



# AIKIYALAYA COMMUNITY KOTTUR



# **Sisters of St. Joseph's of Tarbes Kottur Community**

## **Aikiyalaya**

*The way of proclaiming God's word and carrying out God's deeds, begun by Jesus (cf. Lk 4:15-21)*

*He taught in the  
synagogues and was praised by everyone.  
Then Jesus went to Nazareth, where  
he had been brought up, and on the  
Sabbath he went as usual to the  
synagogue. He stood up to read the  
Scriptures and was handed the book of  
the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll  
and found the place where it is written,  
"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has chosen me to bring  
good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to  
the captives  
and recovery of sight to the blind;  
to set free the oppressed  
and announce that the time has come  
when the Lord will save his people"  
Jesus rolled up the scroll, gave it  
back to the attendant, and sat down. All  
the people in the synagogue had their eyes  
fixed on him, as he said to them, "This  
passage of scripture has come true today,  
as you heard it being read."*

"...When one starts afresh from Christ the spirituality of communion becomes a strong and solid spirituality of disciples and apostles of his Kingdom. For consecrated persons this means committing themselves in service to their brothers and sisters in whom they recognize the face of Christ. In the exercise of this apostolic mission being and doing are inseparable because the mystery of Christ constitutes the absolute base for all pastoral action. "The contribution of consecrated persons, both men and women, to evangelization is, first of all, the witness of a life given totally to God and to their brothers and sisters, imitating the Saviour who, out of love for humanity, made himself a servant". Consecrated persons do not limit themselves to giving only part of their time but rather give their whole life to participating in the mission of the church..."



## BRIEF HISTORY FROM THE YEAR 2015-2023

The great commission of Jesus to proclaim the good news to the poor following his teaching we, the sisters of Aikiyalaya community commit ourselves to proclaim Christ in the word and deed and to the mission to live and build communities of communion. We foster a spirit filled love, abounding, fraternities through ministry of teaching, healing, social work, pastel care. Thus, witnessing the joy of the gospel.

The front line ministry for **HIV patients** started in 2012 with 45 patients with HIV/AIDS. At present, we are providing nutrition supplements for 320 patients throughout the Krishnagiri district.

**Children home** began in 2017 and recognized on 05.08.2020 by the commissioner of social defence under juvenile justice (Care and Protection of Children Act, 2015 as children's home) for marginalized children, social discrimination, orphan, single parent, economically poor, school drop-outs, difficulties to study at home and abused children. We envisage supporting them to progress in education and living with moral values for the self and for the well-being of the society and environment at larger context.

**Observation home** - reflecting as an institution, neglected and delinquent juveniles are kept for few weeks or pending decision of the case. It was started by the request of the child welfare committee as a fit facilitation under section 51 of the juvenile justice (Care and Protection of Children Act 2015) from 05.08.2023 for three years. We aim to make sure that they meet the needs of children with basic care, development as a social being. We try to bring upon functions like- socialization, acculturation, sense of belongingness, propagating religious faith, moral learning and moral education.

**Hostel** - we provide shelter and food for tribal college students. It helps to pursue their education, becoming easier for them to get connected with their educational institution. We act as connecting bridge for their career development.

**Self Help Groups** - began on 20.08.2022 with 20 members in each group, namely Susaiyappar Sangam and Lourdes Madha Sangam. It plays vital role to help poor and marginalized women financially. We look up for women empowerment, economically building social capital.

**Pastoral** - We are strengthened by the Holy Spirit each time to feel the responsibility of our evangelization to reach out to the people of God through pastoral care, restoring their dignity of being the child of God and empowering them to recognize God in their Life.

In following of Christ, the spirit calls us today, to proclaim the good news of love to the world in which we live. Today we need to seek the will of God discern and have the audacity to be relevant to the vision for future. Spreading the kingdom of God's love and salvation to our wounded patients, children, parishioners and the villagers surrounding us.

This journey requires constant planning, guidance and assistance from God and from one another with zeal, commitment and with the spirit of dedication and determination.



# CONTENT

<b>People Living with HIV (PLHIV)</b>	<b>03</b>
<b>Children Care Institution</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Reception Home</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Self-Help Groups</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Summer Camps</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Pastoral</b>	<b>35</b>

## **People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV)**

Tamil Nadu is one of the states in India with high prevalence, majorly targeted with age group of 15 to 49 years old. They are affected and influenced through diverse social, economic, political and cultural aspects.

Lack of awareness, social stigma, and psycho social emotional deprivation are major challenges that PLHIV and their family members face.

State government supports by testing centres, ART centres, ICTC centres with different schemes for the better quality of living. There are also diverse programme rolled out on Non communicable diseases, maternity benefit schemes, immunization, menstrual hygiene programs, provision of Mother-Baby related kits, etc.

Most of the affected people are from the rural areas, lacking basic health facilities and awareness. Added to this, income distribution (including income inequality) affects their living due to rising poverty and unemployment or daily wage employment. As a result, unhygienic living environment also affects greatly. Lower income population are infected at disproportionately higher rate. In terms of education, and support for separate system for PLHIV, there is a need of specific observation and guidance, generally not considered.

In specific, Women Living with HIV (WLHIV) struggle and are not appreciated for education, marriage, social movements, decision making and health compared to men. They face intense rejection from family and society bringing them down in terms of economic, social, biological and reproductive aspects. They are supposed to be self-dependent by earning money and taking care of household chores.

Along with the mentioned challenges, Non-adherence to Antiretroviral therapy is an issue as there is lack of education and poor literacy rate for infected and affected people. Due to extreme discrimination, they tend to depend on low wage/ daily wages, being variable. Considering it, Government is providing them with opportunities like schemes, awareness programmes, events to indulge them and centres for the basic health facilities.

