

GOOD SHEPHERD SISTERS

Province of South West India

We all have a role to play:



Every year on 22 April, people come together for Earth Day to celebrate the planet and environmental protection. This year marks the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, but the Corona Virus pandemic (COVID-19) outbreak made the celebrations look very

different from usual.

The massive global response to COVID-19 leads us to the question: what can we take or learn from the pandemic to tackle the climate crisis and protect the environment?

Climate change and COVID-19 are two very different challenges, but they do have the same keys, things in common. Both are global - they do not have National boundaries - and both require countries to work together to find solutions.

As the impact of climate change intensifies over time, it is the children and young people of today who will face its worst effects. Young people have been telling us that they are afraid of climate change with the same urgency as people now feel about COVID-19. This is a time for children and young people to talk with parents and grandparents, to discuss the kind of world we want to create when the pandemic has passed.

The global community has shown that it can act to address a crisis, with governments,



businesses and individuals taking measures and changing behaviours in response to the pandemic. When we work together, even small personal actions when put together, like physical distancing, can make a big difference, helping us to overcome huge challenges.

Many social determinants of health—including poverty, physical environment (eg, smoke exposure, homelessness), and race or ethnicity—can have a considerable effect on COVID-19 outcomes. Homeless families are at higher risk of viral transmission because of crowded living spaces and scarce access to COVID-19 screening and testing facilities

It is also poignant that physical distancing measures, which are necessary to prevent the spread of COVID-19, are substantially more difficult for those with adverse social determinants and might contribute to both short-term and long-term morbidity. School closures increased food insecurity for children living in poverty who participate in school lunch (Midday meals) programmes. Malnutrition causes substantial risk to both the physical and mental health of these children, including lowering immune response, which has the potential to increase the risk of infectious disease transmission.

People or families who are homeless are at higher risk of infection during physical lockdowns especially if public spaces are closed, resulting in physical crowding that is thought to increase viral transmission and reduce access to care.

The outbreak of (COVID-19) has created a global health crisis that has had a deep impact on the way we perceive our world and our everyday lives. Not only the rate of contagion and patterns of transmission threatens us, but the safety measures put in place to contain the spread of the virus also require social distancing by refraining from doing what is inherently human, which is to find solace in the company of others.

Within this context of physical threat, social and physical distancing, as well as public alarm, what has been the role of the Good Shepherd sisters in different communities of the Province.

Here is a short report from different communities of the Province of South West India.



❖ **Mysore Community:**

On the 1st week of April we decided to distribute some provisions to those affected by the virus in and around our Convent. We would concentrate on the domestic workers and those who do not have any job now due to this lockdown. We decided to help 50 families with 5 kgs of rice and 2 kgs of dhal each. The amount was Rs. 20,000.00. The Bishop had requested all the Religious for contributions and we contributed Rs. 15,000.00. The School Sisters met and decided to give Rs. 500.00 to the students who cannot afford food at this time. Higher Secondary School and Pre University Course 60 students; Kannada Higher Primary 50 students; English Higher Primary 20 students; these amounts are being deposited into their accounts. So far we have extended help amounting to Rs. 1, 00,000.00. (One lakh).

We had 15 girls in our Home till 10th April and now there are only 6 of them. We feed 2 to 3 persons daily in our campus at the construction site.

We are also intending to help with provisions about 20 people (construction workers) who are not with us. They live somewhere far away and work in many places.

❖ **Manvi Community:**

Through the intervention of Snehadhara Trust, Good Shepherd Provincialate and The Arise Foundation, we were able to reach out to support those on the margins, who were facing the consequence of the COVID 19 pandemic. With the help of our Janodaya staff we were able to identify the economically needy, elderly men and women who are living alone, families with differently abled persons who are unable to make both ends meet , single mothers (widows) etc and prepared the list of beneficiaries. We used the Food Banks –



where parcels of food and supplies were prepared and individuals collected them from one location. Since we are still in the nationwide lockdown, we have no permission to gather people in large numbers. Therefore, we had called around 50 people in a day and distributed the food parcels on 10 consecutive days. A total of 410 families from 5 village and 9 slums availed food supplies from the Emergency fund.

