



“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times”

October 2020

Dear Friends,

When Charles Dickens wrote his famous book titled “A Tale of Two Cities” his first line was “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.” Doesn’t that seem like where we are today? Some days we all wonder if it could get any worse. And other times we remember how blessed we are to have the opportunities and freedoms that we have.

It is not the best of times for the children

Right now it is not the best of times for the children you sponsor. They are facing the most fearful pandemic in over a hundred years and many of them were forced by government mandate to wait out the coronavirus with families that were unable to care for them previously. Fortunately, your generosity and the fearless determination of the orphanage staff has ensured the children have food to eat and know how to protect themselves from Covid-19. Some children with nowhere to go stayed in the sanctuary of their orphanages. But in the next few weeks they are all expected to return.

When that happens, there will be so many unanticipated needs that we expect to be swamped with requests for help of all kinds. Already, two homes have asked for funds to purchase some water buffalo to ensure the children have milk and enough nutrition. Many others have warned us that all schools plan to hold classes remotely. That may be fine if you are a well-to-do family with computers and internet connection. But what is an orphanage supposed to do when 50 or 100 children all need computers, tablets or Android phones just to attend class every day?

Whatever the Need

We are calling the 2020 annual campaign “Whatever the Need.” Because the orphanage administrators don’t know exactly what their needs will be in the coming months, we decided to broaden the usual format of our annual fundraiser. In the coming months, we expect to identify specific projects like we have done in the past. But for now it will give us the greatest flexibility if you donate to whatever the need. In addition, it will allow us to help the children continue their education. As you know, helping children gain a complete education is their ticket out of the poverty they were born into.

Will you provide what you can so that whatever the need may be, the children will be covered? If you will do that I predict you will feel the way Charles Dickens’ main character did when his final sentence in the book was this: *“It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done.”*

With gratitude,

David Purviance
Executive Director

Updates from the homes

The children and their caretakers are struggling right now, as so many around the world are. The government mandated that if the children had a relative they could stay with, they must temporarily live with them. As restrictions from each state are lifted, children are starting to come back or will return soon.

What's the overall situation in India?

Shobha Rani, administrator at Balavikasita in Telangana reports:

“The central government has left the discretion of opening educational institutions to the state governments. The state governments are not able to make any decision as the COVID cases are still growing and people are still afraid of going outside. Adding to this, there are heavy rainfalls and floods. It is very chaotic right now with very limited COVID treatment hospitals. Everything is in a mess.

“The government is willing to start schools but is asking parents to give hand written declaration about their willingness to send their children to school at their own risk. The local transport system has also not resumed its services so everything is still in a big confused state.

“Meanwhile all the schools and colleges have started online classes and everyone is struggling to buy PCs and Android phones so that their children can attend classes. Even primary grade students have started online classes.

“I will keep giving updates about the situation and government decisions regarding returning of children to the homes. As online classes have started those children who do not have any facility for Android phone, PC or TV have started returning to Balavikasita homes now. We will slowly bring them all back very soon.”

Have the children and administrators stayed healthy?

The administrator who oversees all the Sacred Heart homes around India said that some of the sisters in Tamil Nadu got coronavirus, but they are all well now. Sister Lumina from Nirmala Matha Home, who contracted coronavirus wrote:

“With God's grace, I have recovered from this cruel illness [COVID]. I was hospitalized for more than 60 days. It was hard and tough to stay alone. Doctors did not allow any sisters to stay with me in the hospital. Sorry for my absence these days. I will continue my work. Some of the students came back to our home who stayed at their relative's house. Thank you!”

Sister Suvartha from Sister Seline's Memorial Home for Children in Andhra Pradesh reported:

“We did get a scare with one of the children, Balla. Balla has HIV and was visiting relatives when the India coronavirus lockdown was put in place so she could not return to the home. Just recently she was allowed to come back to the orphanage and she was put in quarantine from the other children. Unfortunately, she tested positive for COVID, and she was admitted to the hospital. She did not have any symptoms luckily. Children with HIV are much more vulnerable to contracting illnesses. The rest of the staff and children tested negative, but the home was put on quarantine for 14 days.”

Naturally when we received this email from Sister Suvartha, we were very concerned. Two days later we received another email from her:

“We are glad to inform you that the COVID test result for Balla is NEGATIVE. She is given permission to come home and to be in home quarantine for one more week. Yesterday evening, I brought her to the home. Thank you for the prayers. All children are taking sufficient care and precautions.”

