



# RNDM INTERNATIONAL MISSION NEWSLETTER

2016 # 2

MAY

FOR RNDM'S,  
ASSOCIATES,  
FRIENDS,  
SPONSORS &  
PARTNERS



**RNDM INTERNATIONAL MISSION OFFICE**

PROMOTES MISSION THROUGH  
COMMUNICATIONS AND FUNDING FOR THE  
MISSIONARY WORKS OF 1000 SISTERS OF  
**OUR LADY OF THE MISSIONS**

Dear Friends

You will read in this Newsletter the wonderful stories of how your generosity through the RNDM Christmas Catalogue, 2015 GIVE A GIFT THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE has certainly made an enormous difference in the lives of children, women, and their families.

You gave Hope to the orphan children of Bangladesh; Health and Nutrition and empowerment of women in Bijapur, India; love and care to the destitute children at Iakring village, Vietnam; to education of children from the slums and streets of Kolkata. On their behalf I thank you most sincerely..

Sister Maureen Dwan has been responsible for preparing this Newsletter over the past five years and I would like to take this opportunity of thanking Maureen for her creativity and tireless searching for the stories and articles to keep you informed of the great missionary work in which you are valued partners.

This will be the last Newsletter that Maureen and I will publish as we are retiring from the IMDO and handing the baton to Sisters Helen O'Sullivan and Smitha Thomas. We have every confidence in these two sisters and know that they will bring a freshness and new approach which we welcome.

It has been my privilege to be part of this IMDO and I am continually inspired by the fantastic missionary work of our RNDM sisters worldwide. As I have said on many occasions the sisters could not continue this great work without your generous support.

May God bless and reward you and your families.

*Catherine Kvalander* Director, RNDM IMDO

you have changed  
a child's life

In the heart of every child is a hunger for a home. Not just for food and a place to sleep, but for safety and community. Most importantly: **for love.** Since 1831 the RNDM Sisters have offered refuge to abandoned and orphaned children from the slums of Chittagong or from the hill tracts surrounding Chittagong.



Even the definition of "orphan" is complicated. Not all of these children are abandoned or have lost both parents, some are double orphans having lost both parents, others are children who have only one parent who is not in a situation to be able to care for their child. They will often return for their child when their situation changes. Most of these children are girls as they are not as valued in the society. Some have done well and have gone on to become nurses or have entered vocational training.

We the Sisters, helpers and the children at St. Benedict's and St. Peter's are a family, where God's love guides us all as we grow and expand year after year. With children ranging from babies to 17 year olds each day brings new challenges to overcome, but we are doing it. The older girls take special care and offer love and guidance to the little ones, helping them to get ready for school and wiping their tears when they fall. Lives are being changed and stories rewritten daily.

We are so grateful for your gift, love and concern for each one of us. Be blessed from God and from us!



# HEALTH AND NUTRITION EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN ALMEL, BIJAPUR, INDIA

We work with 950 women belonging to different castes and classes of life covering 28 villages. Most belong to Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribe who are considered as outcasts in the society. It is really challenging to work among these women because they find it difficult to understand and move beyond their local beliefs, customs, practices and way of thinking. Their life is lived around superstitious beliefs and it is difficult for them to change. We organize awareness programs on superstitious beliefs, the benefits from the government, micro savings, health and hygiene, ICTC (The Integrated Counseling & Testing Center is a gate-way, a one-stop shop for a host of related services in HIV/AIDS prevention & Care.) We have 64 Women's Micro Saving Groups with 870 women. We also have a youth group and two children's' groups; we conduct regular camps and seminars to create an awareness of these situations and how they can be the agents of change in the society.