Bargur is one of the most affected areas with HIV/AIDS in Krishnagiri district where people mostly are uneducated and illiterate, travel to other parts of the state and outside for earning a living as either migrant labourers or on business, major source for getting infected. Uthangarai and Bargur blocks have been topmost under the category of number of cases reported of HIV.

Since 2012 onwards St. Joseph's Convent, Bargur have been providing nutrition supplements to 45 patients, today we are providing for 320 patients throughout the Krishnagiri district. Counselling individuals, group and family, giving them education, home visit and follow up, and work for the prevention of the disease by giving awareness programme to the villages and to the schools.

We provide varied programs under 3 Centres, covering 9 Blocks- Bargur, Krishnagiri, Hosur, Kelamangalam, Thenkanikottai, Soolagiri, Mathur, Uthangarai and Kaveripattinam.

All of them feel comfortable in approaching us and figure out any form of uncertainties and receive assistance as per need or requirement. There has been increase in number of villagers whom we provide our services. Many people come for counselling and medical guidance. All of them support each other for well-being and take conscious measures for healthier way of living.

We have been into varied activities, programmes, services for affected and infected HLAV (both men and women) since 2012. In order to bring awareness to villagers, community used to visit villages to support and guide people for Education and healthier way of living.

This is a place where young hearts, regardless of their challenges, can find inspiration and the strength to face life's hurdles. In addition to the magic of Home, we also provide vital nutritional support, ensuring that every PLHIV's health and well-being are nurtured. The power of love, friendship, togetherness, moral support, sharing their difficulties, struggles regarding their health helps to light up their life.

## **Vision**

Committed to serve and build a healthy society by supporting programmes of Nutrition, Rehabilitation, IGP activity and educating them in Life.

## **Mission**

Inspired by the Divine mandate of Jesus, we the sisters of St. Joseph of Tarbes, are taking steps towards a consecrated life, which is more incarnated and acculturated, a life to be active agents and prophets of communion where the option for the poor and the excluded is essential. This option is expressed by the choice of new apostolates, new ministries and new ways of involving ourselves in the mission, in new insertions and according to the needs of the times; those sick from AIDS, immigrants, prisoners and the marginalised.

## **Goal**

The detailed explanation on services provided for infected and affected PLHIV people. Our commitment to love is manifested through the following:

- Actively involving ourselves in medical, social and pastoral activities.
- Remaining in solidarity with the poor, the marginalized and dehumanized.
- Providing hope and restoring human rights, human dignity and fullness of life to people.
- We will extend our hospitality to all our beneficiaries, without any discrimination.

# SOCIO AND MEDICAL MINISTRY:

*“Called to bind, the wounds of the broken humanity”*

## 1. Nutrition Program

Importance of Nutritional supplement for PLHIV-

- Good Nutrition is very important for long time health and well-being. Nutrition Supplement is given to the HIV/AIDS patients once a month to sustain the immune system and to cope up with their medication.
- Body weight and strength has to be maintained.
- It replaces lost vitamins and minerals.
- Improving the function of the immune system and the body's ability to fight infection.
- Extending the period of infection to the development of the AIDS disease.
- It provides energy and stamina to be active throughout the day.

We support by providing nutritious food, medical support and counselling to the PLHIV for Hosur, Burgur, Krishnagiri and youth group every month. The spirit continued to move them to share their experience with others around them and through the services in the fields of education and caring for the sick.

Our patients lack protein and nutrition supplements in their regular meals. All the Nutritious powder and kit that community provides are bought in wholesale after proper quality check and prepare monthly nutrition mix with 19 types of grams – in total 200kg is roasted and taken to mill for grinding. Packing is done by the children and students who spend their day for this purpose.

The following are the ingredients provided in Nutrition Mix for the infected PLHIV-

S. No	Ingredients	Quantity
01	Maize	25 Kg
02	Jowar (Small solam)	2 No.
03	Millet (Kambu)	25 Kg
04	Wheat	25 Kg
05	Ragi	25 Kg
06	Rice	25 Kg
07	Balck Gram	6 Kg
08	Red Gram	6 Kg
09	Brown Channa	6 Kg
10	Groundnut	6 Kg
11	Horse Gram	6 Kg
12	Green Gram	6 Kg
13	Toor Dal	6 Kg
14	Barli Rice	2 Kg
15	Sago (Soga)	2 Kg
16	Fried Gram	4 Kg
17	Channa Dal	4 Kg
18	Cardamom	500 grams
19	Dry Ginger	500 grams

The following are the Items provided in Nutrition Kit -

S. No.	Items	Quantity
01	Nutrition Mix	1 Kg
02	Channa Dal	1/2 Kg
03	Ragi Powder	1 Kg
04	Red Gram	1/2 Kg
05	Food	-

The following are the Schedule of Provisioning nutritional supplement to PLHIV of different centre-

Name of Distribution Centre	Number of People	Distribution every month
Hosur	75	2nd Saturday
Bargur	100	2nd Sunday
Krishnagiri	85	3rd Sunday
Youth Group	60	4th Sunday

We provide varied programs under 3 Centres, covering 9 Blocks in Bargur, Krishnagiri, Hosur, Kelamangalam, Thenkanikottai, Soolagiri, Mathur, Uthangarai and Kaveripattinam.



Awareness program related to Nutritional supplements



Nutrition Kit distribution



## 2. Awareness Program

- Medical care to the sick and elderly in their homes.
- Medical support to HIV / Aids and poor in the locality.
- Assisting the dying patients.
- Counselling and moral value education through house visit, personal visit and through camps and training.
- Adherence monitoring.



