

RNDM INTERNATIONAL MISSION NEWSLETTER



**RNDM INTERNATIONAL MISSION
DEVELOPMENT OFFICE - ROME
PROMOTES MISSION THROUGH
COMMUNICATIONS AND FUNDING FOR THE
SISTERS OF OUR LADY OF THE MISSIONS
IN 22 COUNTRIES WORLDWIDE**



On Christmas Day 2021, we celebrate the 160th Anniversary of the founding of the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions by a courageous French woman, Euphrasie Barbier, at Lyon, France in 1861. Euphrasie's dream was to send her Missionary Sisters to work with women and children - the most marginalized people of the world through works of education, health care, pastoral and social development. Today, the Sisters' priority remains focused on the same for those who are oppressed and living on the fringes of society. From those humble beginnings, the Congregation has spread to 22 countries with 870 Sisters serving in the missions worldwide. The Sisters continue this great mission with passion. However, we could not do it without you, our friends and Partners in Mission, who enable and promote our missionary activities.

In recent times, the Covid-19 with its variants has brought about greater sufferings, especially to the lives of the poor and vulnerable. Many people continue to live in fear and insecurity. Your generosity and support have made a great difference in the lives of the most disadvantaged women, children and families in the society. To all of you we say **"Thank you"** on behalf of the people who are the recipients of your goodness of heart and whose lives are greatly improved by your ongoing support. May our God bless you!

As we prepare for Christmas, may the coming of Christ bring peace into our hearts, our homes and our world. Wishing you and your families every blessing of Peace, Joy and well-being at Christmas and the New Year.

Smitha Thomas

Smitha Thomas RNDM



HELPING HANDS OF MIRIAM ASHRAM - BANGLADESH



RNDM Sisters at Miriam Ashram, Diang, began their dedicated service to the disadvantaged children and to the community through healthcare and education. It is one of the poorest areas inhabited by cobblers, barbers and fisher folks. The Sisters run three primary schools for these village children. Besides schools, there is a health centre where the Sisters give basic medical care to the villagers, specially for women and children.

There are 113 children in three different schools who are being supported by our program. We continue to give nutrition and educational support to them, so that the children remain healthy and sturdy.

During the Covid periods, the people have a hard time to survive, as most of them lost their livelihood and are unable to support their families. The solidarity fund enabled Miriam Ashram Sisters to provide medical needs for many children and their families.

Through our outreach service, we give out hand sanitizers, soaps, masks and vitamins to the children and their families. We also care for some of the helpless elderly people with medical care and food provisions.

We are grateful to our donors for your generous support and we pray for God's special blessing on you always.

Shiuly Gomes RNDM



Supporting the slum children and families - India

Our Lady Queen of the Missions, the Afternoon School have educated the children of the slums around the city since 1968. The Covid-19 pandemic hit everyone hard, more so the poor and the disadvantaged ones who are most affected with its after effects and lockdowns.

During this time, the Sisters and the teachers connected with students through mobile phones and organized classes. The teachers through WhatsApp groups, gathered the students to give lessons. It was indeed a problem to keep the social distancing as many students live in shared homes with a common mobile.



The teachers recorded classes through voice messages and videos, taking photos of the lessons and sent them. The students were given project works and assignments to complete and drop into the school for correction. It was great to see the keen interest taken by everyone for the education of our students. Many of the students shared the mobile phones to complete the given tasks. Most of the students exchanged their old books with those who did not have any books at all. There was a great spirit of sharing and solidarity among them. The teachers continue to work hard and put in their best effort to gather the students and motivate them at this difficult time. The students are eager learners who are also given awareness classes on hygiene and the importance of clean living in the crowded slums. We provided them with soap, detergents, sanitary kits and masks to keep them clean and protected. We

also distributed study materials and food kits to the children and their families. We are continuing our work as the Covid variant still remains a challenge for all.

We thank our sisters and generous donors for supporting the education of our slum children and their families. We are able to reach out to these students and families in their most vulnerable time due to your generosity and we appreciate your kindness and support always.

Moncy Mathew RNDM

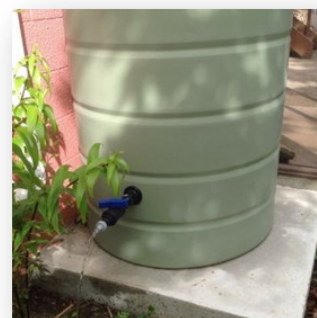


Kia Ora, Talofa Lava from Aotearoa New Zealand and Samoa

Greetings! I just would like to share some of the Solidarity activities in our province.

The Sisters spent an enormous amount of time making a response to Parliament, on behalf of the Planet, and passion for **Climate Change**. This year at our Province Assembly, we made a commitment to conserving water. Some of our communities already had tanks on their property and explained how these worked.

Since then several others have set up a tank system to conserve the rain water. This is one of Nelson community's tanks. Earlier in the year, two concrete platforms were built to receive water tanks, one at each end of the house. In September the tanks were installed and the plumbing connected. Then we waited for rain!! Now our tanks are ready to supply water to all our front gardens and large areas of lawn.



