

## **LIVES TRANSFORMED!**

*“Hope is Alive!”* writes Dee Rebba. *“Praise be to God, who has not rejected my prayer or withheld His love for me!”* (Psalm 66:20). God has done great things for the children of Southeast India. Looking back at all the stories of redemption and changed lives against a background of widespread idolatry, many children can credit *only one God* (not the many ‘gods’ of the backgrounds many of them come from) for everything they have in their life – and that one True and Living God is their Lord, Jesus Christ!

In times of struggle, He has encouraged these children. In times of desperation, He has protected them. In times of extreme fear, He has fulfilled His promise to save them from their enemies. Reading their stories is a constant and real reminder of God’s love for this remote region of the world.



*The children at IREF are being empowered by the education they receive. They are being given hope for a new pattern of life, and aspirations they never knew were possible!*

### **Divya Chandana**

My story starts when I was six years old after my mother died with tuberculosis and my father abandoned our family. Our neighbour brought me and my younger brother, Preetham, to IREF to be cared for and IREF has been our home ever since. The IREF compound in Repalle is where we make our home all the year round as we have nowhere else to go and no one else to care for us. I enjoy playing with my friends here at IREF and I am now in 5<sup>th</sup> class. Many students here at IREF have similar stories to the one I am telling you today. We have a love from Jesus Christ that encourages us daily and we get to hear about how He is working to provide all of us with a hope and a future. Jesus is my only hope!



*Dee Rebba is now the closest person to a mother that Divya Chandana and her brother, Preetham, have.*

### **Sai**

My story starts when I was a little girl. The occupation of my family caste was prostitution. According to the caste that I was born into, I was expected to become a prostitute, too. My mother and father both contracted the HIV/AIDS virus when I was young and I went to live with my aunt after my father died. She heard of IREF and brought me here to get an education; but I never expected my life would be changed so dramatically. While I was at IREF, I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour. I also completed a degree in science and now I am working in an eye clinic in the main city one hour away from IREF’s headquarters. I am able to provide for my family with the job God has given me and I have been able to break the sad expectations that my caste had for my life. Without the power of Jesus Christ my story today would have been much different. Praise God for His perfect plan!



*When Dee took her sister to an eye clinic to have a cataract removed, much to her delight she found Sai working there in the clinic!*

## Parvathi

My story starts in 2009 when I was brought to IREF by an evangelist from the city of Guntur. I was brought to IREF under very secretive and confidential conditions. You see, my uncle kidnapped me when I was in high school and sold me to sex-traders who were seeking to transport me and 49 other children to Thailand. The sex traders needed to move us in order to evade the authorities. At that point, I was able to escape. I was brought to IREF for safety and for a chance to study for an undergraduate degree. By God's grace, I was able to finish my education there in 2012. I am now married to an evangelist and we both started to serve with IREF in June 2015. Praise God for His saving grace!



Parvathi (far right) with her classmates; they were all prayer leaders at IREF during their final year of college.

Children who would otherwise be destined for a life of poverty are being given wonderful opportunities to change their life's prospects. They are being given a foundation of faith and a wealth of knowledge, both inside and outside of the classroom. They are getting an education that is a crucial component in breaking the cycle of poverty that has afflicted their families for generations. The presence of Christ changes lives, and IREF is doing all it can to bring the hope of Christ to as many people as possible.

***Give praise to God for the remarkable way he is changing the lives of all these young people!***

## UK 2016 Team

We are beginning to plan for another UK team visit to Repalle. It looks at this stage as though the team will go earlier than normal to coincide with the IREF Youth Conference in January, rather the main Bible Conference in February. We are hoping to send a large group of healthcare workers including nurses, dentists, an optician and doctors. They will be

treating the children in Repalle in their first week and hopefully will then travel in their second week to some outlying villages where healthcare is rare.

The UK Team visits to Repalle having been taking place for more than 20 years now; and as the work has expanded, health has improved. There is less dental decay now and generally healthier pupils. The team is also hoping to work with the Nursing School to help create indigenous personnel who can care for those whom IREF serves all the year round.

More updates will follow over the next few months. Meanwhile, please consider supporting this venture financially through [www.justgiving.com/iref](http://www.justgiving.com/iref).

## Help still needed for Ullipalem

IREF(UK) fully supports the Child Development Centre in 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 ...

- ***all the many children and young people in IREF's care.*** June marked the beginning of a new academic year for IREF's 2,000+ children and young people.
- ***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;
- ***the 2016 UK team as it takes shape*** – see above;
- ***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 which is much appreciated here and in India!

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