Gathering in Hosur



Session with Father



Distribution of Tailoring machine for PLHIV



Awareness program on Menstrual health



Construction of House for one of our patient (Girija)

The following are the amount received and spent for the welfare services provided -

**Amount Received from sisters of St. Joseph of Tarbes  
Jeevandhara Trust**

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Years</b>	<b>Amount</b>
01	2016-2017	3,65,000.00
02	2017-2018	4,45,000.00
03	2018-2019	4,40,000.00
04	2019-2020	4,15,000.00
05	2020-2021	5,60,000.00
06	2021-2022	5,90,500.00
07	2022-2023	6,30,000.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>34,45,500.00</b>

**Mess Charges**

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Years</b>	<b>Mess charges</b>
01	2016-2017	24,500.00
02	2017-2018	19,100.00
03	2018-2019	61,200.00
04	2019-2020	1,31,100.00
05	2020-2021	84,500.00
06	2021-2022	1,77,500.00
07	2022-2023	3,48,200.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>8,46,100.00</b>

**Amount spent on nutrition by the province**

<b>S. No</b>	<b>Years</b>	<b>Amount</b>
01	2016-2017	1,67,607.00
02	2017-2018	2,46,203.50
03	2018-2019	2,08,283.00
04	2019-2020	2,90,343.00
05	2020-2021	2,56,908.00
06	2021-2022	2,54,061.00
07	2022-2023	3,90,476.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>18,13,881.50</b>

### Medical expenses

S. No	Years	Medical expenses
01	2016-2017	39,595.00
02	2017-2018	39,248.00
03	2018-2019	45,325.00
04	2019-2020	93,757.00
05	2020-2021	48,869.00
06	2021-2022	60,726.00
07	2022-2023	90,810.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>4,18,330.00</b>

### Educational expenses

S. No	Years	Education expenses
01	2016-2017	-
02	2017-2018	84,038.00
03	2018-2019	82,372.00
04	2019-2020	74,743.00
05	2020-2021	34,933.00
06	2021-2022	30,205.00
07	2022-2023	1,16,975.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>4,23,266.00</b>

### Food expenses

S. No	Years	Food expenses
01	2016-2017	1,16,925.00
02	2017-2018	1,27,106.00
03	2018-2019	1,00,265.00
04	2019-2020	1,82,807.00
05	2020-2021	1,23,519.00
06	2021-2022	1,29,112.00
07	2022-2023	1,86,150.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>9,65,884.00</b>

## 2 Corinthians 9: 6-8.

*“Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver, and God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.”*

### Contribution received for the Mission of HIV/AIDS and Children (CCI) on monthly bases.

S. No.	Name	Amount per month	Amount per year
01	Vincent De Paul, Hosur	2,000.00 Cash	24,000.00
02	Mr Vincent	500.00 Bank	6,000.00
03	Dr Rose	3,500.00 Bank	42,000.00
04	Legion of Mary, Krishnagiri	3,500.00 Cash	42,000.00
		9,500.00 Cash	1,14,000.00

*“He who has a generous eye will be blessed, for he gives his bread to the poor”* (Proverbs 22:9)

### Donations and Contributions - 2016 - 2023

S. No	Years	Contribution Received
01	2016-2017	1,67,607.00
02	2017-2018	3,42,900.00
03	2018-2019	3,61,530.00
04	2019-2020	4,21,950.00
05	2020-2021	1,52,248.00
06	2021-2022	2,27,601.00
07	2022-2023	3,57,491.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>20,10,220.00</b>



## Collaboration with the Don Bosco

We are in collaboration with the Don Bosco Rehabilitation centre of Chennai province since 08.09.2017. To reach out to the Children / youth infected with HIV in the district of Krishnagiri.

The following are the activities carried out:

01. Empowering adolescent living with HIV towards guaranteed future by positive living.

02. Counselling and guidance on -

A) Positive living and life time desire.

B) Adherence monitoring.

C) Short stay and crisis intervention.

D) ALHIV support group.

03. Clinical care:

A) Periodical special medical consultation.

B) Intensive follow-ups for symptomatic children.

C) Self-care/minor ailments training.

04. Education and vocational training:

A) Higher education.

B) Formal/non-formal training.

05. Campaigns and Conference;

A) Community stimulation program.

B) Annual conference for ALHIV

## Home Based Care – Youth Group

- We would like to present the glimpse of activity taking place every month. Youth come to the centre 4th Sunday of every month. Generally, youngsters lack protein and nutrition supplements in their meals. To boost-up their immunity system, they are provided nutrition in a regular base.
- Their education is mounted and helped to pay for their fees, study material, IVDP scholarship for college student.
- Short stay in health centre is provided when youth are sick (those who are orphan).
- Travel allowance is given according to the distance.
- Lunch is provided after the program.

Clinical monitoring for periodic health check-up:

- Height
- Weight
- CD4 Count
- Adherence monitoring is done.

The following are the Nutrition support received for the welfare of YLHIV-

S No.	No. of Beneficiaries	Nutrition support	Medical Support	Educational Support	Travel Allowance	Parent's Nutrition Support
01	65	Milk-2 litre, Eggs 24, Nutrition Mix	Don Bosco and St. Joseph health & Social work centre	Don Bosco and St. Joseph health & Social work centre	6,000	-
02	30 (Parents of Youth)	-	-	-	-	Channa(1/2kg), Red Gram(1/2 kg), Ragi(1 kg), Nutrition Mix

- 4 infected couples are married and have given birth to Negative child.
- 24 of them are working.
- 36 children are studying in different Colleges, Non-formal trainings and School. They are involved in different education system as per need.
- Honorarium for the sister-in charge is 13,000.00 each month.

The collaboration with Don Bosco had been a positive impact on YLHIV. It has bought a hope and happiness in the life of our youth and making a difference in our mission. Your Kindness and generosity embody spirit of Don Bosco, and we're incredible thankful for your unwavering commitment to our cause.



Initial group of Youth



Medical check-up





Youth group married and given birth to HIV negative child

Our aim is to provide them proper educational support for career development, get them married to other PLHIV and give birth to negative child

## Christmas celebration

The true message of Christmas is love. Christmas is the season of joy peace and happiness it is a special season set aside to celebrate the birthday of Jesus Christ.

