

## Anthony's Charity a.s.b.l.

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*« Educating the poor children for a better world »*

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Foundation Laying for St. Anthony's School  
Building... «You bring colors to our lives !!»

Dear friends,

Most of you have been sharing with the poor for years from what you have as a symbol of solidarity with them. Though in the past we have been channelling your donations to different humanitarian works, we never had the opportunity to inform you about the strategy by which we dispersed these donations to the various development projects. Now as we are responding directly to the poor ourselves we intend to utilize this fund in a more efficient way in the development of the less privileged. As a result of it, we start this *ACB News*, which brings you our plans and operations in which your generous donations are utilized. Hoping that you will continue to help the marginalized to build up a life, we take up this project. We kindly request all of you to make this project a reality with whatever little you can contribute. In this first Edition we have our project manager speaking from the field about our initial efforts to educate the children from a marginalized society.

Marc Valentin, Président



## Village in India

The first sight that catches the attention of anyone who enters in a remote village in India is children roaming about aimlessly and grown ups sitting idly engaged in playing cards. We find women carrying water from far away water sources like wells and springs. They bring grass, which they collect from fields to feed the cattles, which is their main source of income. Almost all of them are uneducated and are confined to their homes. A strange thing one find is most women cover their faces when they emerge from their homes.



Most children in these villages do not attend schools either because of their poverty which does not allow them to go to school or there are no schools in many of these villages. There are no jobs available for the grown ups except the agricultural jobs which are limited to seasons. Most of the families have very limited amount of land which hardly provides them enough food. Unemployment and lack of resource make them struggle and they have very poor health. One also would notice that there is no drinking water facilities, no clean surroundings, very poor housing etc.

### The small beginning

I have worked in Indian villages for many years and seen villagers suspicious when a stranger enters into their village. So, when our team entered Jugawar and nearby villages we were not surprised to see them approaching us with their usual suspicion.

This is mainly because of the poverty situation they live, in which people easily don't trust one another. During the subsequent visits we sat with them, listened to them, shared with them our concerns and slowly gained their trust.

### Their needs are many...

The reason for us to select this area is that this is one of the most backward area in India with a lowest literacy rate and high population.

These villages have high unemployment rate, there are no educational, communication and health facilities; there are no schools, no good roads, no regular electricity supply, no telephone connections. Thus the village is a picture of the lack of basic facilities. In these villages to live is a struggle than joy. Our efforts to be of some use to these people, we realized, cannot relieve any of their

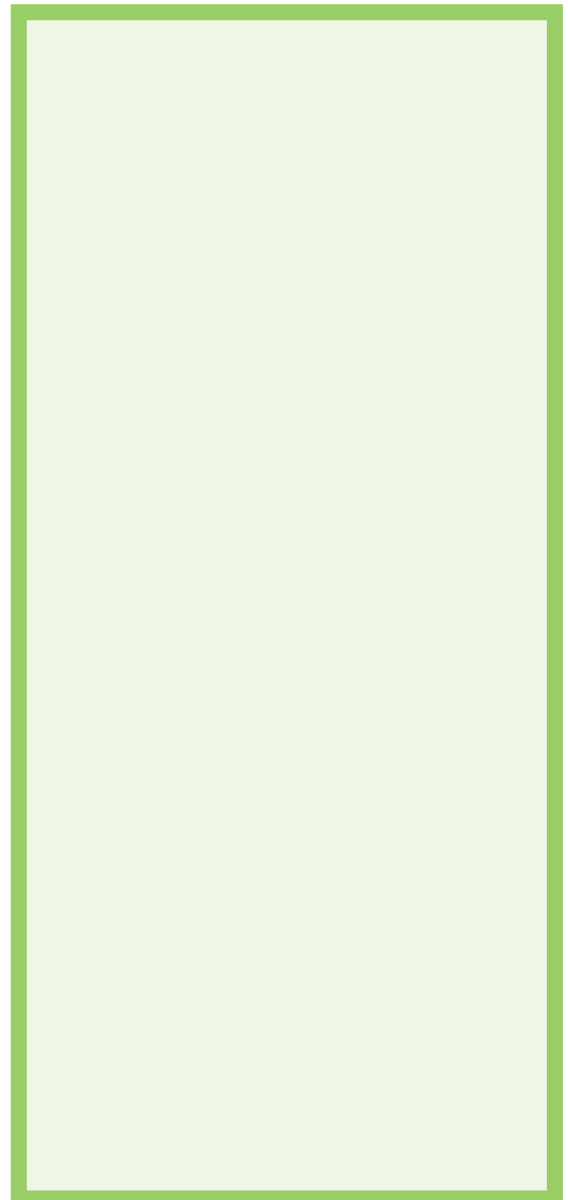


basic problems, yet, we wanted to do the little we can. Therefore we started to help in the process of educating their children. Maybe from there we could organize women especially to dialogue with them and explore with them the possibilities of change and development.

### **Village Leaders Gathering**

Recognizing the importance of the local people and accepting them are essential for gaining their confidence in us and in the work we planned. So we planned to convene a meeting of the local village leaders. In the meeting they came out with many problems they face and suggested many solutions. They shared their own views about education and their expectations from us.

The ideas, and suggestions of the villagers were taken down. They all felt as given importance and recognition and they responded that they are ready to collaborate with us in the common undertakings. Putting up a tent in the open ground of the future school and having a snack was part of the gathering. They all were happy of this event which was a new experience for them.



### **The need for an infra structure:**

One of the needs we felt, to get start the process of educating the children was to have a building and teachers. Both are not available in these villages. So we purchased the land at a reasonable price from the villagers for the school and boarding for teachers from outside. To provide good education we need good teachers who have been educated in a good schools. The locality don't have teachers of this kind. They have to be brought from outside the area, which means we have to provide them residence.

### **Foundation Laying for St. Anthony's School Building**

Suggestions for the Foundation laying for the school came from the villagers, we followed their initiatives. It was a new experience for them to come together and work as a group for a common cause. We initiated the first step of educating them to organize for a public cause. The outbreak of their joy was expressed in words such as «you bring colors to our lives !!»

Many of the important local government and church personnel were present.

### **Initiating our education program.**

We have initiated the program of identifying needy and deserving children from different walks of life. There are many more deserving children waiting to be enrolled in the new school which will start functioning from July 2004.

### **Gratitude from the villagers.**

Villagers often ask about those who are behind this noble service to them. We told them about Anthony Charity and all of you who have contributed to make it possible for them. They told me to thank each of you for your kindness and love towards them... many of them often ask about the life in Europe and the people of Europe, for them it is something entirely new, and they end the inquiries with, «God Bless all of them !»

Mollykutty Sebastian,  
Project manager