

Connecting with Compassion to Combat COVID-19 Good Shepherd CEIN creating tiny ripples of HOPE!

Who said I am excluded?

COVID – 19 has shaken the lives of millions of people across the world, sparing none, perhaps inviting each one of us to relearn, redefine and restore newness to Mother Earth and her children. It has awakened a spirit of solidarity and challenged us to build bridges of love and hope, especially with the vulnerable persons of the society- migrant workers and elders.

As India goes into the second phase of lockdown, the plight of the poor, who are struggling to fend for a single meal is heart-wrenching. We appreciate the support of the Good Shepherd Economic Justice Project who helped to prepare a budget to provide relief measures for the project beneficiaries and other poor families in the slums.

Sunbeam amidst the shroud of peril

“Love in Action” - Mangalagiri

In Mangalagiri and Tadepalli Mandals, almost 200 individuals received relief materials to sustain their families as well as livelihood - supplies of buffalo feed for 32 beneficiaries and provision kits (including rice, dhal, sugar, wheat flour, cooking oil, ground nuts) for 108 beneficiaries. Another 60 families were also provided provision kits, masks and sanitizers.

Almost 650 masks were stitched by the children of our Shelter Home - KARUNALAYAM Shelter Home children, as their contribution to the poor and needy with the support of EJ Cooperative Office.

“Whatever you do to the least of the brethren, you do for ME!” – Chennai

In Chennai, the Sisters continue to reach out to the needy families in the slums in multiple ways. So far, over 800 families including 250 parishioners, elders, migrant workers from Nepal and slum dwellers have received food supplies. The children at the Shelter gladly share in this activity, by lending their helping hands in packaging and distribution. The tailoring department is working overtime to share their skill of stitching masks for the Police Department.

'Dhan'yavādālu' – Heartfelt Gratitude - Mulakalapalli

At Mulakalapalli, all our programme participants whose families rely on their daily wages or agricultural work are crippled without work. Thanks to the support of the EJ Project, 150 women beneficiaries from 10 villages received rice, dhal and cooking oil apart from hygiene kits. This effort was greatly applauded by the Village Presidents and other Government Health Officials.

One of the beneficiaries expressed her words of gratitude to the Good Shepherd Sisters. *"I am Mrs. Ram Thulasi, one of the Board Members of Girijina Raithula Thrift and Credit MACS Limited as well as Ward Member of Mogaralaguppa Panchayath. I express my heartfelt gratitude to the Good Shepherd Sisters, donors and staff for supporting us at this crucial time of the nation-wide lockdown. We are happy to receive rice, dhal, cooking oil and sanitizers. We always hold you in our hearts for your generosity and thoughtfulness."*

'We'll be there for you..' - Karjat

In Karjat, we work in 17 villages amidst the primitive tribal groups of Maharashtra. These tribes are landless people and depend on daily wages. In collaboration with the Centre For Social Action, Mumbai we were able to help 205 families with food supplies.

We also helped 18 migrants who were stranded at a nearby railway station in Neral, with rice and dhal from our community contribution. We are very grateful to all the donors who shared their bounty in this time of need as well as our staff who came forward to lend a helping hand.

'Reaching the unreached' - Balaghat

When we were asked to hand over cash contributions to the Collectorate instead of utilizing the same for reaching out to the stranded labourers and migrants, we dared to set out and find the unreached families, who were suffering without a morsel to eat. We identified 118 individuals in 27 families and supplied groceries to tide over these few weeks. Each day we hear of one family or the other who needs our help. We are grateful to our staff who is always on the lookout for stranded families and ensure that the unreached are helped immediately.

'Do all the good you can, in all the ways you can' – Andheri

In Andheri, Mumbai, the Sisters and Partners in mission are relentlessly serving at the nearby Migrant Camp, by distributing food materials, medicines, clothes and even helping them connect with their family members. What makes these migrants look forward to our happy helpers? - Counseling, prayer and emotional support!

Remembering with profound gratitude the words of Saint Mary Euphrasia: “***Labour generously and unceasingly according to your calling***”, we begin each day, connecting with compassion with the creation around us, hoping that SME will be pleased with her dutiful daughters and sons!

Sr. Pushpa Louis
Province Leader
Good Shepherd CEIN