The real Christmas story of God is becoming a human being in the person of Jesus Christ. *Why did God do such a thing? Because He loved us.* (1 John 4: 8) why do we celebrate Christmas each year? Out of Gratitude for what God did for us , we remember his birth by giving each other gifts , worshipping him , and being especially conscious of the poor and less fortunate.

Love includes the unconditional acts of respect, caring and kindness that communicate the worth of others and that promote their welfare, growth and wholeness.

Christmas can be a season of great joy, it is a time of God showing his great love for us, and it can be a time of healing and renewed strength.

It is a great joy for us sister's to share this true love of Christ to our patients every year during the Christmas through carols singing and Christmas dance by our children. Mr Kulandai Francis (IVDP) provides Christmas gifts for patients of Bargur, Krishnagiri, and youth. Vincent De Paul from Sacred Heart Church provides Christmas gifts to Hosur patients.

*"For we are God's handiwork created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." (Eph 2:10)*



## Integrated Village Development Project (IVDP)

Kulandai Francis is an activist, social worker, and the founder of the NGO Integrated Village Development Project (IVDP) in Tamil Nadu, India. He sustains programs in pursuing the holistic economic empowerment of thousands of women and their families in rural India.

Francis has been helping the patients with Christmas gifts and has volunteered to offer educational support for the youth, college students (HIV infected and affected students).

The following are Christmas gifts received for PLHIV (infected and affected) -

S. No.	Year	No. of Beneficiaries	Item/ Scholarship	Amount
01	2016	127	2 set of dress & Cake	1,23,475.00
02	2017	220	Bed sheets & Cake	2,20,000.00
03	2018	220	Collage bag for Youth, Kit bag for audit	1,24,000.00
04	2019	270	Bed sheet & Cake	1,71,000.00
05	2020	200	Nutrition	2,19,800.00
06	2021	-	Chairs of community hall	56,625.00
07	2022	200	Nutrition	2,20,000.00
08	2022-2023	36	Education scholarship for HIV infected & affected people	3,60,000.00
<b>Total</b>				<b>14,94,900.00</b>

We are wholly humbled and grateful for all of your support to the people in need. We want to extend our heartfelt gratitude for the thoughtful gifts you've provided to HIV infected people. We are truly blessed to have your support in our journey, and your gifts have made our Christmas extra special.







## Woman's day celebration

International woman's day was celebrated on 8th March every year for our PLHIV patient's. It is the celebration of social economic, cultural and political achievements of women over the years. Women are recognized for their achievements regardless of divisions based on nationality, language, culture, economic or political status.

Among our patient's, 80% of them are woman and 70% of them are widows. To mark this special day, we sisters would like to describe women as the most beautiful creation of God and Architect of Life.

To highlight the importance and challenges faced as a woman in their role of a mother and a wife in spite of her sickness. She rejuvenates and makes the family alive. She comforts and builds their confidence and makes family proud to be a part of her world, standing behind their success. She guides and focuses on the achievements of the children dream. She is the synonym of sacrifice.

The children of our home performed in short cultural programs through skit, dance, songs and competitions. It focussed on woman empowerment, creating awareness about their rights and role in families. A speech to elaborately explain the potentials, the inner strength and motivation that is in each one of them, to do their best to their families.



PLHIV participation and involvement in different activities on women's day celebration



## Community Hall

“Count Blessings like

Children count the stars”

*“The Great Attitude is the Gratitude “.* We remain Grateful to our Triune God, for giving us our provincial and Councillors for the vision to build and for providing the resources, adequate funds, competent professionals and skilled labours for the construction to provide us with a beautiful and functionally flexible hall for the social medical ministry.

St. Joseph’s Community Hall was inaugurated by Rev. Sr. Benedicta Mary Joseph Provincial Sisters of St. Joseph of Tarbes, province of Bangalore. Blessed by Rev.Fr.George, V.F - Krishnagiri, Diocese of Dharmapuri on 20th October 2021.

The inaugural function began by cutting of ribbon by Sr.Benedicta Mary Joseph. Provincial was followed by Eucharistic celebration. Felicitation of the guest of honour, nutrition distribution to the patients (200) and then followed by lunch.

Functionally, we utilise hall for larger gatherings like meetings with PLHIV, organise celebrations, summer camps, Tuition for children. It is also flexible as place to rest and study for tribal college students.



Front view of Community Hall



Inauguration of Community Hall



Inauguration of Community Hall



## Covid Pandemic

Mercy of God was experienced during Covid 19. It was crucial for us to adapt and provide continued support to individuals with HIV during these challenging times. We had to ensure that HIV Patients receive the care they need while also addressing the challenges posed by the pandemic.

Major problems that were faced by PLHIV were related to Health concerns, Economic hardships, Access to healthcare, Greif and loss, Vaccination hesitancy. Adding to this youth had sensitive and deeper impact as their mental health, Education disruption, Social isolation; Disruption of daily life, Information overload affected their way of living in itself. It was devastating to live with uncertainties for a longer period for them. Motivating patients for Vaccination, Nutritional support, Counselling played crucial role in addressing these issues.

Trusting and having Faith in steadfast love of God found meaning and purpose to face the challenges during Covid and to be a source of strength for our patients. We were able to participate in daily Eucharist celebration in parish only for sisters. It was a great blessing and strength for our community. An extraordinary grace helped to transform us amidst uncertainties, anxieties and catastrophic moments. Prayer made us to seek comfort, healing and guidance. We were able to see face of God in these situations, it motivated us to move out courageously to distribute nutrition kit to patients in their respective villages during the covid pandemic.

Encouraging and motivating patients to face the challenges without fear, to remain at home (use mask, frequent hand wash, maintain distance, faithful to their medication) was counselled. All the patients were safe and took care of themselves. Only two patients were infected with virus and then recovered. Through government, NGOs, generous people, we were able to provide nutrition kit for our patients. Hence, they were not dependent on their wages or earning for livelihood.

