

premdan newsletter

Christmas 2019



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Christmas I s...

The simplest meaning or explanation of Christmas is summarized in the words of Scripture: "God among us!" "God has become one of us," "The Savior", or "The Promised One".

We pray that "God with us" His presence may be felt in your family every day. May the peace and joy of the little babe fill your lives!



DEAR SPONSORS, BENEFACTORS, FRIENDS AND WELL-WISHERS,

After a lengthy Newsletter of September 2019, lets focus on the situation of Prem Dan 43 years into existence and what exactly we do towards uplifting poverty. We may want to ask: Is it worth reaching out to so many underprivileged children and women residing in the dirtiest slums of Mumbai?

For the kind information of our new Sponsors, I would like to describe the realities of who we are serving wholeheartedly.

[Brief description of the background and setting against which we work:](#)

Considering Mumbai is home to Asia's largest slum dwellings, most migrants to the city are mistaken to thinking they can find cheap accommodation when looking for basic shelter, anyone with such a notion however, will be in for a rude shock.

Mumbai: After the Forest Department arrived at the Ambedkar Nagar slum at Cuffe Pararde and started the demolition of the slum on May 1, more than 500 families were left homeless.

This slum is just a stones-throw away from the controversial Adarsh Housing Society and is surrounded by the plush societies of Colaba and the Military Cantonment.

Forest Officials present at the site, claimed that a notice to vacate the land was sent to them in 2015. Slum-dwellers alleged that the Officials demolished their structures without verifying their documents.

Jagdish Gujjar, a resident of the slum, said "Of the 12,000 houses in Ambedkar Nagar, only 270 were regularized by the civic body in 2012.

In 2013, a major fire broke out in the slum wherein more than 600 houses were affected. Several residents lost their documents which could have proved their ownership of the house. Even though there are several unauthorized structures in the slum,

[We reach out to the following Slums around our vicinity. \(Simple Slum survey :\)](#)

SLUM NAME	TALUKA	DISTRICT	AREA SQ.M
1.Ganesh Murthi Nagar	Colaba	Mum bai	120771.23
2.Machim ar Nagar	Colaba	Mum bai	37181.09
3.Geeta Nagar	Colaba	Mum bai	26501.21
4.Kaula Bandar Joppad Patti	Mazagoan	Mum bai	12822.96
5. Kawla Bunder	Reay Road	Mum bai	14957.13
6.Kaula Bandar Dharukhana	Reay Road	Mum bai	461.75

Our Reality:

We have numerous migrants coming from other States of India i.e. U.P, Karnataka, Bihar, Tamil Nadu etc. who come to Mumbai with a big dream in search of a good job and to eke out a better livelihood. But their dream will remain a dream because they begin by fishing and cleaning the fish at the docks. In the monsoons they become jobless and find difficult to even get a decent meal at a day. Prem Dan tries to find an answer to this need.

1. The story of Prem dan, is the story of a Challenge – the answer to the much repeated maxim, “that English is a foreign language and hence it should not be the medium of instruction of the underprivileged. But every child who sought admission into our school had a desire to learn English first, to be a better human being. All of them asked the same question,” if we learn English will we get admission into the recognized English medium Schools? This is the dream of the Parents. Even though they are uneducated, they want to make their children's lives beautiful and they believe that Education is the greatest wealth they can give to their children. Therefore we have hundreds of Parents approaching us for help. This is the first generation of school going children in their families and this naturally becomes a matter of joy and pride for them.

2. How do we select the 'real' needy and deserving families to be helped?

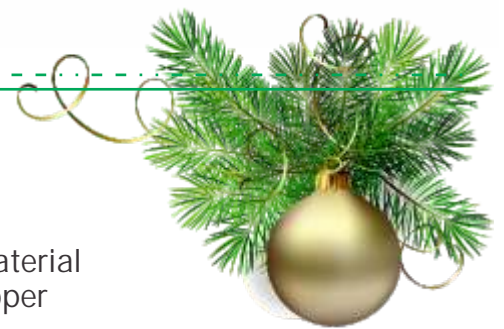
We do this by visiting the slums, by interviewing them, studying their background, financial, economic, health situations; we allocate the child to any willing Sponsor. With the help of kind hearted Sponsors the children are enabled to attend our so-called 'Recognized schools' and return each day to the (Prem Dan) Garden School, to be helped with their home-work by teachers whom we have engaged for this purpose. The children are unable to do their school -work at home, because their parents are illiterate and the home space is very limited and devoid of basic facilities. During the heavy rains, waterflows inside and the little space they have, is destroyed by the inflow of sea water (Back Bay). The mid-day meal for these children is served before and after the Home work classes, so no child studies on an empty stomach.

The few photographs of our sponsored children speak volumes for the rest, along with their testimonies. Do view them and read them. It will touch your heart and awaken you to a real human need. Then if you can afford to be a little more generous, compassionate, kind, in understanding their situation, you will surely make a difference to their lives?

Realities of the Slums

Reay Road & Colaba – Mumbai.

The photos will provide a glimpse of the living conditions, the material used for structuring the houses, some families do not have a proper house which is pathetic.



Garbage around their homes



Poverty



Single home for 6+



Back waters in homes during high tide.



Cluster of Homes



Homes of Plastic and Bamboos



Narrow Passage



Rented from Slumlord

School Feeding Programme



A hot mid-day meal is provided for the sponsored children at the school they attend.

We distribute old clothes and ration to 30 poor and needy families.



Free Tuitions are organised for sponsored Children at Garden School

Here are notes of appreciation by the children benefiting from tuition classes.

