling in the wake of lockdown situation due to the Corona pandemic, Archdiocese of Bangalore too has reached out in as many ways as possible. Archbishop Peter Machado has exhorted and called on all Catholic and Christian hospitals, doctors and nurses to reach out and to take care of the sick, especially people affected by the Corona Virus. The Prelate also encouraged the hospital administration to set apart either a block or a section with as many beds as possible to admit the increasing number of inflicted cases.



In order to accommodate migrants, homeless and those who are stranded and lost in a big city like Bangalore Parish Priests have been requested by the Archbishop to identify small groups of volunteers not more than 3-4 persons to identify the poor families, daily workers and other needy people and also make request to generous donors who can support this cause. The Archbishop Peter urged all saying, "Christians are urged to come in solidarity to reach out to the poor in best and prudent ways possible. In this time of isolation and social distancing, let us not isolate the needs of the poor and let our hearts share the warmth of the love of God and neighbour".

Titili Cyclone Housing Reconstruction Project

In October 2018, the district of Gajapati in southern Odisha was hit by a devastating cyclone which claimed about twelve lives, destroying as many houses and leaving as many people homeless. One of the worst hit areas in the district was our Sacred Hearts Ludru Mission (St. Damien Parish) which had been established just three months earlier in July 2018. According to the parish survey of the destructions caused by the cyclone, fourteen houses were identified as completely destroyed leaving the family members homeless and many more were identified as partially destroyed needing minor repairs.

Together with the pastor Fr. Subal Francis, the then Regional Superior Fr. Sudhir Nayak sent out a communication to the Congregation and to our friends/partners in mission with an appeal for financial assistance for the re-construction of houses destroyed by the cyclone and thus re-building the lives of family members. To this appeal, there was a generous response from the wider Congregation and from our Mission friends/partners. A total donation of Rs. 19, 81,237.00 was received towards the "Housing Reconstruction Project".

In consultation with the Regional Finance Commission, the then Regional Government made a decision to utilize the donation/fund toward reconstruction of fourteen houses which had completely been destroyed. It was also decided that the "reconstruction project" would be carried out under the aegis of Damien Social Development Institute (DSDI).



Now, the reconstruction works of fourteen houses have been completed and the homeless families have already occupied their houses. On behalf of the beneficiaries, our target partners, the Region of India, through its Social Service wing DSDI, would like to express our gratitude to all our stakeholders: the wider Congregation, the Secular Branch and our Mission Friends/Partners. The Region of India also would like to thank our Brothers Subal Francis and Lalit Toppo, who are in the pastoral care of the parish, for overseeing the project. It was our participation and it was your

participation in the "corporal act of mercy" as Pope Francis, during the Year of Mercy, had called us to practice. Thank you all very much!

- **Alexis, SS.CC.**



Annual Picnic – Dangadighila Community



The Community organized its annual picnic to *Sundarban*, located between the state of West Bengal, India and Bangladesh. After about a month of planning, the community had a quality time together. The Bursar Fr. Tileswar was so kind of taking care of driving and providing his service which was very much appreciated. It was a great time for us as a community to get together and celebrate the joys of living as one Family. With great excitement and fun we set out

on our journey at 5 A.M. Sr. Helen, DSA joined us as our tourist guide who also arranged breakfast and lunch for us in family who were so kind and welcoming. Indeed, it felt at home at their immense love and generosity which blended with warmth and homeliness. Upon our arrival, we celebrated the Holy Eucharist in nearby Parish church and preceded to the picnic spot thereafter.

During the ride on boat, we just sat back idly and enjoyed the magical view of this dense mangrove forest as well as its treasure trove of unusual flora and fauna while having delicious snacks on the board. Whether it's about seeing the clean water, enjoying chirping birds or trying to see tigers and some crocodile but did not see single tiger or croco but this unique *Sundari* forest has a lot to give you a break from the hectic, mundane life and at the end of the forest — our boat ride in *Sundarban* can be one of



the greatest memories that we cherished as a community. The picnic was a good time to reminisce with one another and encourage each other to keep going. Finally, we ended our picnic with the great lunch. On our way back home, it was an opportunity to visit Fr. Sujoy Sardar's house. The Family members of Fr. Sujoy were very welcoming, generous, and hospitable to us. They had prepared some tea – snacks and we made this opportune time to relax and to share our love with the family.



Sunderbans is, perhaps, the largest mangrove delta in the world. It is a National Park, Tiger Reserve and a Biosphere Reserve. Though 70% of it falls within Bangladesh territory, the 30% which is

part of India is still a pride of India. The delta is densely covered by mangrove forests, and is one of the largest reserves for the Bengal tiger. It is also home to a variety of bird, reptiles and invertebrate species, including the salt-water crocodile. There are seven main rivers and innumerable water courses forming a network of channels at this estuarine delta. All the rivers have a southward course towards the sea. Sundarban has achieved its name from the *Sundari* (beautiful) Trees. It is the most exquisite variety of tree that are found in this area, a special kind of Mangrove tree.

Sadly, the population of Sundari tree is on the decline due to pollution and global warming.

Even though travelling to Sundarban took hours and at the end of the picnic all of us were tired, it provided us much needed break and it re-energised us all.

- ***Robert, SS.CC***