❖ visit to quarantine Camps in Manvi

Manvi is a taluk located in Raichur district of Karnataka. It is one of the 5 taluks of Raichur district. It is the municipal headquarters and consists of 63 villages. It is a home to number of religious sites. It has a population of 46465 of which



23261 are males while 23024 are females. Over more than half the populations are working as migrants. The people from these villages migrant to major cities like Bangalore, Bombay, Pune, Andhra Pradesh, etc as construction workers, and daily wage laborers in the unorganized sectors. Since March 22nd 2020, there was a nationwide lockdown due to the

pandemic COVID 19. People lost their jobs overnight, they faced scarcity of food, water and lacked basic facilities. They found hard to continue life without work and money. They had no means of transport to return to their home towns. Thus many people started walking hundreds of miles to reach their home town, and they had fatal deaths due to the fatigue, lack of food and water. After the third face of lockdown, government provided transportation and reached them to their hometown.

Karnataka government has made it 14-days quarantine mandatory for all migrants coming into the state except for those arriving from high virus prevalence states like Maharashtra, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, who will undergo 7 days institutional quarantine and seven days home quarantine. But the state had not made any prior preparation to accommodate the migrants and to quarantine them in institution. They are quarantined in different schools and hostels. Among them, the most vulnerable are pregnant women, children under 10 years of age, senior citizens over 80 years of age, and terminally ill patients. In Manvi town itself in 6 different places around 800 to 1000 migrants are being quarantined. We the sisters of the Good Shepherd and our Staff from Janodaya NGO visited these centers. It was difficult for us to enter into these camps. We took special permission from District collector and Thasildar and visited them.



We met the migrants who are accommodated in the institution and gave them instructions to take precautions against Covid-19. We interviewed few people individually and found that they are not provided proper food and they lack basic facilities. In a small school with 5 class rooms around 150 people are staying and in the night they sleep in the open ground. Since two months they were struggling due to lockdown and again they are quarantined. Therefore those at the quarantine institution are psychologically stressed and they are in trauma. We interviewed two mothers who had delivered their babies 15 days ago, and they are living with two months old babies in the thickly populated quarantined institutions. One of the mothers shared that within 5 days of her delivery, she had to walk nearly 300 kms without proper food; she is very weak and she is unable to nurse the baby. Another mother had caesarean (C section) delivery. Mothers and the babies had no water to have bath. We spoke to the

in-charge of the quarantined camps, to provide the basic necessities for them. At the end we distributed snacks, fruits and toilet articles for them. We are planning to give ration kits, when they return to their homes.

❖ Sandanaplaya Community:

Our rural areas are the food bowl of the country, inaudibly standing as the backbone, but they are the abandoned ones. Our two fold goal is to reach out to the vulnerable informal sector workers in the rural communities and to rejuvenate the neglected communities.

Hygiene initiatives: In response to the Covid -19 crisis, Snehadhara provided funds to distribute essential to those in dire need, we were able to reach out to those on the margins and vulnerable communities. We adopted Good Shepherd Skill Development cum Production centre in response to the imminent threat of COVID-19. The center runs tailoring as a Skill development initiative, offering skills training to local women and children who are vulnerable to exploitation. But now, it has become



a COVID-19 mask-making Center. The trained women in tailoring along with the staff stitched around 800 masks out of Cora material woven in our Good Shepherd Skill development cum production Center which are eco-friendly and distributed in Sanadanapalya surroundings and Public Health Care Center in Suluvadi, where people live in precariously close proximity without financial support, in need of medical and sanitary supplies.

The principle of distribution of masks' will be an assertive interactive transformation. We hope that this will sensitize people to the realities of the pandemic and encourage communities to be attentive to hygiene and social distancing wherever possible.

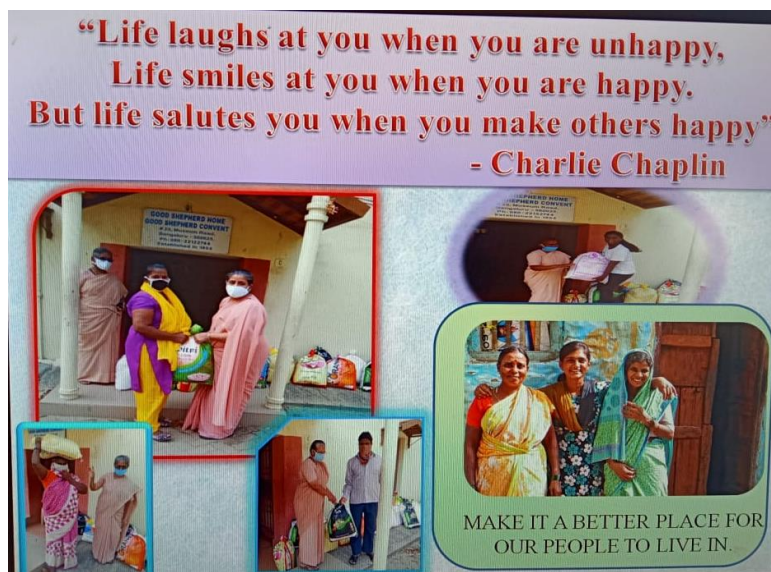
❖ Good Shepherd Provincialate:



