

ST. JOSEPH'S LEPROSY PATIENTS SOCIETY, KALASAPAKKAM
ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT FOR 2019 – 2020

As in the previous years, the organizers of St. Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society have undertaken activities and programs in consonance with the stipulated objectives of the organization. As it was the dream by Rev. Fr. Schlooz, SDB & Mr. P. John the founders of the organization, over the years St. Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society has become an organization that is totally devoted to look after the multifarious needs of persons affected by leprosy and their family members in the villages of Kalasapakkam block in Thiruvannamalai district in Tamilnadu State, India. The organizers of St. Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society have taken extra care to function very close to the stipulated vision of the organization that reads as, "Transformation of communities that would accept leprosy as any other disease and treat persons affected by leprosy and their families on equal footing with others in communities".

St. Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society has been trying its level best for realization of the above-mentioned vision by undertaking training, education and awareness programs for community groups aimed to spell out misinformation and stigma attached to the disease and to provide correct information about all aspects of the disease. In addition to this, St. Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society has been also undertaking projects and activities on awareness creation, skill development, capacity building, leadership development, self-help promotion etc. With the prevalence and incidence rates of leprosy coming down St. Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society has now extended its activities to help also persons suffering from general disabilities, mental retardation and cerebral palsied.

As in the previous years, Sitaram Jindal Foundation has been rendering monetary help to St. Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society to carry out some charitable activities. St. Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society takes this opportunity to record its sincere and heartfelt thanks to Dr. Rainer Fueg (Basler Leprahilfe) for its financial support to St. Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society in carrying out the charitable activities. St. Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society takes this opportunity to record here its heartfelt thanks to the state government for enabling the organization to continue to organize the Special School for the mentally retarded and cerebral palsied children.

Ongoing activities of St. Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society

- St. Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society continues to participate in the health and health education activities organized by government departments in the service area villages of St. Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society in Kalasapakkam Block.
- St. Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society continues to motivate leprosy infected persons during the period to continue the full course of treatment
- St. Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society has continued to organize health education programs for prevention leprosy, Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS
- St. Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society has also organized awareness education in the principles, practices and maintenance of self-help and self-help groups.

Promotion of higher education

With the realization that providing for the higher education/professional education is the best investment that can be done for children that belong to poorer families affected by leprosy and other disabilities St. Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society has continued meeting the expenses in relation to the cost of books, notebooks and other stationeries, dress materials etc of 167 children in the service area villages of St. Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society.

St. Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society had also paid the tuition fees of 12 children who are in higher standards. St. Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society has also met the expenses of cosmetics, casual wear, and inner wear of 23 children who are children from the under-the-poverty line families.

Through the efforts of St. Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society, 9 children were helped to secured government scholarships.

Maintenance Grant for the disabled

St. Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society has helped 4 persons affected by leprosy, and 3 disabled persons to secure government maintenance grant.

Charity related activities

- As in the past, St.Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society during this year has distributed rice for the entire year freely to 42 absolutely poor families of leprosy affected and other disable families. The total expense incurred on this count is 198,986 rupees.
- Medical expenses amounting to rupees 114,928 were extended to 143 persons that included 87 women. But for St.Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society, most of them wouldn't have availed timely medical treatment for want of money.
- MCR footwear was made available to 264 persons that involved a total expenditure of rupees 105650 rupees.

Leprosy Awareness Medical Camps

- During the year 2019-2020, St.Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society had organized "One day Leprosy Awareness Medical Camps" in 58 villages that involved an expenditure of 145485 rupees. These camps included creation of awareness programs, in-depth group education for self-help groups of women and youth groups and school groups, rallies making use of school children and members of self-help groups of women.
- Main points taken up for discussion were causation, early symptoms, availability of modern medicines to cure the disease, wrong ideas and notions concerning leprosy, complications of the disease, actions need to be carried out for eradication of leprosy etc.
- The day's program ended with a public meetings and mass education program.

Tree Plantation

Tree Plantation & Environment Awareness Programs were organized in 9 villages of the service area of St.Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society. Processions by school children were organized before the planting of seedlings in public places. Formal and informal leaders and members of self-help groups of women from the villages participated in these programs. Education programs were organized for the school going children, as it was felt that any knowledge given to them would have permanent results. The subject matter included the following:

- Stop cutting trees
- Treat water as a scarce resource and preserve its cleanliness

- Keep your environment clean
- Grow more trees
- Help in preserving the Eco System

Special School for the mentally retarded children

- Number of children benefiting through this program 37. They include children affected by mental retardation and cerebral palsy and some disabled children.
- 4 qualified Special Teachers work in this program and are giving care and attention for the children.
- The program is receiving help from the government.

Vazhi Kattum Thittam (Government of India)

- St.Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society continues to work with the government through the implementation of this program that is described as the "Vazhi Kattum Thittam" in Tamil language – its English equivalent is "a program that shows the way".
- Tamilnadu government is paying the salaries of 45 field staffs and a Project Coordinator.
- Activities include - enabling the differently abled to access facilities and schemes provided by the government; regular home visits of all families in their respective villages.
- A good data base of the differently abled people has been developed.

Concluding remarks

The above-mentioned programs have been undertaken to the utmost satisfaction of the beneficiaries and the committee members and staffs of St.Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society. St.Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society is fully satisfied about the quality of work and about the dedication that has been shown by the committee members and staffs in executing the works. It is befitting for St.Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society to take this opportunity to once again thank all those who had extended help to St.Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society to implement the above-mentioned activities. St.Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society wishes to express its sincere thanks to the staffs of the organization for doing their level best in implementing the activities. St.Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society also wishes to records its thanks to all the formal and informal leaders, leaders and members of self-help groups of women, teachers and children in the area schools and youth groups in the villages for extending cooperation and support to St.Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society' staffs and program.