

# FRIENDS

Newsletter of the Ragpickers Education & Development Scheme (REDS) Bangalore, India  
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## ***The Wave that Devastated***

The Tsunami wave which swept across South India on the morning of December 26<sup>th</sup>, left in its path devastation and destruction covering Coastal Andhra Pradesh, Chennai, Nagapattanam, Caddalore, Pondicherry, Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Kanyakumari. In India alone over 1 lakh people lost their lives and property worth cores was destroyed.

What was worse was the plight of the survivors, with everything they had lost to the deadly tsunami; they literally had to start from starch. With aid pouring in from all over the world to assist the victims of this natural disaster, the Marianist Family too did their bit to help some of the families.

Contribution came from;

- REDS Deepahalli (Rs.10,000/-)
- REDS Bangalore (Rs. 7,020/-),
- Dr. Rani (Rs. 1,000/-)
- Bro. Mark Ormond, SM (Rs. 23,980/-).

The Families who were assisted in making a fresh start were;

- Sr. Shanti's family who lost everything (Rs. 8,000/-)
- Sr. Kebin's family who lost everything (Rs.5,000/-)
- Sr. Jancy's family, there are 7 children in the family and they lost their father (Rs. 14,000/-)
- Sr. Queen's family who lost their house (Rs. 2,000)
- Mr. Baskar, residing at Nagarkoil (Rs. 8,000/-)
- Mrs. Prema, residing at Nagakovil (Rs. 5,000/-)

We empathize with these families and the thousands more who have lost family, friends and loved ones to this disaster. We pray that God gives them the courage and determination to pick up the broken pieces of their lives and start afresh.

## ***"Chaminade Trophy" - Annual Football***

Like every year REDS – Skill Training Center organized the Annual Football Tournament. The event was held on 2<sup>nd</sup> October '04 with BOSCO, APSA, YMCA and two teams from REDS – STC participating.

Rains on the previous day did not deter the enthusiasm of the boys, preparations for the day was taking place with great vigor. 250 boys between the age groups of 15 – 19 yrs participated. The day began at 9.00am with the first round of matches. Although the games was a little rough, it was a nice to see boys who have spent most of the childhood days on the streets of Bangalore play with discipline and respect for each other.

Lunch was a memorable occasion. Boys from the participating organization sat together and shared a meal like one big family. The rain played spoils sport in the afternoon but it did nothing to dampen the boy's spirit in the game; they continued to play in the downpour. The ground was slippery and the water on the field did not allow the ball to move, yet the boys' continued.

YMCA and REDS –STC team A had to try their might in the final match for the coveted trophy. The spirit of the boys was much appreciated and the staff braved the rains and stayed out to cheer the two teams. It was a difficult and interesting match but the day belonged to the boys from the REDS –STC team A. They walked away with the trophy.

The day ended with the prize distribution. The chief guests for the event were Bro. Tom Oles, SM and Bro. Vijay Minj, SM. They gave away the Trophies and medals to the winning team and the runners up. The boys departed keeping in mind that, “it’s not the victory but the fight, not to have won but to have fought well and fought justly.” We take this opportunity to thank Bro. Darwin, SM – Executive Director of REDS, staff and friends of the organization for their support in organizing the event and their participation to make the event successful.

## *Children’s Day – 14<sup>th</sup>*

**November 14<sup>th</sup>** was a day to be remembered by all REDS. Together with ‘Children’s Day’ we also celebrated ‘25 years’ of REDS service to the ragpicking children and their families. This year we had children from REDS – Bangalore as well as the Skill Training Center participating in the ‘Makkala Mela’ that was organized at Deepahalli. It was a day of fun and frolic for the children in an attempt to give them a glimpse of childhood they have lost for no fault of theirs.

The day began with registration and breakfast being served for the children. 720 children from the areas and skill training center participated. The children were welcomed with badges given to each of them.

The Inaugural event began with Ms. Prema Manthesh welcoming the chief guest , Mr. Eshwara Prasad and the other guests of honour for the day. The event began with a prayer song by children of L.R. Nagar. She then called upon Mr. Eshwara Prasad, Asst. Commissioner of Police together with Fr. Ignase Arulappen, Bro. Sukrith, Fr. Pragasam, Fr. Santosh Tudu, and Bro. Darwin to light the lamp, this signified not only the inauguration of the ‘Children’s Mela’ but also commemorated ‘25 years of dedicated service’.

Ms. Prema Manthesh then presented the history of REDS and the development of REDS into a holistic program for children involved in waste recycling in the last 25 years of its existence. She then called upon the chief guest Mr. Eshwara Prasad to address the children. He captivated the children and staff with his impressive speech and meaning full songs. He said that he was pleased to be invited by an organization like REDS which has strived for 25 years working with the downtrodden to help them come up in life. He went on to say that his work did not permit him to give much time for such activities and he was grateful to the management of REDS for giving him this opportunity to be involved in this program. His message to the children about life and the right way to live was very meaningful, especially since he conveyed what he wanted to say through his songs, which was very much appreciated by all. Mr. Prasad said that though he was not sure of how he would be able to help the program he assured us of his solidarity and prayers and would definitely return to meet with the children to understand their difficulties and sorrows.

Fr. Ignase speaking to the children said there were no words to describe the message that Mr. Prasad has given through the songs. He also said that he was happy to see so many children gathered to celebrated this day and wished them the very best and asked them to enjoy the day since it was ‘their day.’ The inaugural ceremony ended with Mr. Jaypaul thanking the chief guest and the other present on the dais.

This was followed by a cultural program where children from L.R. Nagar and Madiwala put up group dances and songs. The Children were given buns and cakes for breakfast which were provided by Koshy’s Bakery and MICO. The day continued with a ‘Magic Show’ by Mr. Bosco Anthony. The children were mesmerized by his tricks and watched with much enthusiasm.