It was challenging for us as there were a lot of limitations and co-ordinating under these circumstances was learning on how to push ourselves for the well-being of patients by providing proper guidance, basic facilities and counselling. In this entire journey God stood by us with his mercy and love. We thank God for the gift of our community sisters and for their generous service in this time of pandemic.

### Collaboration with Camillian Father-

*Proverbs 11; 25 says 'Be a blessing to someone today.'*

We are deeply thankful and grateful to God for all the blessing from Camillian Father from Nachikuppam, Veppanapalli, Krishnagiri and Tamil Nadu.

They have been a great support to our patients during the Covid Pandemic by providing nutrition kits worth ₹ 4,80,000/-. They also conducted training programs of our children in CCI.



Blessings from Camillian Father



Packed Nutrition Kits sponsored for distribution

## Summer Camp - Bijapur

In 2023, summer holidays were well spent in summer camp that was conducted in our centre for CLHIV of Bijapur. Summer camp for children offers an opportunity for holistic development, medical care and emotional well-being contribution to a better quality of life.

Our aim was to embrace and guide them with the importance of hygienic lifestyle to restore their mental, social and physical health status.

We ensured that children take proper medical care, adhere to their medical schedules and learn essential self-management skills to maintain their health. Camp helped them to build self-esteem, resilience and coping skills, which are crucial for managing the emotional aspect of living. Interaction with peer group boosted their social skills, friendship.

They actively engaged in varied tasks that were conducted for self-development skills as follows;

- Morning Prayer and Mediation
- Discovering different learning styles of individual children
- Art Therapy
- Healing therapies
- Importance of drugs intake
- Sports & Games
- Time management
- Positive living and life time desire
- Adherence monitoring.

Along with different activities, we visited places like Yelagiri bird sanctuary. A very refreshing experience with all happiness as they involved with nature by playing with birds, boating, etc. These involvements greatly helped them in social interaction, communication, and spread of varied awareness with each other. Children were well-disciplined and trained under our sisters. It helped all of us to indulge in activities efficiently.



Group of children participated in Summer Camp





Site seeing through Bird sanctuary



Children involved in other activities like Boating



Involvement and playing with Birds

# St. Joseph Children Home

*“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” -Matthew 19:14*

CCI – Children Care Institution registered by commissioner of social Defence under Juvenile Justice (Care and protection of children Act, 2015 as children’s Home) is under registration No 1412/DSD/2020 on 05.08.2020.

St. Joseph’s children home began in 2017. Our main objective was to educate girls, majorly socially discriminated, marginalised, economically poor, doesn’t have good ambience or place to study or learn.

In Krishnagiri district, children tend to face lots of difficulties without safe home and security, but thrive to continue or focus on their education and career. It highly depends on family, neighbourhood, background, awareness they are living with. They lack meaning of life, hygiene and moral values to follow a right path leading to enlighten self and world around.

Our goal is to shape their lives, as learning proper education, moral values of being human and evolve into a better being by shining in society we live at. We have 17 children at present from various parts of the district. All come in different mental state are personally guided. Certain addictions or dependencies like drugs, daily wages against child labour, family situations are often limitations they face.

We began our journey placing our total trust in the almighty God who brought us together in this abode of unity to share the light of spark amidst the poor and marginalized children to create a more compassionate and ethical society.



St. Joseph’s Children Home (Right) & Community Hall (Left)



## **Vision**

“To be a spark in the midst of darkness”

## **Mission**

Enabling children to become agents of social transformation through education.

## **Activities**

- All 17 children have been admitted to government schools. We follow up their academic performance, help the students to complete their home works and improve in their studies.
- We involve them in extra - curricular activities like prayer, peace meditation, physical exercise, cultural programs, sports and environmental science, academic and general knowledge.
- Importance to slow learners by motivating and providing special attention to improve their education.
- Involvement in social works related to PLHIV like being part of preparation and packaging of nutritional Mix, helping in distribution.
- We help the children who are drop outs, teach non formal education and put them into main streams.
- We organize cultural programmes and other activities on festivals and national celebrations to identify their talents.
- They are facilitated to set goals for themselves and pursue the same.
- They build friendship among themselves, cordial to each other.
- They are able to identify the values.
- They also become aware of social, moral and health problems and seek help.
- They are improving in their health and hygiene.
- They learned to save water and cosmic energy.
- Visiting nearby places once in a year, mainly recreation for exposure to new experiences and personal development.



Diwali Celebration



Medical check-up for children associated with children Home



Involvement of children for celebrations and festivals.



College Girls



Children's Day Celebration

We maintain Individual Child Care Plan (ICP) to focus precisely on their development every month. All the activities are inspected by District child protection unit and Child welfare committee for observation of individual children related to self-growth and education.

Children conduct meetings within themselves to improve skills like leadership quality, decision making and problem solving, focussing to evolve a better leader. Parents meeting are held twice a year to discuss on their distinctive skills, education and career growth. Children without safe home live with CCI even during holidays. They also actively help sisters in social works and involve themselves in the parish spiritual activities. It contributes to better community and social cohesion.



Children meetings and discussion on extra-curricular activities



Yoga sessions

## Case Studies

### **Ms Venkatalakshmi and Ms Bhuwaneshwari (2017)**

Siblings are from Jypsy community in Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh, depending on daily wages for livelihood. They were 11 and 8 years old respectively when they became part of home with parent's acknowledgement. They did not have any identity proof or nationality evidences. Basic needs like education and hygienic living was challenging for children to look at.

As the kids expressed desire to study. We placed them in school in lower grades. Later, they got placed to higher grades as they had potential to grasp basic knowledge.

Soon, mother had called the elder sibling back to help her when she was conceiving child. We asked mother to come and stay with us, complete nutritional support and better place to accommodate in children home.

