



Grace & Peace Mission to Orissa

January 2015 Newsletter

Dear Friends of GPMO,

As 2015 gets underway, we would like to pause and recap the work the Lord has accomplished this past year.

2014 began with a trip to Nanda Orphanage in the Kandhamal District of India. Our travels in and around the area were curtailed due to security reasons, but God's plans began to unfold as the week progressed. One of our main goals was to bring two water purification systems with us and install them where needed most. Much to our surprise, the well at Nanda tested completely clear, so we were able to install one system at a local Hindu high school in the town of G.Udayagiri. They were most grateful for the gift, and we pray that it will be a testament to the love of Jesus Christ.



A larger goal for the Orphanage has been to move toward sustainability. One way to do this is by better developing the agricultural possibilities at Nanda. Learning what to plant and how to plant, how to care for the gardens, utilizing and cultivating more available acreage, and increasing the yield, are ways to do that. It might also allow Nanda to sell extra vegetables in the market in the local town. A decision was made to bring in a colleague from a neighboring state who not only ran an orphanage, but was experienced in vegetable and fruit gardening. The Rev. Dr. Manamohan Panda came to Nanda several months after our trip and shared his experiences and expertise in agriculture to jumpstart the program. The staff at Nanda now has goals of harvesting three planting seasons and have cultivated another two acres.

On previous trips to the Nanda campus, we noticed the children eat their meals outside with no shelter to protect them in inclement weather. With a little more time on our hands, a decision was made to build a covered pavilion so the children could eat their meals sheltered from the rain and sun. With the children and staff pitching in together, phase one of the pavilion was completed and ready for use by the time we departed. Phase two now includes a concrete floor and retaining wall.

We had two very unusual experiences while in India. Twice we were invited into Hindu homes which would be highly unlikely as Christians. We were invited and graciously welcomed into a Hindu home during a three-day wedding celebration! A delicious Indian meal was served while seated on a rooftop dining area overlooking the city. Before we left, we were asked us to pray for their daughter, who was an engineering graduate searching for a job. What privilege it was to be asked, as Christians, to pray in Jesus name for their daughter! We were also invited to the home of childhood friend of Saima Naik Tandi. The gentleman and his wife were Brahmin Hindus, the highest class in India. They not only welcomed us in, but shared tea and pastries. They too asked if we would pray for them and for their families, which was a testament to the power of the love of Jesus!



Due to a restricted travel schedule we were not able to visit the tribal people in Belghar, but we were able to send needed supplies such as large cooking pots and utensils, food, medicine, and greetings in the name of Christ.

As always, our visit to the Leper village was very meaningful. We worshiped together, served a meal and offered gifts of food and clothing. In many ways the people afflicted with leprosy and their families still feel “untouchable” and unloved. During our time of worship, Reverend Hemant Tandi made a symbolic gesture of exchanging clothing with one of the older men in the village. This gesture I believe touched us as much as anything we experienced while in India. We are all made in the image of God and called to love and care for our neighbor...even halfway around the world!

The Spirit is moving during each visit to Nanda, stirring within us a sense of the ways He wants us to move. Many of the children had skin infections while we were visiting. We were able to get 17 children to a doctor and get medications for the infections. Our eyes were opened to the need for some way to monitor the children on a regular basis for things that could be easily missed in the day-to-day business of caring for 135 active children! We’ve begun discussions about setting up monthly checks of basic health needs, as well as recording height and weight, immunizations, and of course, symptoms of more serious diseases. This may be done by staff and/or a nurse, if one can be found.

In September of 2014, one of the young boys was found to have TB. Pilata, was very, very sick by the time he was diagnosed. Fortunately, thanks to some very kind donors, we were able to get him to a hospital to be treated. He is back at Nanda and has much improved health. Praise God! We hope this system of monitoring will prevent these types of serious illness and generally improve the children’s health.

We continue to be challenged by how and where to direct the older children as they transition to young adulthood. Many have been at the orphanage since they were quite young, and life at Nanda is really all they know. For some of these students, learning a skilled trade such as Welding or Sewing would greatly increase their opportunities to adequately care for themselves and a future family. We continue to look for ways to accomplish this training to better prepare these kids for life outside Nanda. For other students, further education may be the answer. We are excited to implement a Scholarship program designed to help those students who have shown academic competency and have demonstrated leadership during their time at Nanda. The scholarship program is designed so that once a student has successfully completed his/her advanced schooling, they will “pay it forward” to another student by contributing 10% of their earnings back to the scholarship fund for five years. In this way students are invested in their education and help support further opportunities for other children at Nanda. We currently have two students enrolled in a nursing curriculum and one in engineering.

In 2015 we hope to send another team back to India. Prayerfully consider if you might be interested in being part of the 2015 team. If so, please contact Graham Upton in person or by using the “Contact Us” link on the GPMO website: www.gpmoindia.org

We continue to look for God’s leading as we care “for the least of these” in India. We would covet your prayers for direction and resources to accomplish that which God has called us to do.

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