Around 100 families were helped by the Provincialate. They were given a food kit containing Rice, Dhal, Sugar, Pulses, oil, etc. Each kit cost worth Rs.1, 000. The locations were Shanthi



Nagar, L.R Nagar slums, Austin, Annepalaya, Neelasandra slums and our neighbors who are very poor. We also provided food kits to our construction workers at St.Euphrasia' Girls High School, Bangalore and all our drivers and security guards in Bangalore. Our domestic workers were also given help during this time.



❖ Museum Road Community – Bangalore

Good Shepherd Sisters of Museum road community involved in distribution of the Relief Supplies to around 600 families belong to migrant workers slum dwellers. Domestic workers, daily wage laborers etc.

❖ CHALICE SPONSORSHIP PROGRAMME – Canada

Bangalore site consists of 5 sub-sites that are located in the following rural and urban communities. They are namely Bellary, Manvi, Museum Road- Bangalore, Sandanapalya & Wayanad. Through Chalice sponsorship program we have advanced Rs. 3000/- from each child's account towards food supplies for 1200 families.



Further, from the salaries of the sisters who are working as Site and Sub site directors in the project contributed their April month salary to provide food parcels for the deserving families in respective working areas.

Here is a summary of each sub-sites activities towards addressing the COVID 19 pandemic.

❖ Sandanapalya sub site:

The vulnerable communities are suffering as the COVID -19 has worsened. Hence with the help of our GSRDS (Good Shepherd Rural Development and Sustainability), Chalice staff we identified the vulnerable informal sector workers, who are unable to make their both ends meet, abandoned elderly men



and women, single parents, widows, chronically ill persons etc. we distributed the emergency kit to the 113 families in Sandanapallya, Nellur, Dumme gowdana Doddi and Peddanapallya.



❖ **Museum Road Sub site– Bangalore**

On 30th April 2020, Chalice Bangalore site along with GSH Museum Road sub site joined together and provided provision for 75 families of street vendors in Shivajinagar market area, Bangalore.

❖ **Manvi Sub site**

The deserving families were identified, and were able to provide food grains for 28 families from the April month salary of the Sub Sit Director. They were very grateful for the support extended to them in this time of Corona Crisis. The sponsored 340 children's families were provided provision Cheque worth Rs.3000/- from their individual bank accounts.



❖ **Bellary Community:**

As part of the outreach during the COVID 19 pandemic, we extended our support to 600

families. It was a joint venture from St.Philomena's school and the Bellary Community. The people were supplied with rice and other food supplies. We used the food bank method where the beneficiaries came to our campus and collected the food parcel, which was packed and distributed.

❖ **Delhi Community:**

We, the Good Shepherd Sisters at New Delhi with the support and sponsorship of the Arise Foundation, CRI Delhi and donors from local Delhi, reached out to 450 families with one month provision. The announced of a national wide lock down



which was extended from 23rd March continue to the new date of May 31st. Impacts of the lockdown have come to stand still and have spared none. There is a disruption in work, wages/income and food – all are interconnected. The informal

economy workers are excluded from most government measures. The beneficiaries were the migrants' informal sectors families who survive on daily wages like rickshaw pullers, domestic workers etc. The ration kits were a great relief for their families. There was no evidence of other organizations or the government distributing food and supplies to those to whom we were helping. It

has become a successful because we have received the support from the local community, youth and governors to implement this project.



❖ St.Michael's Community, Bangalore.

At this time of dire crisis, we the sisters and staff at St.Michael's Home reached out to the domestic workers, slum dwellers of Bangalore. We also helped a few elderly people. The beneficiaries were provided with provision kits. A total of 465 families were given worth Rs.1000/- each food kits.

St.Michael's Home donated provisions worth Rs.56000/- to the Arch diocese of Bangalore. This service was extended mainly to the migrants in the city of Bangalore, those who were stranded in city, due to the lockdown and unable to make both ends meet.