To our knowledge, the children who stayed in the orphanages have remained healthy. We will update you with reports as all the children return.



World's Children

Annual Campaign 2020

October 2020

Whatever the Need

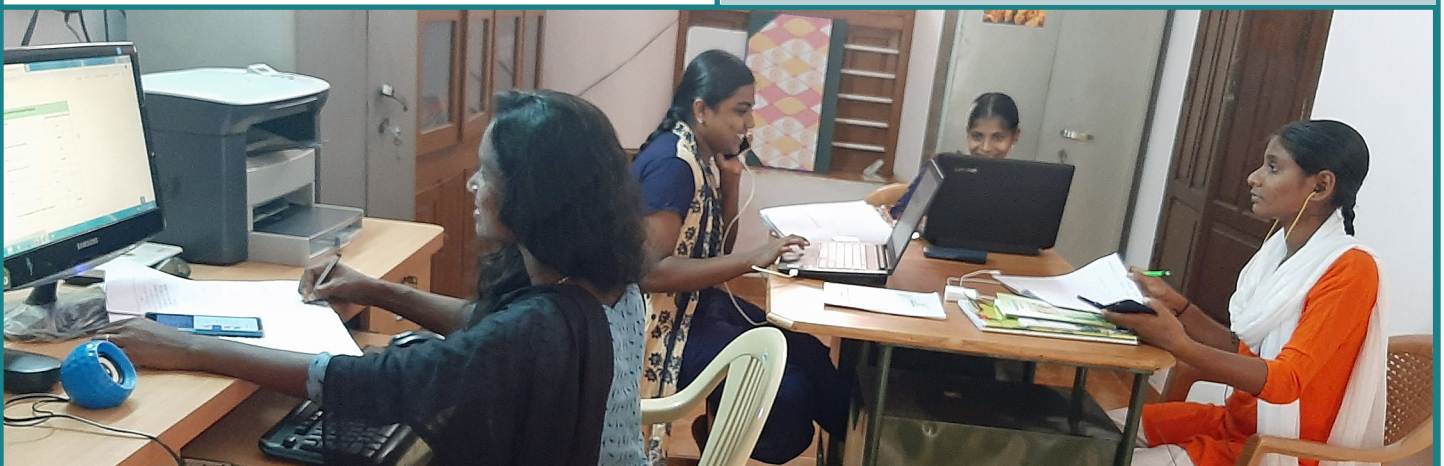


This girl (left) has just collected eggplant from the children's home garden (above). Growing food has become a necessity for some of our homes.



Bethel Orphanage and Raichur Girls' Hostel have asked for water buffaloes to provide milk for the children.

Because of the coronavirus pandemic, our children and their caretakers are facing more uncertainty. But in the next few weeks all the children who have been staying with relatives are expected to return to the children's homes. The orphanage administrators do not yet know their greatest needs, so we have created a special campaign called "Whatever the Need." So far we have had requests for everything from water buffalo to computers for remote learning.



Some of the children are living in the orphanages and some are temporarily living with relatives. All are remote learning. These girls are working on their schoolwork at a children's home WC supports in Bihar, India.

A day in the life of a college student during COVID



Muthu is one of our scholarship students who is currently living with relatives. She has a sponsor and she describes the current circumstances for our college scholars very well.

“We are all happy, safe and sound. Our sisters have been encouraging and guiding us over the phone.

“I have been attending online classes. We are missing our home, college, and our professors and the enjoyment. We do not know when the college will be opened.

“Here in our village people are started to go for work for their daily needs. But many do not have jobs because of transportation. People are waiting for the normal situation.” — Muthu

We have 41 students like Esther and Aji who need our help to go to college



Esther BSc Nursing, 2024

Esther is a true orphan and she has three sisters. She has lived at St. Anthony's Orphanage for 9 years, but she is not sponsored. One of her sisters has a scholarship.

When Esther finishes her degree, she wants to find a job in a hospital.

“I have no one in my family to help me so I need your financial assistance.” — Esther



Aji Mechanical Engineering, 2022

Aji and his two brothers were neglected and finally abandoned by their parents. He lived at St. Anthony's for 10 years but was not sponsored. Aji started his college program, but almost had to drop out from lack of funds. Luckily the sisters helped him to stay in school.

“My goal in life is to find a job in the IT field and come up in my life.”— Aji

Though the times are daunting, please give if you can. Together we can provide whatever the need, so the children will be cared for, healthy and educated.