

## **PRAISE GOD FOR ANSWERED PRAYER!**

*“The 2015 Youth Conference, which took place from 10<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> January, went extremely well,” Emmanuel Rebba was glad to report from India. “Many young people came forward and accepted Christ as their Saviour. 49 young people were baptized at the end of the conference!”*

*“The Youth Conference was followed by IREF’s annual Gospel meetings, which took place from 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> February. We praise God that IREF was able to conduct these meetings without any opposition from the government; many came to a living faith in Jesus Christ as a result of them.”*

## **So, WHAT NEXT? KEEP GOING!**

IREF’s annual Gospel Meetings were held, as usual, on the large IREF campus in Repalle, a fairly large town not many miles from the outflow of the River Krishna into the Bay of Bengal. Thousands of people from the town itself and from many of the surrounding villages came to hear God’s wonderful message of salvation as it was delivered by Emmanuel Rebba and his son, John.



*Emmanuel and John Rebba spoke at the follow-up village meetings.*

Shortly afterwards, IREF quickly turned its attention to strengthening local communities of Christians and spreading the good news of Jesus to the surrounding villages. The tribal villages

surrounding Repalle are where the true mission of IREF takes place, just as much as on the large campus in Repalle where IREF’s two main schools and several colleges are based.

These small rural farming and fishing villages are crying out for any hope of prosperity for their families. But what better way to meet their greatest need than to feed their souls with the message of Christ’s love for them! Emmanuel Rebba commented on this planned re-focus for 2015, *“The IREF campus is a comfortable place to serve God and there is a great sense of Christian community in Repalle as believers support each other in all sorts of ways, materially and socially as well as spiritually. But this sense of community needs to be extended into our local villages where a great battle for souls is taking place. The tribal villages are predominantly Hindu in their religion and culture, but I know God wants us to take his wonderful message of hope to them.”*

Emmanuel Rebba and his wife, Dee, together with their son, John, and several IREF pastors ran 3-day revival meetings in the nearby villages of Nagaram and Bobbaralanka. Similar revival meetings continued for the next two months in multiple locations as Emmanuel Rebba planned to focus IREF’s efforts on villages where IREF churches and Child Development Centres have already been planted.



*A Hindu man silently observed baptisms at the Krishna River and felt an urge from God to come forward for prayer to learn more about the gift of eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ.*

## **CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTRES**

In the state of Andhra Pradesh where IREF schools, churches and Child Development Centres (CDC) are located, Christians make up less than 5% of the population. Over 90% of the state's 84 million inhabitants are Hindu. Andhra Pradesh is known for its lower population density than many states; it is mainly an agricultural state. With a majority of the rural population in Andhra Pradesh living in small tribal villages, literacy rates are a problem. Andhra Pradesh is the least literate state in India with a literacy rate of less than 67%.

IREF has worked for over 60 years to reach the local population with the love of Christ in word and deed, and provide an opportunity for many to learn to read and write. Many children and parents come to know the Lord Jesus Christ through their connection with an IREF Child Development Centre. CDC teachers and leaders encourage parents to consider encouraging their children to continue their education at the IREF campus in Repalle.



For many families in Andhra Pradesh, the prospect of their children receiving a good education is little more than a distant hope or pipe-dream. Good educational institutions are often too far from a tribal village for children to attend them, and parents are too poor to transport their children over long distances. Many parents take their children to work with them in rice and corn fields to supplement their meagre wages.

IREF currently operates nine Child Development Centres. Their efforts are focussed on tribal villages surrounding Repalle, where the main IREF campus is located.

The continued support for each CDC is critical to the overall mission of IREF, as the tribal villages

are ultimately the communities which the mission aims to serve. Our prayer in 2015 is that God will continue to grow the impact that IREF has through each Child Development Centre and that the Gospel will spread through the hearts and minds of all who attend them.

## **Help still needed for Ullipalem**

IREF(UK) supports the Child Development Centre in the village of Ullipalem (the 'onion' village!). Each quarter, we remit £1,425 to IREF(India) to cover the cost of running the centre. We currently receive about £1,200 per quarter in donations from those who have undertaken to sponsor a CDC child. **Co-sponsor costs as little as £1 per week; full sponsorship is only £2 per week.** We currently have sponsors for 52 of the 70 children in the Centre, so there is plenty of scope for others to share in the joy of giving to the Lord and his work in this way! Please make this need known to your friends, so that we achieve full sponsorship for all the children in the CDC by the end of 2015.

## **Points for Prayer** Please pray for ...

- **the ongoing impact of the revival meetings** held in local villages over the past two months.
- **all the many children and young people in IREF's care.** April marks the end of the school and academic year for IREF's 2,000+ children and young people. For some, this means an end to their time with IREF. Please pray that as they go back to their homes the Holy Spirit will work through these young people to bring spiritual light into their often dark and superstitious villages.
- **new sponsors to come forward** to support the work of the Ullipalem Child Development Centre.
- **the impact of the Telegu version of Christianity Explored** pioneered by Craig Dyer last November; pray that it will continue to be well received and put to good use, and for any necessary refinements to be quickly identified and ironed out;
- **Emmanuel and Dee Rebba and all the staff employed by IREF:** that they will be granted wisdom, spiritual and physical strength, and great integrity, as they lead God's work to the glory of Jesus Christ.

Once again, thank you for your generous and on-going support for IREF.

*David Hunt* [Chairman, IREF(UK)]