*Sr. Jacinta Lasardo conversing with the women.*

*Thank you to all the Sisters, friends and benefactors for supporting the Mission through the Christmas Catalogue program*

**Renuka sharing her experience of being empowered through the Sangas (SHG self-help group)**



*The arrival of Sisters in our village has brought lots of changes in the lives of people.*

*I was very poor and every day I was going for work in the field so that I could buy little food for my sons. Now I do not need to go every day to work in the field in a scorching sun. I manage from the savings and the interest. I also sweep the market area in the morning and get income for my family. I had lots of superstitious beliefs and other practices which were handed down by my parents since they were uneducated. I am also uneducated but the Sisters helped me to read and write once I became part of the women's group. I was elected as the animator of the group and I attended the training program which helped me to know socioeconomic taboos. I attend the training programs and the seminars conducted by the Sisters which really helped me to change my outlook towards life. I am able to stand in front of the people to speak for my rights and the rights of other women. I am not scared of what people say now. I am being taught by the sisters to do the banking and I meet with the government officials to demand our benefits. Now the Sisters have selected five other groups and have given them a goat to generate income for the group and that will help the individual women with their daily living. My group of women are really lucky that the Sisters worked with us to open a Ration Shop which brings a good income for the group and it helps us for our daily sustenance and wellbeing. I am grateful on behalf of all the women in the villages to all the Sisters and Partners in Mission for empowering us. Thank you very much for your financial support in different ways.*



**GIVE EDUCATION**  
PARK CIRCUS, KOLKATA, INDIA

"Educate a boy you will educate an individual, but educate a girl, she will educate a family and a whole society." Your gift of education will provide an opportunity to over 500 girl students who come from, and around, the slums and pavements of Kolkata with a longing that will satisfy their hunger for intellectual knowledge and physical support.

The parents of these children are illiterate and very poor. Most families have many children and few are sent to school because they cannot afford school fees and uniforms. The girls are often sent back for baby sitting or are sent out to do domestic work to earn a little money for their family's survival.

Your generous gift of \$100 will provide necessary text books, uniforms, stationery and nourishment needed to achieve educational and personal growth and development of these 500 girl children. In return, they will become the agents of social change and live a dignified life for themselves with self-esteem and confidence with the hope of a better future.

**\$100**

**How to order a Christmas gift that will make a difference**

By post  
Complete the Order Form enclosed and return it to:

Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions  
Catholic Pastoral Centre,  
40A Mary Street,  
Highgate WA 6003

By phone  
08 9422 7904

For further information please email  
mdmsecaus@oim.org.au

**SISTERS OF OUR LADY OF THE MISSIONS**

Give a gift this Christmas that makes a difference

Christmas Gift Catalogue 2015

## CHRISTMAS CATALOGUE

**GIVE HOPE**  
ABANDONED CHILDREN  
CHITTAGONG, BANGLADESH

Since 1933 the RNDM Sisters have offered refuge to abandoned children from the slums of Chittagong. Today 60 children aged from infancy to 17 year olds are welcomed by the Sisters into a stable and loving environment where they receive good food, shelter, medical care, education and protection. Most of these abandoned children are girls as they are not so valued in the society. Some have gone on to become nurses or have entered vocational training.

Your generous gift of \$25 will help provide for the daily needs of these children and enable them to have a stable, dignified and promising future in society.

**\$25**

**GIVE LOVE AND CARE**  
TO DESTITUTE INDIGENOUS CHILDREN  
IAKRING VILLAGE, VIETNAM

Many ethnic children are so extremely poor they are unable to go to school or receive medical care. Their survival depends on other people who might take pity on them and offer work to their parents. These people live below the poverty line and are frequently sick because of malnutrition. A breeding piglet for a family would enable them to start a small business and thus generate an income to improve their situation.

Your gift of \$50 would improve a family's life and enable them to provide better nourishment, medical care and send their children to school.

**\$50**

**GIVE HEALTH & NUTRITION**  
EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN  
ALMEL, BIJAPUR, INDIA

The health status of women and children is not a priority in remote villages in Bihar. Both the infant and maternal mortality rate is very high as is the prevalence of child abuse, child marriage, malnutrition, HIV/AIDS etc. More than 60% of adults are illiterate. Women's groups help women to gain their rightful place in society by way of self help programs, nutrition and hygiene, community health and education programmes.

Your gift of \$75 to these Women's groups will provide the women with an income for their families as well as education and medical care.

**\$75**

US\$7,687.00

TOTAL: US\$43,766.00

2015

US\$15,063.00

US\$12,864.00

US\$8,152.00

# LOVE AND CARE DESTITUTE INDIGENOUS CHILDREN IAKRING VILLAGE, VIET NAM



In this project we work with indigenous children and their families (Montagnards) and they have benefitted from your generosity through your assistance in enabling the children to receive education. The Montagnards do not speak Vietnamese, so education is so important to enable them to fit into society and not be discriminated against. One example of discrimination is when the indigenous people come to the market, they can be cheated with the price paid for their produce and also charged a higher price for goods that they may buy. Another common form of discrimination is when land is taken from the indigenous people and the price paid is so small.



