



KARUNA

Stories of humble humanitarian works by the Catholic Church of Gujarat during COVID-19

Blessed by the Bishops of Gujarat and Issued by Fr. Vinayak Jadav, Spokesperson, Catholic Church-Gujarat State.

23 May 2020

Volume : 11

Design : DHARMESH VAGHELA

Pope Francis shares his vision for Covid-19 aftermath

Pope Francis describes the present moment as a “propitious time” to be open to the Spirit, who can “inspire us with a new imagination of what is possible.”

“We cannot allow ourselves to write the present and future history by turning our backs on the suffering of so many people,” he says. Quoting the book of Genesis, he writes that God himself is asking us, “Where is your brother?” He expressed the hope that our response would be marked by “hope, faith and charity.”

Pope Francis expresses the hope that, in the light of the resurrection, “we would



encounter the necessary antibodies of justice, charity and solidarity” to change the world. He calls for the building of “a civilization of love,” which he described as “a civilization of hope,” contrary to one marked by “anguish and fear, sadness and discouragement, passivity and tiredness.” This civilization “has to be built daily” and requires “the commitment of everyone.” Says Holy Father.

(Courtesy : Vida Nueva, the Spanish religious weekly)

Our Lady of Pillar Hospital (OLPH), Sanand turns into COVID Care Centre

Due to the spread of Corona virus and Covid-19, the available government facilities are not enough to cope up with. Gujarat is on alert with second highest number of Covid-19 patients in the country. To control the virus and to take care of the patients, the government is taking help of private hospitals turning these well-equipped hospitals into Dedicated COVID Care Centers (DCCC). Our Lady of Pillar Hospital, Sanand, near Ahmedabad is one such centre. Through an official government circular dated 14th May 2020, the Collector and District Magistrate of Ahmedabad Shri K. K. Nirala (IAS) declared OLPH as Dedicated COVID Care



Centre (DCCC). It is heartening to note that after Christ Hospital of Rajkot, Our Lady of Pillar Hospital, Sanand has become second Catholic hospital in the state to help the state authorities to combat Corona pandemic.

- By Dr. Sr. Lucy Joseph

Director – Our Lady of Pillar Hospital, Sanand

Our Lady of Pillar Hospital (OLPH) reaches out to children



The Multi Speciality Our Lady of Pillar Hospital is giving services as a Dedicated COVID Care Centre. In the midst of this Corona pandemic, the Sisters and the staff of OLPH are at the side of the children with medical assistance, fruits and medical kits. Under the Malnutrition Programme for the villages; medicine kits, tonic, syrup, fruits and biscuits were distributed in Chekhala

village, near Sanand. With the support of the local village panchayat and the Sarpanch of Chekhla, the Sisters conducted free checkups of the children between the age of 0 to 15 years. The medicines and other things were given free of cost to the needy children. They also distributed free masks to the villagers. The OLP Hospital is planning their next medical camp for the pregnant women in the nearby villages.

- By Dr. Sr. Lucy Joseph

Director – Our Lady of Pillar Hospital, Sanand



When I was hungry you gave me to eat : MATRUCHAYA does it!

Due to lockdown and no work, two tribal settlements were in deep trouble. As they were not getting daily odd jobs, they got no income too and consequently no food! Even the children did not get a decent meal a day. When MATRUCHAYA sisters came



to know the plight of these poor through their animators, the Sisters immediately responded. They requested their remedial class teachers to cook food for the poor and hungry. The raw materials were provided by Matruchaya. The staff prepared the meal which was served to the needy.



The next day MATRUCHAYA Sisters distributed more than 100 ration kits to the villagers of Verasa. After an initial survey, proper ration kits were distributed. The regulation of social distancing was

well maintained during distribution.

- By Vijay Macwan

A help not so meagre from Mehmdavad

Mehmdavad is a small mission station about 30 kilometers from Ahmedabad. The Priests of St. Alex's Parish and Sisters of St. Anne's Convent helped the poor and the needy of nearby villages. They did the survey of the villages and assessed the need. After that they procured the daily needed food grains and other provisions and prepared ration kits for families. These ration kits worth Rs. 40,000/- were distributed to 60 families of different villages around Mehmdavad.

-By Fr. Xavier Amirtham

Parish Priest



The Society of Vincent De Paul in the footsteps of founder Bl. Frederic Ozanam

The Conferences from Ankleshwar to Gandhinagar, under CC Ahmedabad have risen to the occasion and come forward for the works of charity. They were able to manage with their available funds helping numerous needy families. In March 2020 they helped 524 Families which amounted to Rs. 2, 44,921/- In April 2020 they helped 1655 Families which amounted to Rs. 4,73,667/- Total 2179 families were supported worth of which was Rs. 7,18, 588/- The help consisted of food kits, medicines, vegetables, edible oil, other essential commodities, etc. One of their Conferences- St. Jude Conference, Thaltej, Ahmedabad has provided lunch to 400 people. In addition to the above, the Central Council of Ahmedabad has donated Rs. 11,000/- to the Balasinor Parish on receiving request from them.