❖ Priyadarshini Community, Museum Road.



Marian Villas working Women's Hostel is part of the Priyadarshini community apostolate. From the hostel 100 food kits of worth Rs.1000/- was provided to the needy poor and jobless slum dwellers. Majority of the beneficiaries were domestic workers living in

slums. Door to door delivery of food parcels was distributed with the help of the staff and the youth.

❖ **Thaikatussery Community, Kerala**



As a preparation, we took an informal survey as to who need emergency food or medical support during the lockdown. Many daily wage earners were most affected since all business firms were closed and were not able to seek work because of the lockdown situation. Aged parents, elderly women staying alone and a few families with bedridden patients also found hard to get their daily food supplies. We contacted families of guest workers (migrant laborers) who were living close to Thaikattussery and were out of jobs.

We prepared grocery kits with 10kgs with needed condiments, soaps and cleaning materials. We distributed these grocery kits to a total of 61 families; that is 24 migrant families, 37 local families of all caste and religion and they were indeed glad to receive this gift provision.

❖ **Kannara Community:**

We the sisters at Kannara Community witnessed the plight of the migrant and daily wage laborers at Kannara & Chiyaram, kerala. We assessed their situation. We could see the migrants who came from West Bengal could not return to their home town. Among the migrants were women, toddlers, infants, children and elderly who were



facing the brunt of lockdown. With the help of Snehadhara Trust from our Good

Shepherd Provincialate we were able to extend a helping hand feeding these needy people by providing them with food grains and pulses. Thanks to Sr.Meera our Province Leader for this initiative.

❖ **Vizhinjam Community**

Vizhinjam is a village located near Kovalam in south Kerala, India. It has a population of 20,714 (2011, India Census). An international port at Vizhinjam was conceived as early as 1991. In August 2015, the Kerala government and Adani Vizhinjam Port (AVPL), representing the Adani Group, signed the agreement for the Adani Vizhinjam project. Thousand of fisher communities will be misplaced, lose their livelihood, source of income, if the harbor as to come in. we the sisters are mainly addressing this issue in this region and working towards the empowerment of fisher community. They lack education and their socio-economic condition is very low. Thus they are more vulnerable to all forms of injustice.



COVID-19 pandemic has crippled the lives of almost all the fisher folk families. They were unable to enter the sea, which is their only means of livelihood. Thus we the sisters took initiative to provide cooked food for 500 families per meal and also provided them with food grains.

❖ **St. Martha's Hospital Community**

St. Martha's Hospital (Estb 1886), the congregation's only hospital under the leadership of the local leader, Sr. Gracy Thomas Rgs, has been leaving no stone unturned to come to the aid of patients in Bangalore. A Fever clinic has been set

up that evaluates any symptomatic patient that is referred to it by the preliminary screening unit, situated at the entrance of the hospital. The fever clinic would then refer the suspected cases to a first respondent hospital.

The Preliminary screening unit screens every patient, staff, and visitor to the



hospital for documents verification of hotspots in the city, body temperature scanning, Oxygen saturation, and preliminary symptom screening.

The hospital was quick to act on the emerging shortage of PPEs by preparing in house face masks, visors, reusable PPEs, and body bags for deceased COVID suspect patients. The sisters at the community along with the college of St. Martha's Hospital College of nursing provided dry rations to 203 families which included all migrant construction workers on campus and all contract laborers who were struggling during the Lockdown period, in partnership with sponsorship organizations.

Migrants

The Indian government in response to contain novel Covid -19 came up with wonderful unique phase solution was the lockdown. This policy version has failed miserably in containing the novel Covid-19 virus and added ambiguity and uncertainty to the unorganized sector workers especially to the migrants. The migrants are those who are vulnerable to slavery of all forms as they do not have

any savings to fall back in such crisis situation. Since the national lockdown is continued in 4 level their situation has worsened but least improved. They are in a dire need of support and understanding.

Statics of Migrants in our Mission Areas

Sl No.	Place	Total No. of Male migrants	Total No. of Female migrants	Total number
1.	Thalore- Kannara	119	57	176
2.	Chiyyaram	80	102	182
3.	Manvi – 21 villages SC -377 ST- 208 OBC – 188 Minorities -25			798 families with 3400 individuals

Collated and edited by:

Sr.Kalai Selvi

SWI Province Communication Team.