Many families cannot afford the school fees, let alone the compulsory uniform. There are also other costs like notebooks, pens and pencils. Without this support it would mean that the children are prevented from receiving the opportunity for their development and an education for their future. We RNDMs also provide group tutoring of the students after school, together with providing a meal as their parents are not able to provide enough for their children. For some very poor families we also provide nutritious meals for children to eat before going to school.



When we go to the different villages to visit, we give simple medicine for the sick and in some cases where we find seriously sick people, we support them to go to hospital for their treatment.

Some families have received money from us RNDMs to raise pigs. Two pigs have recently had piglets, and after two months all but two will be sold. The remaining two piglets will be kept to add to the stock. The money received from the piglets that are sold will be used by the families to support themselves, pay for future school fees thereby enabling the families to become more self-supportive and better able to make decisions regarding their own future. In the coming months further pigs will be bought and distributed to families and education given to those families on how to care for the animals.



Through your generosity, one child called Linh, was close to leaving school because her family was too poor and they could not pay school fees for her. Her knowledge was not good, but she was very bright. Linh is 13 years old and has 3 siblings. We were able to provide support for her family by paying her school fees, providing some clothes and shoes. After school Linh comes to our convent for further tuition in important subjects like reading, writing and simple maths. Now she feels very grateful for

your help and she is better able to understand, and her English is improving. She is also able to help her friends and her younger sister to learn as well. She tells us that in the future, she would like to be a teacher to help her own people to realize the importance of education for better futures.

*Thank you dear gift givers from the bottom of our heart.*





## EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN OF THE SLUMS PARK CIRCUS KOLKATA, INDIA



Our Lady Queen of the Missions Afternoon school, Park Circus was founded 1969 to cater for the poorer classes of people of Kolkata. Many of the children are from the Muslim community. Most of these students are from the nearby slum areas or are pavement dwellers or live near the railway lines. They do not own a house or property. The environment is harsh, the streets of Kolkata are overcrowded and swarming with many homeless people who find it difficult to eke out a living. Certainly they are not able to live with dignity or privacy. There are many health problems related to the poverty and poor living conditions and medicine is expensive. Most of the mothers work as domestic servants, as ayahs and the men folk are engaged in vegetable selling, vendors, porters in the railway stations, or pedal bicycles or are rickshaw runners. They earn a minimum wage of Rs 60/- per day.

Most families have many children and few are sent to school which is prohibitive because of the cost of school fees and uniforms. The children are often kept for baby sitting or are sent out to do domestic work in home to earn a little money for their family's survival.

The Afternoon School provides academic studies for these deprived children. The children are also given the opportunity to learn craft work, painting, tailoring, dance, play and they are given skills in leadership training.

There are eight teachers who are paid remuneration and this is being met by the morning school which is an English medium School. The girls who attend this morning school are from middle class and wealthy families and are able to pay school fees. When they vacate the school the street children move in.

While at school the children are offered a nutritious meal and are given uniforms and stationary items. Twice a year they are given a special gift like a school bag, umbrella and other useful items. The school staff visit the homes of the children regularly giving parental education and assistance. Most of the girls complete their class V11 with us and continue their studies in other vernacular schools and some of them even go up to graduate level and find employment.

On 15<sup>th</sup> of June the School will be reopened after summer holiday. The children and teachers will be very happy to come back to the school. This year the weather was very bad and unbearable. Many people died due to the extreme heat in different parts of our country. A number of children were down with chickenpox and fever. So hopefully they will be well enough to attend the class at the beginning of the term.

**Dear Donors, we appreciate very much your loving concern and hard work for our children.**

**You will be happy to know that your help and generosity has made a difference in the lives of these little children.**



**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: SR. CATHERINE BRABENDER,  
P.O.Box 4037, BALWYN, VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA 3103  
PHONE: 0061 3 9816 4831  
cbrabender@bigpond.com**

**Please view our RNDM Website: [www.rndm.org](http://www.rndm.org)**