She was provided with healthier ambience before delivery with her elder daughter to accompany and help whenever required. We provided counselling, basic knowledge on family planning. After delivery, she was being guided throughout and supported by the community to get their family planning.

Community were updated about their living and being a family with lack of awareness. We encouraged finding a rental house under government to live. We guided them to go through certain government procedures for identity proofs like Adhaar card, ration card, Bank book for children. Financially children home has been a great support to finish all these procedures.



## Ms Lakshmi (2023)

An Abandoned child came through CWC. She is Tamil speaking child with unknown source or idea about family.

CCI took a complete care of her and took her to Krishnagiri Medical College, according to reports; she is around 9 years old.

Lakshmi has 3 siblings. Her mother had eloped leaving their children on different places to work which is unknown till date. She doesn't know her father, was never disclosed. Mother had been very harsh on her children as her intent was majorly to earn out of them. Lakshmi had a 4th sibling, younger sister. She had never considered nurturing baby, even to breastfeed. In front of Lakshmi, mother had killed the baby by drowning her into water. As she realized she approached to stop it she was forcible stopped by harming. One of Lakshmi's relative had asked her to run away from home.

Found with none for long in street, an old lady took her to her place and got all her domestic works done by Lakshmi including risking her. She was ill-treated as slave and abused. She handed over the child to CWC and right away she was sent to CCI.

Now, she is getting along with children in home under guidance. She has many opportunities to learn and grow along with other kids in home as a family with healthier environment thus, improvising her way of living with better values and health. She can focus on her education as well to reach greater heights.

CCI went along with child line person to her village named Uddanapalli in search of her younger siblings and parents. They found that her parents are not living in same place. Her younger brothers were working under daily wages. Younger brother was working as shepherd and passed away. Second younger brother is adopted by their relative and are taking good care of him.

In village, all children are disturbed mentally and physically without proper sanitation and habitation. Child line person informed the Thasildar. Later, Development Officers, Soolagiri Medical Officer visited the place and are initiating to provide government support for better built space with basic facilities like water, sanitation, etc.

As villagers got to know about the Team, One of Lakshmi's relative sent 3 girl children to study in CCI. Such initiation by CCI has immense potential to support many people in need and provide them healthier environment with guidance for their educational support and growth.



Ms Lakshmi's village - complete settlements of temporary structures. In search of Lakshmi's home and relatives.



## No amenities, 15 Irula families near Uddanapalli seek government help

Residents say they are unable to even take bath regularly due to irregular water supply

SIVAGURU S @Krishnagiri

A total of 15 Irula families living in a row of group houses between Uddanapalli and Hosur complained that the settlement does not have basic amenities. Around 60 people live in the eight group houses that were constructed in the early 1990s and many people have built thatched roof sheds in front of their houses.

M Srinivasan (26), a resident told *TNIE*, "There is no drinking water supply to our settlement and the houses are in dilapidated state. Due to lack of regular water supply, we are unable to take bath regularly and depend on water from the fuel station opposite to the habitation. There are no toilets and people are forced to defecate in the open behind our habitation. Most of us are daily wage earners and go to other districts for work with children regularly."

M Murugesan (38) another resident said, "Last year I went to Erode with my wife and three children for work and I enrolled



Shoolagiri Block Development Officer K Vimal Ravikumar and Shoolagiri Block Medical Officer NM Vennila visited the habitation on Sunday | EXPRESS

my children in a school there. I have returned to my village, but I am unable to send the children to school here."

The habitation has more than seven school dropouts, while some are studying in a government higher secondary school, which is less than one kilometre away.

A six-year-old girl went missing from the place recently and was traced by district child protection unit near Veppanahalli and admitted in a children's

home near Bargur. Childline team visited the habitation last week and spoke to people on the need to send children to schools. Out of eight houses, two are severely damaged.

M Ezhumalai (38) said that he takes shelter in a church nearby at night with his wife, two children, and father-in-law.

After *TNIE* informed Shoolagiri Block Development Officer (BDO) and Shoolagiri Block Medical Officer (BMO) about

the families, the two visited the area on Sunday.

BDO K Vimal Ravikumar said, "Two months ago, we included the damaged group houses for repair work. Also, there is water source near the habitation, a water tank was planned to connect with the water source, but the residents moved the tank to other area and it was damaged. Another tank will be erected soon. Toilets have already been constructed for each houses, but they are damaged due to poor maintenance. However, individual toilets will be constructed again."

Shoolagiri BMO NM Vennila spoke to the people about the need to maintain cleanliness and hygiene. She told *TNIE* that a health camp and cleaning work will be conducted in the habitation soon.

Hosur District Education Officer (elementary) A Muniraj said that he would visit the habitation on Wednesday.

Police added four people in the habitation are wanted in theft cases.

Publication in District Newspaper about Lakshmi's Village and Reception Home





Ms Lakshmi's relatives place - Temporary structures with lack of hygienic and healthy way of living. There were many children without any awareness regarding education and career growth.

### **Ms Akhila and Ms Bhumika (2022)**

They had come to children home from CWC. They have younger brother and parents. Mother, Saraswati had difficulties with their father as he is alcoholic, abusive and domestic violent in handling her. Akhila was bought to CCI with her sister as her father tried to abuse 1st child.

Akhila was around 10 years old and Bhumika was around 7 years old when they joined the home. Mother couldn't take the pressure from her husband, left the home and came to the CCI with 5 years old younger brother Thirumurthy.

For around 1 Month, CCI took a good care of them until she found a job and their brother was sent to Vellore for studies under sister's guidance.

With the help of CCI's network and support, Awareness on varied opportunities were provided to Saraswati, was being guided and counselled to work. Now, both daughters and son are studying under proper guidance with better personal health. At present, Saraswati travels to see their children and then get backs to work in a better place and healthier environment. She is now living with good quality of life as a person.



