



RNDM INTERNATIONAL MISSION NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2016 #3

FOR RNDMS
ASSOCIATES
FRIENDS
SPONSORS &
PARTNERS



**RNDM INTERNATIONAL MISSION
DEVELOPMENT OFFICE – ROME**
PROMOTES MISSION THROUGH
COMMUNICATIONS AND FUNDING FOR THE
MISSIONARY WORKS OF 1000
SISTERS OF OUR LADY OF THE MISSIONS
IN 23 COUNTRIES WORLDWIDE

Dear Friends

Greetings and welcome to this first newsletter from us, Helen and Smitha, at RNDM IMDO Rome. In the last newsletter you will have read that Sr Catherine and Sr Maureen are retiring from IMDO and have handed over the baton to us. We are sure you will agree that they have set the bar very high, but we will endeavour to keep you informed of the great missionary work that is being accomplished by our Sisters across the Congregation, often in very difficult situations. Without the prayerful and financial support of you, our partners in mission, our friends, our benefactors – very little would be achieved. We are indeed grateful to each and every one of you.

Recently, in Poland, young people travelled from around the world to attend **World Youth Day 2016 in Krakow**. Pope Francis in his homily at the closing Mass, where it is estimated 3 million were present, reminded the young people **"God loves all of us with a special love, for him all of us are important: *you* are important! In his eyes, you are precious, and your value is inestimable"**.

In this newsletter, you will read about the lives of many young people in Myanmar, India South and Laos who know they are important because they are benefitting from your generosity. They have received the gift of education and now have a hope filled future.

Education, both formal and informal, has been and remains a key focus of our missionary works across the whole congregation. In the Philippines education is with young people, their families and communities through a wonderful initiative to care for Mother Earth. In New Zealand a major thrust is inviting staff and students in the schools where our Sisters once taught, to share in the vision Euphrasie had for her congregation and ways in which they can engage in solidarity with others around the world. We hope you enjoy reading some stories and the impact that education has had in the lives of young people and their families.

May you and your families be richly blessed

Helen O'Sullivan RNDM *Smitha Thomas Rndm*

RNDM International Mission Development Office Rome

**"You must be the change you want
to see in the world"** Mahatma Gandhi

St Mary's Preschool Mindon, Myanmar

Sr Elizabeth Mai Pain RNDM writes

Mindon is a quiet small town in Magwe division. The majority of the people are Burmese Buddhist and a few are different Chin Christians. People are poor but they are simple, honest and friendly. Many are farmers, fishermen and daily workers.

There is only one high school and four primary schools in the town. Our Preschool is the only one. Some of the parents asked us to open a pre-school for their children. It was opened on June 1st 2012. In the first year we had 23 children, and in the next year 42 children. Gradually every year the numbers have increased. This year the role is 64.

Since the number of children increased we bought some desks and chairs for them. We also bought teaching aids, some toys, indoor games, stand fans and a DVD machine. Some parents cannot afford the fees so we let them be free. Thank you very much for helping us in our poor and simple mission. May the Lord bless you all.



Students at St Mary's Preschool Mindon

"Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world" Nelson Mandela

Bidar District, North Karnataka, India South Sr Oliva Saldana RNDM writes

Poorly clad, simple children roam around collecting cow dung in baskets, carrying their little siblings and tending cattle or working in the fields. These are some of the common scenes noticeable if passing through the villages of Bidar. But life has changed for these young ones since 2012, when the RNDM Sisters began the mission of education, for teachers and students, together with youth formation in these villages. The main issues faced here are lack of education, poverty, caste system, child marriage, unemployment and alcoholism.

There are government primary schools in each village, but they lack quality teachers and methods of teaching. Hence more often the children just roam the streets. Poor and illiterate parents consider it as an opportunity for them to use the older children for baby sitting or collecting cow dung or firewood. The Sisters have motivated the staff and students in their teaching learning processes and encouraged parents to send their children to school.

The Sisters organised tuition classes and many children began attending these evening classes especially for English. Most of the students who are catholic are very weak in their studies. Summer camps are conducted in which they participate eagerly. Their parents too are happy for their children to study and participate in the different activities. The Sisters are not only engaged in meeting educational needs but also the pastoral, social and spiritual needs of the people in the villages of Bidar.

If you walk into the lanes of these villages today you can see young people proudly walking to school, wearing their school uniform and with a school bag on their back, eager to learn. The opportunity to support the education of boys and girls from far off villages will be of great benefit to society when these young people become the future leaders of their communities.

Thank you so very much for your love and care.



Sr Oliva with some village women and children

Dear Sisters and Friends

Greetings! I am Virnda Anushkathé student of Mariam Nilaya School, Bangalore. I am studying in class VIII A.

I am staying with my aunt and uncle. Now my mother is no more since the day of her death, I am staying with my aunt and uncle. My uncle and aunt were not affording to pay for my fees so Sister has given the financial support to complete my school fees.

I am proud of my school for helping me for my education. My school give me lots of opportunities not only in the classrooms but other activities. I love to come to school. I like my teachers, friends. My school organises activities like drawing, throw ball, singing, dancing, debate, quiz etc. I like to participate in all the activities.

Thank you very much for helping me to enjoy my school life. I have people to take care of me but still I miss my parents. I often remember and pray for my mother. May she rest in peace!