1. "I am very happy to come to Garden School. Here is light, Fan and table which is not there at my home. I get help in my lessons and finish my homework without any difficulty. God bless our Garden School sisters!"
– Master Lucky Shelar,
Little Flower School Std. 8.
2. "I am very happy to come to Garden School. I am not good at studies, but teachers and Didi's (Students volunteers) help me to do my best. I am thankful to all Garden School Staff"
– Ms. Khushi Tiwari. K.V. No. 1. Std 6.
3. "I am lucky to come to Garden School because all are there to help me in my studies and all my home work is done here. I am very thankful and blessed for getting this opportunity to study free of cost".
– Ms. Shelly Razzak
St. Joseph's high School Std.7 7.
4. "I am very lucky that I get all knowledge and clear all my doubts without any cost. I really love to come to Garden School".
– Master Vishal Balmiki,
Little Flower High School, Std. 8.
5. "I get help from Garden School. I get an opportunity to study here and we are four Sisters get benefits from Garden School since my Father cannot afford to pay tuition fees or School Fees" Thank you sisters!"
– Ms Sania Khan
Holy Name High School std. 7.
6. I am so grateful that Gardn School have given me free of cost tuitions daily. Garden School is like a heaven to me".
– Master Suraj Nirmal
Little Flower School Std. 8.
7. I am very ahppy to come to Garden school because I can do my homework with Teachers' help. I study well with all other children. It's all free including the evening snacks. My gratitude to Sisters and Teachers".
– Ms. Anjali Gupta,
Our lady of Dolours School Std. 7.

Premdan Students attending other schools

St. Josephs School (55)



Little Flower High School (55 children)



Students from other schools (48)



Sir J.J. School (14) Children



Students from Reay Road (60 children)



Holy Name High School (81)



Bai Kabi Bai School (15 Children)



St. Stephen's School (32 children)



Kendriya Vidhyala School –(42 children)



Our Sponsored child Ms. Mahima Kamble was suffering with Tuberculosis for a year. Now she is healthy and back at school. During her illness Prem Dan has supplied the mother with medical aid and nutrition.



We request you to pray for Riya Goud one of our bright sponsored students suffering from Acute Leukemia and is under treatment at the Tata Memorial Cancer Hospital in Mumbai.

Boarding School Prem Dan Social Service Centre, at Kharghar

After visiting and studying the situation of the families, the orphaned and single parent girl child have been admitted to Prem Dan Social Service Centre, Kharghar, where they attend our 'Jesus and Mary' English medium school. There they receive an education and total personal formation. This enables them to bloom and grow beautifully into young women for the future of society. They gain confidence and become persons for others" which is the Objective of all our 'Jesus and Mary' Education.



Presently we have 28 boarders from Stds. V to XII. Who are in the care of Srs. Madeleine, Philomina, Carmen and Rohini RJM. We have a Driver Mr. Sushil Pereira and a cook Mrs. Roshni.



With the living out of our Project:- objective of being sensitive, compassionate and sharing our love and concern with the underprivileged children, we were able to reach out to 40 boarders in the remote area of Ahmednagar District. We provided them with Snacks, School Bags, Tiffin Boxes and Items of Clothing with the help of the Prem Dan Trust. This gave us much joy and brought many blessings.



Sponsors and Volunteers

A word about Mr. Juergen Hans lovingly called 'Uncle J'. I am happy to have found an old photograph of his, along with Mother Felicity. He is one of our pioneering sponsors who is still a part of Prem Dan Family. He sends us funds every month, for the maintenance of the Trust. His son Mr. Tommi and family, from Germany, also work hard to raise funds for Prem Dan for our Educational projects. They have done so over forty years with much dedication and love. Prem Dan will always remain indebted to them.



Mr. Tommi and his wife Steffi visited Reay Road and Garden School last year.



Uncle "J" with Mother Felicity,

VOLUNTEERS FROM Manchester U.K. Ms. Bethany White Oak, Siobhan Griffin and Elizabeth Clarke, Ex-alumni of Aquinas College Manchester, spent



a day at the Garden School. We are grateful for their love, loyalty and concern for the kids and the Institution.

We thank our Students Volunteers from Xavier's college, Siddharth College, Sofia College for their commitment, dedication and kind support rendered towards tutoring the Prem Dan sponsored children.



A New Visitor from Singapore generously donated Ration and Stationery for our children. Thank you Mrs. Soh.



We are grateful and so impressed with the latest group of students and Staff of Aquinas College, for their enthusiastic walk in Manchester, U.K. to raise funds for Prem dan.

Social Work And Women's Empowerment Project

This year we had the unique experience of conducting a Beautician's course in two batches so far, at Reay Road and Garden School to help the Women to "Learn and Earn" with the initiative of Sr. Asha Ohol Rjm. This has proved truly beneficial to both the groups. Ms. Senora Pereira Beautician and teacher taught the two groups successfully. They also learnt to make soaps..



Hope the above description of our works, against the background of the Slums, gives you a fair idea of what goes on in Premdan much of the time.

So far we have concentrated on the girl child, now we plan to focus our attention on School dropouts among both boys and girls. Specific training for boys will be given in the fields of Vocational skills namely, Electronics, Plumbing and Refrigeration. For this new endeavor we look forward eagerly for your generous outreach to Prem Dan. Your generosity will go a long way in this regard. We thank you in anticipation.

As the great feast of Christmas approaches we thank God for all the sponsors who have made this year a fruitful one. Our Prayers and good wishes are with you and your dear ones.

With Warm Wishes, Gratitude and Christmas Blessings,
Srs. Felicity, Sylvia, Asha all Sisters at Kharghar and Staff at Premdan.