The scorching sun and the excitement made the children tired but their spirits were high again after they were given a nourishing drink of Boost and Horlick’s which was sponsored by Ranganathan Stores - Hebbagodi. At 1.30 pm the children were given lunch.

The last event for the day was what they were all eagerly waiting for – the orchestra. They sang the local hit songs to which the children danced. The day ended at 4.00 pm with gifts and snacks given by MICO and Little Sisters of the Poor being distributed to all the children who participated in the event.

We take this opportunity to thank the Brothers of Foustino Community – Deepahalli, Brothers of Scholasticate Community - Deepahalli, Brothers of St. Joseph's Community – Deepahalli, Aspirants from the Marianist Society, Novices from Augustine Missionary Sisters, MSW students of Bangalore University and Ganga Cauvery Institute and our NFE and Play school teachers who helped with the program

## ***Christmas***

Christmas was a time of joy and sharing. On 12<sup>th</sup> December Jyothi Nivas College and on 18<sup>th</sup> December Bishop Cotton Boy's School invited our children for lunch. 500 children participated in this program. At both places the message of Christmas was shared with the children. Games and cultural programs were organized for them. The day ended with lunch for the children. The children enjoyed themselves and had a lot of fun.

On 19<sup>th</sup> December a get-together was organized for the children from REDS who had been admitted to school. Ms. Anu one of the members of the Marianist Lay family and her friends organized a Christmas party for the children. 25 children participated in the games and cultural programs that were held. Ms. Anu sponsored snacks and gifts for the children.

Christmas get-together was held on 23<sup>rd</sup> December for the boys of REDS – STC. Fr. Pragasam shared with the staff and children the Christmas Message and distributed gifts. Cultural events were organized and the day ended with lunch.



At Ranchi children at the different center gathered to celebrate Christmas on different days. Some of the center children were even invited by the local schools. The month was filled with happiness in celebrating the birth of the Lord. Staff at Bangalore gathered on 23<sup>rd</sup> December to celebrate this occasion. Fr. Iggi and Fr. Pragasam shared with the staff and children the Christmas Message and distributed gifts and a fellowship meal was organized.

## ***News in Brief***

### **REDS – BANGALORE**

With heavy hearts staff of REDS bid farewell to Bro. Joseph Darwin at a get-together which was organized on 28<sup>th</sup> December '04. We take this opportunity to thank him for his encouragement and support and wish him all the best. We are also happy to say that Fr. Pragasam who has been associated with REDS is now the Executive Director; we look forward to working with him.

As planned tuitions are being conducted for the children who are being sponsored by REDS. 25 children attend tuitions regularly. Apart from the children who are sponsored other children too come for tuitions. The need to have a clear-cut program for the youth in the areas was strongly felt by the street staff, and discussions are on to design detailed program for this group.

### **REDS – SKILL TRAINING CENTRE**

Children from the center too participated in the Christmas program organized by Bishop Cotton School. On 21<sup>st</sup> December some of the children and staff organized a Christmas celebration for the inmates of the Center for the Mentally Challenged managed by the State Government. It was a memorable day both for the inmates as well as the children. Cultural programs were put up to entertain the inmates, they were also given snacks.

### **REDS – RANCHI**

The severe drop in temperature was a cumbersome hindrance in conducting activities at the centers. Centers were closed from 23<sup>rd</sup> December '04 to 2<sup>nd</sup> January '05. All center organized parents meeting in view of the 2<sup>nd</sup>

terminal examinations that were held in the month of December. With the tremendous support of the parents preparation for the new center at Mousibari is coming along just fine and a new kitchen is being built at the Hatia center.

### ***Calendar of Events - Bangalore***

...October '04

- 10<sup>th</sup> Oct Solid Waste Management Meeting – ISWM
- 14<sup>th</sup> Oct Program on 'drug abuse' at NIMHANS – Neelasandra children.
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Oct 'Children's Fest' – Christ Compassion Trust
- 25<sup>th</sup> Oct Validictory Program of the one month residential camp for children - Sathi

...November '04

- 14<sup>th</sup> Nov Children's Day Program – Deepahalli
- 19<sup>th</sup> Nov Visit to museum & planetarium – MSV
- 20<sup>th</sup> Nov Children's Day Program - YMCA
- 25<sup>th</sup> Nov 'Urban Health Care' – Health check up for children
- 30<sup>th</sup> Nov Sport Meet for Children on the street - YMCA

...December '04

- 5<sup>th</sup> Dec Christmas program for children at Madiwala organized for brother of the OMI Seminary
- 7<sup>th</sup> Dec Meeting with area staff to plan for the intervention program for 'young adults' in the area
- 8<sup>th</sup> Dec Inauguration of the 'Gandhi Center' at L.R. Nagar by Bro. Darwin
- 8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> Dec Awareness program on 'Health issues' organized by CHC for SHG member at Madiwala
- 10<sup>th</sup> Dec Rally on in occasion of Human Rights Day organized by Paraspara
- 12<sup>th</sup> Dec Christmas program organized by Jyothi Nivas College – Children from L.R.Nagar participated.
- 19<sup>th</sup> Dec Christmas program organized by Ms. Anu for children attending tuitions at L.R. Nagar
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec Christmas program for Play School Teachers  
  
Christmas message for residents of the Govt. Home for Mentally Challenged Children by Fr. Tony Attukaran and Brothers at Deepahalli
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Dec Christmas program for Staff and SWM workers
- 28<sup>th</sup> Dec Staff bid farewell to Bro. Darwin

Staff at REDS wish you the very best for  
the New Year!