By Cyril Macwan (Secretary, CC, Ahmedabad)

SSVP – Chavdapura

Conference of St. Vincent De Paul, Chavdapura, Jitodia, Anand helped 111 families with essential items of worth Rs. 61,000/-

-By Dawood Parmar (President SSVP-Chavdapura)

SSVP – Bochasan

St. Ignatius Conference, SSVP Bochasan is regularly helping the poor and the needy. During the Corona pandemic, they have distributed food grains to the needy families.

-By Alfonse Francis Xavier - Nadiad



Don Bosco Snehalaya, Vadodara

The community of Don Bosco Snehalaya, Vadodara reached out to around 55 families/households, approximately 275 persons on 07 May 2020, distributing groceries and toiletries as part of the relief work. Some of the senior boys of Snehalaya helped in the packing and distribution. Most of these families were from slums in and around the Snehalaya campus vicinity. The poor families were identified and coupons were distributed with the specific



day/date. The venue for distribution was at the Snehalaya main gate. This was entirely an initiative of the Salesian community. Previously the Salesians at Snehalaya had reached out to 400 households in the slums of Vishwamitri. This was through the initiative of the Don Bosco Development Society, Mumbai [DBDS – Mumbai].

-By Fr. Sunil Pinto sdb



DRISTI of Don Bosco, Kapadvanj fulfills its vision

DRISTI Don Bosco Kapadvanj assessed the situation of financial contributions and approached the Self Help Groups [SHGs] in 65 village of Kapadvanj Block in Kheda District. In a spectacular response, DRISTI received Rs. 65,000/- cash, 1500kg wheat, 100kg bajri, 30kg sugar, 50kg rice. The generosity 'of the people, by the people, for the people' is an eye-opener and a rewarding result of the animating and mentoring of DRISTI.

Phase 03 helped 148 most needy poor, with each kit containing 7kg wheat, 3kg rice, 500gm toovar dal, 500gm



moog, 500gm cooking oil, 2kg sugar, 1pkt salt, 1pkt tea powder, 1pkt chilli powder, 1pkt turmeric powder, 1pkt garam masala, 1 bathing soap, and 5 washing soaps. Personally prepared by the Director of Amrutdhara, with the help of three youth volunteers from the villages and with DRISTI staff

DRISTI had an encouraging experience in Hadmatia village where the SHG group had promised 50kg wheat, but upon arrival, the villagers filled the entire jeep with wheat sacks, amounting to more than 150 kgs.

Many of the

SHGs women with other women of the village walked in the hot sun with sacks of wheat to reach out to the poorest needy. Similar experiences of the extraordinary generosity in cash and kind in many villages has enabled DRISTI to reach 740 individuals in 148 families in 32 villages of Kapadvanj Block.

- Fr. Mayank Parmar, sdb

Director – DRISTI



Don Bosco Narukot reaches out to 25 Villages

Don Bosco Narukot (Panchmahal District) had initiated its COVID-19 Relief Outreach after a survey-assessment of the villages, where its social development works have been in effect for past three decades. Having completed Phase one of the relief outreach, Phase two started, with a list of the poor yet to receive food-provisions.

Basic essentials with food-provision kits have been disbursed to 565 individuals of 133 families in 25 villages. This time the specific focus was on the impoverished migrant families in 25 villages. Funded by generous benefactors/donors and with a substantial contribution from its own resources, Don Bosco Narukot is committed to continue its outreach, until the situation eases.

The entire community - Salesians with the social outreach staff, went to the villages personally distributing the relief kits. The outreach was coordinated by Coadjutor Salesian Brother in-charge of the social development sector on behalf of the community, together with the community administrator.

-By Fr. Ajit Munis, sdb



When I was a stranger you welcomed me

As Sabarmati Samruddhi Seva Sangh (SSSS)-the Social Service Wing of Gandhinagar Archdiocese staff proceeded for COVID-19 relief work, on the way we saw many migrant workers who were on their way to their native place on foot. We talked to them, counseled them, spend some time with them and assured them. Between 12th to 19th May, SSSS have helped 27 migrants walking from Visnagar to Shimalwada on state highway. We also helped some other migrants walking on NH 48 from Ahmedabad to Uttar Pradesh, 14 migrants walking from Dehgam to Rajasthan, 4 migrants walking from Mumbai to Uttar Pradesh, 4 migrants from Porbandar to Jaipur, 2 migrants from Surat to Madhyapradesh, 3 migrants from Himatnagar to Godhra, 3 walking from Ahmedabad to Nasik, 2 migrants from Maharashtra to



Rajasthan. 12 migrants walking from Ahmedabad to Uttar Pradesh, 17 migrants from Himatnagar to Madhyapradesh, 3 migrants walking from Ahmedabad to Sihor, 58 migrants walking from Chiloda to Ratanpur and 36 migrants travelling to Tamilnadu, Kerala & Uttar Pradesh.



