

John wrote his second letter *to the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in the truth.*

Lydia – a Chosen Lady

Early last month, Lydia, the widow of IREF's founder, suffered a bad fall, breaking several bones in her back. She was taken to hospital in Guntur, where it was discovered that she was also suffering from an inoperable blood clot in her brain. Some ten days later, her long and fruitful life on earth was drawn to its conclusion as she was ushered into the presence of the Lord whom she loved and served. For all of us who knew and loved her for her gentle Christian graciousness, her loss is a great sadness.



I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labour, for their deeds will follow them." [Revelation 14.13]

Lydia came from a family of nominal Lutherans. But following her marriage to Prasada Rao and his subsequent conversion, she too gave her life to the Lord. It is often said that behind every great man there's an even greater woman. That was certainly true of Lydia. Prasada Rao wouldn't have been able to carry out his ministry as an itinerant evangelist in the early days without Lydia's dedication and care for her family. Life was often very hard for her as she sought to provide food for her eleven children, relying on the meagre gifts Prasada Rao received from his preaching endeavours. Sometimes there would be no food in the house; and so, Lydia would go to the woods to find some leaves and small plants, suitable for feeding to her family.

In later years, she was a constant presence at Prasada Rao's side, as in this photograph, watching baptisms taking place in the River Kishna during our 2004 visit.



We extend our deepest sympathy to Hyer Paul, Victor Paul, Frances, Emmanuel, John Paul, John Daniel, and all the wider members of the family. Further details of Lydia's story can be found on the IREF(UK) website: www.iref.co.uk/history.html.

Ian Leitch – a tireless evangelist

At almost the same time that we were hearing about Lydia's fall, news came through that Ian Leitch, one of our founder-trustees, had suffered two massive heart attacks, on 5th May, just before he was due to travel to the USA. Mercifully, and in God's wonderful providence, the heart attacks took place in a hospital, where Ian had gone for a pre-travel check up.

For several weeks, Ian was kept in an intensive care unit; but he has recently started to make a good recovery. We send Ian our very best wishes for a full recovery.



Please remember him, and his wife Morag and their family, in your prayers. You can keep up to date with Ian's progress at his dedicated website www.caringbridge.org/visit/ianleitch

Sad news from Ullipalem

We had received further very sad news from India, in April. Krupadaman Gundala, the longstanding pastor of the Ullipallem village church, where IREF(UK) supports the Child Development Centre, suffered a severe heart attack on Sunday 4th April and died the following day. He was a man whom UK team members got to know well over the years. Because of his exceptional language skills (including Telegu, Hindi, Tamil and English), he often travelled down to Chennai to meet us; and he received us very graciously, at short notice, during our visit to Ullipalem earlier this year. He will be a great miss to the IREF family as one of its senior evangelists. Please remember his wife and two teenage children in your prayers.



Another tragic death

We were reminded again of the fragility of life in India when news came through that Sowrilu, one of the first 20 children to be taken into IREF's care in Repalle, died in childbirth. She was in her early 30s. She went to the hospital to give birth to her third child

(her first son); but both she and the baby died before they could take her in for a caesarean section. Her husband, Bujji, is one of IREF's main helpers. Please remember him and his two young daughters in your prayers.

Update from June Trustees meeting

We are delighted to be able to report that a record £94,924.09 was given to IREF(UK) during 2009, including a £34,049.69 legacy reported in a previous newsletter. It brings the total money donated to IREF(UK) to almost £400,000 since its formation 14 years ago. The total donated for the UK team's visit to India earlier this year amounted to an astonishing £37,589.02 after deduction of Justgiving's fees (£174.35). We give all the praise and glory to God for the generosity of our supporters.

Ullipalem – need for new sponsors

At our June IREF(UK), we agreed to increase our Ullipalem payments from £407 per month to £475 per month to reflect the fact that there are now 70 children at the CDC, up from the previous 60. We need to recruit a further 25 sponsors to cover our on-going commitment as some of our previous ones have dropped out. Please let me know if you would like some sponsorship leaflets to help spread the word, or download them from our website: www.iref.co.uk.

Gospel Meetings at Pamarru

Despite the recent tragedies and sadness of events in India, the work of sharing the Gospel continues apace. People in and around Pamarru village, Krishna District, recently poured into meetings to hear the Gospel message shared powerfully.



On the first night of the meetings, Dr Emmanuel Rebba challenged people to consider whether they would have sided with Christ or Barabbas, when Jesus was on trial for his life. The following night, Emmanuel spoke about the danger of being a nominal Christian, illustrating his talk from the story of Jacob. A further message called on people to turn to Christ to escape the horrors of hell. These messages moved the

hearts of thousands of people to repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Men, women and children, as well as the sick and infirm, attended the IREF Meetings in Pamarru in incredibly large numbers, despite the very hot weather. Credit goes to Rev Pradeep, the local evangelist, who contributed greatly to the campaign's success.

IREF's Children and Students

There are currently 1,630 children in IREF's care. Many come to us from very difficult backgrounds. Among their number are some who are orphans; but there are also those who have been kidnapped for prostitution, or abused by family members, or whose family members are in jail. Many children who enter IREF's care are not only poor and needy, but are also afflicted by various illnesses that require medical attention.

In addition to the work of IREF's two main schools, pupils study in seven Child Development Centres. These children and young people are provided with a programme of afterschool instruction by qualified teachers, a daily meal, school uniforms, and books and other materials.

IREF is also currently providing education for about 1,640 students - 750 in the Junior College, 740 in the Degree College (including postgraduates), 100 Trainee Teacher students, and 50 Nursing Degree students. Some of IREF's former pupils/students are currently studying at a government Industrial Training Centre in Guntur, undertaking 2-year/4-year Diplomas in Engineering. IREF is contributing towards their fees.

As the Gospel is presented and lived out amongst these 3,000 or more children and young people, it is bearing remarkable fruit. About 350 pupils/students were baptized between November 2009 and March 2010! Every Sunday, there are typically 3-5 candidates preparing themselves for baptism.

We praise God for the remarkable openness of Indian young people to the Gospel. Long may it continue! Thank you for your on-going prayerful and financial support for this work.

*I thank my God every time I remember you.
In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy
because of your partnership in the gospel
from the first day until now.
[Philippians 1.3-5]*

David Hunt [Chairman, IREF(UK)]