

Please, make my name Esther

Craig Darling, USA Director writes:

Performing baptisms for IREF usually entails standing waist deep in the flowing waters of the Krishna River. This particular day, I suddenly shivered, not prompted by the cool water on a steamy afternoon, but rather by the words of a 30-something Muslim woman. Clad in a bright purple sari, she carefully waded toward me, her hands reverently clasped together before her face. Her dark eyes reflected a resolute determination as she clutched my hand and turned to face the crowded shoreline. She quietly requested, *“Please make my name Esther.”* My mind immediately comprehended the implications of her simple request. Esther, the young Jewish girl, selected to be the queen of a pagan king, raised up to such a lofty position, *“for such a time as this!”* Just as Queen Esther would risk her life to enter un-summoned into the King’s presence to save her people from certain annihilation by the decree of the wicked Haman, this young woman was counting the cost of following Christ.



Chills ran through me knowing this Muslim convert, would momentarily be immersed in the baptismal river waters, publicly identifying herself with the death and resurrection of her Lord, Jesus Christ! She would, from that moment forward, forsake her given-name and be known as Esther as she returned to her village. The choice of Esther clearly revealed she knew the cost of her commitment, *“for such a time as this!”* In recent months, hundreds of Indians upon hearing the gospel of grace and believing in all that Jesus accomplished for them have sought baptism and changed their names, just as Esther did.

Please pray for these new believers. Pray for them to boldly walk with Jesus and show forth the fruit of their faith and baptism, *“for such a*

time as this.”



Every week, no fewer than ten young people get baptized.

Well done, Airdrie young people!

Congratulations to Airdrie Baptist Church Bible Class for raising £400 for IREF through their sponsored cycle around the Isle of Cumbrae this summer!



One-Day Seminar at Viajaywada

Earlier this year, a large number of evangelists (both men and women), together with a significant number of church elders, attended a one-day seminar at the Railway Institute Auditorium in Viajaywada. Emmanuel Rebba delivered a series of messages on the life of Jonah, the Fleeing Prophet, stressing that every human being - but particularly evangelists, Bible ladies and Church Elders - must follow God’s plans for their lives. Trustworthiness, genuineness, creditability, and above all

steadfastness in spreading the word of God, must be cultivated for the glory of Christ.

Bibles for IREF's children

Every child and young person in IREF's care is given a New Testament or Bible in their own Telugu language. Last November, Emmanuel Rebba distributed Picture Bibles, like the one shown here, to each of IREF's 1,500 children. The Bibles had graciously been supplied by the Bible Society of India. The children read their Bibles every day during their daily devotional time.



News from a former student

I received an encouraging e-mail from a former IREF student (1991-99) recently.

I am now working as a Software Engineer in Pondichery (India). This is not to my own credit - completely IREF's credit only. When I joined IREF, at that time my family was very poor. I studied in John's High School from 1991-99 and completed my 10th Grade class. By 2009, I had completed my MCA (Master of Computer Application) with my family's cooperation. My younger brother also studied at IREF. He is now working in Bangalore as Assistant Professor in the Fiat Training Centre. Why I am telling this story - this is Jesus blessing only!

Present Aid reminder

Two years ago, we launched our *Present Aid* scheme to help raise funds for IREF(India)'s Income Generation Programme. Over £700 has been raised so far through the scheme and with Christmas fast approaching, it may be a good way of solving some of your Christmas present headaches! We have produced a series of cards for such unusual gifts as

rat-traps, bamboo basket-making equipment, sewing machines, rickshaws, handlooms, fishing nets and goats! Here is how the scheme works.

- **You choose a gift to suit your price range.** A full list of options is given on our Present Aid leaflet, available on request.
- **You send the cost of your gift to IREF(UK).** Your donation can be Gift Aided, and we can claim an extra 28p for every £1 you spend.
- **We will send you a card** to pass on to the person for whom you have bought the gift. The card will tell them how the particular gift you have chosen for them will benefit someone in India. The card contains a brief description of IREF's work and tells people how they can find out more about it. There is space for you to add your own words of personal greeting.

Please let us know if you would like further information about the scheme and a full list of the gifts available, which includes Telugu Bibles at £1.50 each. An example of what one of the cards looks like is shown below. They are suitable for passing on to friends and family members at Christmas, and for birthdays, anniversaries and other special occasions.

An Unusual Present?



A fishing net will be really appreciated in India!

There's just enough space to tell you that Ian Leitch is making an excellent recovery from his recent heart condition. Thank you for your prayers for him and for all of IREF's work.

David Hunt [Chairman, IREF(UK)]