## St. Joseph's Reception Home for Girl's

*" The righteous will then answer him, 'When, Lord, did we ever see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you a drink? When did we ever see you stranger and welcome you in our homes, or naked and clothe you? When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?' The king will reply, 'I tell you, whenever you did this for one of the least important of these brothers of mine, you did it for me!' " - MATHEW 25: 37-40*

**POCSO: Protection of Children against Sexual Offences;** Reception Home (RH), reflecting as an institution for neglected and delinquent juveniles who are kept for few weeks or who have pending decision of case.

**District Child Protection Officer (DCPO) and District Child Protection Unit (DCPU)** during periodic inspection, they recognise our service to the children and good environment provided to them. In Krishnagiri District there is no home for Children sexual abuse. Children are brought here for short stay from women's police station with letter from CWC and FIR till their verification is over (court, police station, medical test, CWC).

We envision collaborating with State government to provide secured place, guide, counsel minor girls and people associated under The Protection of Children from Sexual offences Act (POCSO). This Act was passed in 2012. It aims to deal with the issues related to sexual offences against children.

Also, St. Joseph's convent is associated with **Child Welfare Committee (CWC)** under the Juvenile Justice Act (Care and protection). This Act was established in 2015. It is majorly to take care and resolve cases related to children who are in need of support, care, guidance related to growth, protection, awareness.

Therefore, we tend to deal with numerous cases related to POCSO and CWC. CWC institute contact us for any support, guidance and to provide a shelter of the victim until case gets resolved.

There are diverse forms of situations and cases that we tend to deal with. Many of them come to children home completely shattered and in emotionally uncontrollable state.

Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we lead them for better future, provide protection and handle extreme critical emotional phases of children. Social, emotional, physical aspects are few challenging situations that minor girls experience.



Group of Girls involved with POCSO & CWC with sisters



## Roles and Responsibilities when the child is brought to St. Joseph RH:

- Encourages good study habits.
- Provides guidance in problem-solving and promotes a positive attitude towards education.
- Advise on higher education, career choices, financial, literacy and life skills.
- Communication with parents to better understanding of the child.
- Compassion and kindness.
- To continue the education.
- To build positive attitude.
- To propagate religious faith.
- To build up right vision.
- Sense of Belongingness.
- Moral education and moral learning to reach their goal.
- To develop their skills, talents and provide phase for creativity (like basket making, tailoring).
- To help them become better individuals in accepting oneself and to face life with confidence.

Most of the cases tend to happen due to lack of awareness, misconception of people, situations, to flee away due to irresponsible parents, etc. Most Importantly, Today's children are misguided due to the digital world and no proper love, care and guidance from parents.



A girl bought by police department related to CWC



Group of Girls involved with POSCSO & CWC

## Case Studies

### Ms Vaasugi

Vaasugi is 17 year old now. 2 years back she was asked to marry her 30 year old related as forced by her parents. She was sent back to home after few months once when they realised about CWC. As she finished 12th grade, she was in love with her classmate and she eloped as her parents forced to get back to her married life.

Once the Boy's mother got to know, she bought Vaasugi to CWC and then to Observation Home until case resolved. For couple of months she was assured with secured living without any constraints. As months passed by, we realised that her education and career was getting affected due to the case.

We, St. Joseph convent initiated to counsel her parents. The immediate next day, took them for her exam registration but by then submissions were closed. We went to Gonzaga and enrolled her name for further studies into mathematics as per her choice. In a month, she attended her exams and shall be able to pursue her career without any unintentional break.

## **Case Studies**

### **Ms Mubeen Taj**

17 year old Muslim girl from Hosur, has always been yearning for love, support and care as she never felt it after her parents divorced when she was 8. She eloped with a criminal by taking pounds of jewels from home. After her father filed case as missing and on boy.

Mubeen surrendered and was brought to observation home. She was completely disturbed mentally due to all the complications that arose. Observation Home counselled her and gave her all support and guidance for her recovery.

As her mother got to know, she also counselled Mubeen and has made her daughter realise to focus on her career at present. Mother was ready to take her after CWC Acknowledgment but father refused to send because the court order is that the child is under father's care.

Now, Mother has filed a case in high court to finalise with whom she would stay with, as father was never concerned about Mubeen. Meanwhile, she is preparing for 10th grade exams.

### **Ms Punitha**

She was 15 years old, living with her family in Rayakottai. She eloped with a boy from same village and kept travelling. Meanwhile, Punitha's family got to know and went to his home and shattered their house and name. Due to shame, His parents poisoned themselves.

As this news was said to both the children. They immediately came back to village. By then, he lost both of his parents. And the case became even serious as whole village was under police supervision. The whole conflict ended up as village issue rather than two families. Punitha was immediately sent to observation home as situation was getting even sensible.

Punitha created immense trouble as she continuously threatened to go back to home. She was going through extreme mental pressure due to the lost lives and his situation. It was very challenging to take care of her. Throughout, one had to be with her for observation. Later, we requested her mother to come and accompany her as things were going beyond our potent.

Such immature decisions led to a complete different situations and complexities in their lives. Along with them, both the families also have to live with the uncertainties created. Later, she was sent back to her home as it was uncontrollable to keep her away from the situations happening in village.

Due to all the complications, schools also tend to rethink on providing admission for such students as uncertainties arise. There are varied other reasons associated that affects families involved with children studies, career and mental stability/balance.

## **Ms Karthika**

She is 17 years old. After her Mother suicide, Father and 3 relatives including her Cousin Brothers, Uncle sexually abused her. She was bought to CWC after she became pregnant. Immediately she was sent to Observation Home. Reports said, she was conceiving 7 months child by then.

After 2 months of secured living with hygienic environment in Observation Home. Karthika was sent to Salem Centre for her Delivery. For 2 months, she was taken good care in Salem Centre considering Postnatal Care for mother and the child.