Thank you once again. With love and regards Virnda Anushka



"If you educate a woman, you educate a family, if you educate a girl, you educate the future" Queen Rania of Jordan

"To change the world we must be good to those who cannot repay us" Pope Francis

Paske Diocese, Laos Sr Maria Nguyen Thi Cam Linh RNDM writes

We thank you our dear friends for your collaboration and generosity in helping 8 girls in our community and for 5 other girls in the villages. These girls are still living in difficult conditions and had no opportunity to go to school but they always have desired to pass through their current circumstances and rise to a better future.

Through this project we have provided the girls with an opportunity to go to school, helping them understand the importance of education, personality development and enlarging their view of social life and its responsibilities. All the girls have been provided with uniforms, medication for those who do not have good health, tuition fees and their school supplies. They are very happy.

The 8 girls who stay with us in community are happy with the results achieved at school and all the other skills they have learnt, music and dance, also gardening and crafts. The 5 girls in the villages we have been motivating them and giving every encouragement. They are happy to learn skills to help their parents working in the garden and we have noticed that the girls are more responsible in their learning, their lives are better organised and they are more open in relationships with others and have greater confidence. They have good orientations for their future.

Their families are very happy and want to have more children in their village to get an opportunity to go to school.



The 8 girls who stay with us proudly wearing their school uniform

Dear Sir and Madame

My name is Somsamoud. I would like to say thank you very much for many kinds of you.

I have 5 brothers and sisters and I'm the third child in the family. Unfortunately, my mother had died and not long after that my father remarried so now I have a stepmother. My father was neither interested in us as before nor my stepmother. She does not love us at all. My siblings were upset too. However, I was very lucky to meet the RNDM sisters who worked in my village right time. They have recognized my story as well as some others girls in the village who live in difficult circumstances but want to go to school therefore the sisters have taken us to the house at km2 (the Sister's community).

I recently finished the program at the high school and I am very happy to live here with the sisters and with seven friends who are the same ages with me. Although at the beginning I felt very difficult because of the life at the city is very different from the life in my village but thanks to the help of the sisters I have overcome the challenges with the living environment. I want to become a nurse in the future to help my people in the village because I have seen a lot of sick people passed away without health care.

I will always try to get a good results in learning and living well so that I should not make you disappointed at me, more over I want to be a helpful one for the people and the society. Each day, my friends and I pray for you and we will continue remember you all in our prayers and at the good things we do.

Thank you very much! With Love, Somsamoud



"Today's education is crucial to the ability of present and future leaders and citizens to create solutions and find new paths to a better future" UNESCO

Kulaman, Philippines Sr Petite Lao RNDM

writes

Education takes many forms and in Kulaman, a mountainous area situated in a valley in Mindanao in the Southern Philippines, the RNDM Sisters are helping to educate the people in waste management. They do not have 24 hour electricity, a piped water system, concrete roads nor garbage disposal. Therefore, the residents have to manage their own system and develop a culture of waste management and reduction. Two-thirds of the garbage can be either composted or recycled. Yet, there is no awareness yet of waste segregation due to lack of education and facilities to implement it.

Education is required regarding the consequences of accumulating and mishandling waste, along with how to manage waste and materials. Thanks to your generosity we now have a small-scale model for the local residents where they are learning the difference between composting of garden waste and food waste, tins and other materials that can be recycled.

Some of the "waste" with creativity and skill, could be made into useful products. Tin cans have been made into flower pots, bottles into kerosene lamps, at times bringing additional income for families.

Everyone must work together to look after Mother Earth, through your support the people are being educated in practical ways to do exactly that.

Salamat Po

Sr Petite and a parent sorting through the collected rubbish



Aotearoa New Zealand & Samoa

Mission Promoter Sr Anne Sklenars RNDM writes

It seems that many people think that promotion of the Charism and Mission of the RNDM Sisters will not provide very much fruit, but I have good news to tell you....

The Staff members of our Primary Schools in particular, are loving the Professional Development and reflection opportunities they have, to study and pray with our Charism. They are now asking for extended twilight reflection times, which is a wonderful opportunity for us. Along with working with Staff, I am also enjoying the opportunity to share Meditation with Students of all age levels. This involves the quietening, stilling of minds and hearts, and choosing a mantra. Students and teachers are delighted at the impact this has on personal and school lives.

We are constantly putting before the students in our ANZ schools, the situation of other students in different parts of the world and we are working on partnering schools, in different parts of the world. This gives an appreciation of difference and diversity, while all being human with the same human needs.

What are some of the ways we can do this? Mission Days are a great way that schools grow in their awareness of the situation of children in other parts of the world. Where schools have partnerships, this is very meaningful. Exchange of letters, "Days in the Life Of..." and photos or videos are other great ways that heighten exchange and awareness.

Through direct learning, students are very aware of the resources they enjoy, compared to many of their peers in the world. Sharing of my missionary experiences with formal and non-formal education training, gives them first hand knowledge of how this can work.

Our posters this year focus on Students in other parts of the Congregation, and their activities, as well as glimpses of the Sisters Internationally.

Through working with Staff, and enlarging their experiences, students then benefit from this Formation. We look forward to developing partnerships with more Sisters and students of the Congregation.

RNDM INTERNATIONAL MISSION DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

ROME, ITALY — imdo@rndmgen.org

For further information contact: Srs Helen O'Sullivan or Smitha Thomas RNDM
Suore di Nostra Signora delle Missioni, Via di Bravetta 628, Roma 00164, Italy

Phone: 06 6615 8400 Email: imdo@rndmgen.org

Please view our RNDM Website: www.rndm.org