Apart from providing food and other essential items to the migrants returning to their hometown, SSSS continues helping other needy families too. SSSS has provided food and provisions to 52 families in Mehsana and helped 65 families with food grains in Unteshwari, near Kadi. We also provided ration kits and provisions to 100 families of widows, daily wagers of far off villages of Pahadia

and others near Modasa in Aravali district and one orphan family at Pethapur, Gandhinagar and again 06 more families of widows and migrants.

By Fr. Xavier James

Director – SSSS

Fatima Convent, Bhavnagar opens its door to migrants

One more example of Christ's teachings: When I was homeless, you opened your doors !

We all have seen how the desperate migrants walked endlessly on the highways without proper food and drink. Now since last few days the railway authorities have started Shramik Trains to reach the migrants to their destinations. Most of the places, the poor migrants wait at the road side under the scorching summer heat



for government to arrange a transport to take them to the railway stations to board the trains. On 8th May around 350



migrant workers working at Alang Ship Breaking Yard and some other industrial areas of Bhavnagar were to take the afternoon train to Uttar Pradesh. Fatima Convent, Merubaug, Bhavnagar hosted such people from morning 6 am to noon 1 pm after which they were taken to the railway station by buses for their onward journey to Gorakhpur, UP. The Bhavnagar Municipality did a commendable job by arranging for the necessary facilities. The sisters of Fatima Convent took personal care of these migrants and also provided fruits and biscuits for their train journey.

-By Sr. Maggie CCV

An exemplary family

A family of St. Xavier's Parish Navrangpura, Ahmedabad has provided homemade food to 40 families for last one month. It still wants to do more. The present circumstances may not allow that; but the family is determined to do more after the lockdown.

May such examples continue to inspire us, deepen our trust in humanity and remind us that God is still at work.

By Fr. Jose Panadan

Parish Priest – St. Xavier's, Navrangpura

Little Daughters of St. Francis Xavier, Hingoria

When the Corona virus makes life extremely difficult, especially for the poor and marginalized, there are people who make it easier for us. Due to lockdown, there were many who were deprived of their basic needs. The Little Daughters of St. Francis Xavier are helping such families from different villages in and around their convents especially Hingoria. The LDFX sisters of Hingoria have helped 40 such families by distributing ration kits made of essential commodities.

-By Sr. Neeru, LDFX



Sisters of Mary Immaculate, Nadiad



During the lockdown, all our religious institutes are helping the poor and the marginalized. Sisters of Mary Immaculate convent, Nadiad too distributed ration kits to the poor and needy families of the nearby areas. They have given 50 kits and are planning to continue their charitable activities in the coming days.

-By Viral Parmar (Nadiad)

Sahyog spreads its Wings of Charity

Sahyog is an NGO working for the upliftment of slum dwellers. They work among the slums of Vatva near Ahmedabad. Ever since the lockdown was imposed, Sahyog worked tirelessly, providing ration kits. Recently they have distributed 5600 masks to the community with the support from CRY organization. They also distributed food kits to 200 families.

Sahyog works systematically with proper records, data analyses and documentation. Recently, the government authorities contacted Sahyog as they wanted the data of the families who do not have ration card. Sahyog had all the data ready and provided them with necessary information. Now under the Annbrahm scheme, the slum dwellers will be provided free ration.

-By Robert David



An individual can make a difference



An individual from Khambholaj village helps few more families thus following Christ's command : Love one another as I have loved you. Few days ago he had donated ration kits to few families, now on 14th May he has distributed ration kits to 15 more families in Khambholaj village. God bless such Good Samaritans.

-By Mahesh Parmar

An Artist's way of Charity

The pandemic has indeed brought people close to one another and inspired some generous souls to help and support the needy fellow human beings. Due to lockdown, the entertainment industry too has shut down and film production has come to a standstill. Life has become difficult for the spot boys and other support staff of the industry. Hasmukh Macwan of Gandhinagar has donated his remuneration for such daily wage earners of the film industry.

- By Hasmukh Macwan



Another artist helps children



Normally, May is a month of vacation for school children. The children engage themselves in different recreational activities. Attending summer camps is the most common activity where children take part in music, art & craft, drawing, writing etc. Due to the lockdown, children have missed this fun. Viral Parmar of Nadiad, an artist himself and a photographer, saw some children getting bored. These not so fortunate children did not have proper drawing materials. Viral provided them with drawing paper and colours. The children happily brought out their inner talents on the paper. They also came out with interesting messages on how to remain safe during the pandemic.

- By Viral Parmar



Karuna is released only after we get fresh stories that are newsworthy and unique from the ones published before.
May God bless you and may you continue the good work you have begun
Karuna thanks Mr. Rajesh Christian and Mrs. Indu Rao for their support in News coordination.