CWC bought Karthika with her child to Krishnagiri Centre on 07.11.2023 and Child was sent for Adoption. From now, she will pursue her education in our CCI. We will provide her complete guidance for her career development and nutritional support. Counselling and support her for personal growth to become a better human being with healthier social quality of life will be provided by our Children Care Institute.



Ms Karthika



## Self Help Groups

Self Help Groups were started on 20.08.2022 with 20 members in each group namely, Susaiyappar Sangam and Lourdes Madha Sangam.

Our utmost purpose is to help poor and marginalized parish women financially. This base helps them organise and assist themselves, helping in issues including domestic constraints like children education, medical support, religious events, etc.

We aim to schedule periodic meetings, maintain records, savings and credit discipline with well-defined rules and byelaws. Bank accounts on each group are created in Indian overseas bank.

Our community envision leading a platform that would enhance women health through increased knowledge and awareness on health issues. These groups help to facilitate and spread information to village in terms of little basic knowledge like hygienic living, to motivate children for education, career development, to empower women's rights, etc.

## Summer camp for village children – Bargur

### Background

Right after Covid lockdown was shut; Sr. Annu and Sr. Arpudham initiated for summer camp. It was valuable for children after COVID for several reasons like social interaction, physical activity, mental health balance, etc. Summer camp would act as an opportunity to learn and develop skills. It helped them broadly for Technology break, independence fostering for personal growth and resilience. Camp offered a wide range of creative and exploratory activities, stimulating imagination and curiosity, adding on to their skills development.

This shall be reflected in their academics and to live with better values. We are thankful to Rev. Father Mani lazer for all the guidance. Hence, three days summer camp led to a fruitful session at St. Joseph's community Hall.



Children from Village involved in Summer Camp



Sessions to develop communication and interaction

## Objectives

- To identify their SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threat analysis)
- To understand different styles of learning
- To know the skills necessary for stage performance
- To enhance fine motor skills for lower grade students

Our aim is to identify their strength, enable them to develop their skills, to make them learn soft skills, Improve their unique skills, to overcome fear like public talk, communication, etc.

Children were consciously involved in distinctive activities like Brain gym, Movement therapies, Story-telling, Art therapy, Mandala colouring, Stage performance like speech, dance and singing and mind based activities like decision making, problem solving, teambuilding activities and communication skill enhancement.

## Summary

After all the activities, we had sessions to enhance mindfulness like yoga, breathing exercise and dance. Reflection and learning of the day were concluding sessions by sharing it with the whole Team. Irrespective of activities, Children tend to realise diverse skills about themselves and enjoy the process with complete involvement and presence.



Physical group activities



Mindfulness activities



Mandala colouring

# Pastoral

On mission of the kingdom (From Book - Starting Afresh from Christ)

*“In imitation of Jesus, those whom God calls to follow him are consecrated and invited to continue his mission in the world. Indeed, consecrated life itself, guided by the action of the Holy Spirit, becomes a mission. The more consecrated persons allow themselves to be conformed to Christ, the more Christ is made present and active in history for the salvation of all. Open to the needs of the world as seen through the eyes of God, they point to a future with the hope of resurrection, ready to follow the example of Christ who came among us that we “might have life and have it to the full “. (Jn10:10)*

For the sisters of the Aikiyalaya community pastoral mission is a prophetic task where it involves us to put hope in the Lord. We are strengthened by the Holy Spirit each time to feel the responsibility of our evangelisation to reach out to the people of God through pastoral care, restoring their dignity of being the child of God and empowering them to recognize God in their Life.

## Activities

- Involvement in prison ministry. (Time being, permission is not granted to enter the prison)
- Assisting the Parish Priest in the administration of Sacraments/ village ministry / conducting rosary during the month of October in the parish houses.
- Praying over the patients in the hospitals / health centres.
- Taking care of the sick, elderly, visiting their homes praying with them.
- Preparing the children for first Holy Communion / Confirmation.
- Conducting prayer services in the church and villages.
- Ministry with altar services and choir.
- Preparing for mass every Tuesday in SCC groups.
- Preparing for mass on the 3rd Tuesdays at shine present at the NH (we provide vehicle to bring peoples from other parish, chairs, etc.)
- Preparing adults for confession during advent and lent.
- Sunday catechism (it is a great challenge to gather them).
- Christmas programs (carol singing, Christmas dance, games conducted for the parishioners)
- Pilgrim visit to different churches as a way of the cross during lent.
- Decorating the church for different feast.
- Rectification of marriages.
- Preparing our students for liturgy (to assist as altar girls, singing and reading of introduction and prayer of the faithful for the 4th Sunday of the month).
- Carol singing in families by St. Joseph children's, sisters and parish priest.
- Communion to the sick.
- Preparing them for bible quiz.
- Bible classes for the adults (started from September 2023)

## Help given to our parishioners

- Medical help.
- Higher Education for widow's children.
- During covid nutrition support was given.





Eucharistic Celebration



Bible study by Parishioners



Prayer at the St. Antony's Grotto



Rosary

## Conclusion

Our community is very grateful to God for his choices blessing and the choice of God to serve the most deserving people, to build values of the kingdom of God.

With deep sentiments of gratitude in our hearts, we thank God for our provincials and counsellors, benefactor and friends who have been a great support and journeyed with our mission by standing beside our brothers and sisters in need, sharing their spiritual and material goods with them for better future.

The road ahead of us is challenging but we count on the presence of the Risen Lord who, through the power of His Spirit *"Makes all things new Rev 21:5"* All renewal is the work of the Holy Spirit. We place our efforts in view of building Communion. *"THAT WE ALL MAY BE ONE"*, In the hands of Mary our Mother who at Cana with her attentive heart showed us how to act responsively aware to the need and with discreet authority taking in our service to the poor, in our journey with the least and the last.

*"To God alone belongs the Glory"*