Work continues in Hamilton, with Margaret accompanying **Refugees**, and assisting them to settle into life in Hamilton, Here is one young boy learning to ride.

I continue advocacy work on the Board of Family Re-Unification and promoting missions in schools.

We are very grateful for the continued support that our benefactors and partners so generously give. Your giving makes a difference to the lives of so many people in different parts of the world where our RNDM Sisters live and work. Thank you!

Anne Sklenars RNDM



REACHING OUT TO SAVE LIVES - MYANMAR

The RNDM Sisters have been serving in the health care ministry in Mindon Parish. Sadly, the rule of the Military coup has added suffering to the already existing pandemic situation in the country. Many people have become jobless and many more are dying every day due to hunger and poverty. The economy has collapsed and the reality is very grim and pathetic. We hope and pray that democracy will return soon!



The Sisters were able to receive some funds in the last few months and began to assist the poorest and most vulnerable people, who urgently needed help and care. We provide them with nutrition and health care. We also distribute some food items, vitamins and other medicines to those who are in serious conditions. There are many elderly people who are helpless so we give our time to listen to them and give some support for their survival. We could share many stories of people who are old, living alone and are helpless. They all look forward to the Sisters' support and their home visits.



There is an elderly couple, who have no food to survive, as their son has lost his job. Another young man, who is 45 years old suffering from a brain tumor and is bedridden. His father has been looking after him but now he has no income to care for him. We have a blind old woman, who lost her vision in an accident. She lives with her daughter, who is crippled, but looks after her mother, but they do not have enough food to live on. The Sisters and the people are most grateful to all our mission partners and Sisters for the support and prayers. God bless you !

Veronica Khin Mar Aye

HEALING TOUCH AT KOUNKANE - SENEGAL

The RNDM Sisters in Kounkane are running the dispensary since 2020 where many patients are treated specially for malaria. They come from very far off places, walking 10 - 50 kms. We get an average of 800 patients per month. The region of Kolda where we work is recognized as one of the red zones for malaria in the country, where people are mostly poor and need to be given awareness in fighting against malaria and other diseases.

The presence of the dispensary of Notre Dame has brought tremendous hope to the people and has made a great difference in their lives. We have lightened their worries for medical care. Many patients who have been treated at the dispensary, now meeting us, jump with joy and



narrate their experiences. Their faith is great and it adds to their healing. The dispensary is surrounded by greenery and trees, that calm the spirit of ailing patients. We hope that, as the years go by, people will come to know how to prevent illnesses and the dispensary continues to relieve their sufferings.



The Solidarity support has been helping us to have a good stock of medicines and to reach out to the poor who suffer from malaria. The patients contribute small amounts but most patients cannot afford the treatments.

Our sincere thanks to all our Sisters and donors for supporting this noble cause. We remain grateful and ask God to bless you in this holy season!

Cyria Nongrum RNDM

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN MY LIFE - LAOS

Dear Sisters and benefactors

I am Phonekeo from Laos. I have just graduated as a primary school teacher and am in the process of finding a job. First of all, I would like to express my deep gratitude to all of you for helping me to achieve this Teachers' degree.

I come from from Somxanuk village, 80 kms away from Pakse city, where I have seen only hills and mountains. There are no facilities like in the big city; no high school or good transport. We only use motorbikes or pickups. I am the fourth of six siblings. My father is an alcoholic and my brothers have dropped out of school. As my family is not united, I got no support from home. My mother asked me to leave the village school to find a job in Thailand to support the family. However, I did not want to stop my studies, so I had to find a way out to help myself. One fine day, I met an RNDM Sister to whom I shared my story. She took me to the community of the sisters and supported me to continue my studies and become a teacher.



Here, in the community of the sisters, I learnt many things: to be kind and care for one another with joy. I was happy with the sisters and at school, for they loved me and supported me to complete my schooling and get a Teacher's training degree. My experiences during a three-month internship at school were challenging. I was very nervous for the first time, as I had to transfer my knowledge and skills from books into a real classroom life. Another challenge was to teach the naughty students who paid no attention and played pranks in the class. I often felt tired but my teachers and friends helped me very much.



Today, I am so proud of myself that I have completed my training and got my graduation certificate with good results. I am in the process of applying for a job at a primary school in Pakse city, and I have been accepted for a trial job. However, because the Covid-19 pandemic is spreading fast, the school has not reopened yet, so I am helping my family to earn extra income by selling clothes online.

The most important thing I would like to tell you is my sincere gratitude to all the sisters and benefactors for your generous support. You have helped me grow and opened up a future which is full of hope. I absolutely acknowledge that I would not have achieved these results without your help. I hope that your meaningful work continues to bear fruit for many people and children in difficult circumstances like me. I remember and pray for you and wish you a merry Christmas.

Phonekeo

We are ever grateful to all our Sisters across the Congregation, friends, mission partners and all our benefactors for your collaboration and generous support to our missions throughout this year. Your support to the Christmas Catalogue, Solidarity and other projects has enhanced the lives of many people, who otherwise would have missed such an opportunity. God bless and reward you abundantly at all times!

We wish you and your families a Blessed Christmas and New Year filled with joy, peace, good health and blessings!

RNDM International Mission Development Office, ROME



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