



The Grail Trust

Registered Charity 272411
- supporting disadvantaged children in South India since 1995



Chair: Rev Neil Fairlamb, All Saints Vicarage, Tilford, Farnham, Surrey, GU10 2DA Tel 01252 792333
email: fairlamb49@gmail.com

Treasurer: Mr Michael Jordan, 1 Mortimer Road, Montgomery, Powys, SY15 6UP
email: marilynjordan@btinternet.com

Other trustees: Mr Jerry Hughes, Mrs Lynda Chugg
Website: www.grailtrust.org

Christmas Message 2019

Greetings to all supporters! We wrote or emailed all our mailing list of supporters and well-wishers in October with an update on our children's work; if by chance you did not get a copy then I will gladly send you one on request.

We now support **110 children** (57 girls, 53 boys) from ages 6-21 for their maintenance and education, from primary school right up to Diploma level and, for a few, university degrees. The poverty of expectation in so many young lives can be helped by our funding of family budgets, school costs and transport and the fees for diploma and higher certificate studies. All our children are mostly either orphans or with one parent, usually the mother.

We want to show you some of our new intake this year, our youngest children, with brief profiles of their situations. Then follow some photos of our older children in their higher studies. Individual children can be sponsored by our kind donors and further details on this possibility can be sent.

Sponsorship for a child is just £20 a month.

To support 110 children costs our Indian partners a little over £22,000 a year; a little money still goes a long way in India but fees for higher studies continue to rise and we cannot afford to overcommit ourselves. We have modest reserves for the future but need to raise more money to ensure we can provide properly for all these children, and future intake, for years to come.

To comply with Charity Commission rules, our annual accounts are published each year and a copy can be sent on request. **Our AGM, to which all are invited, will be held on Friday 7th February 2020 at 2.30pm in London House, Town Walls, Shrewsbury, SY1 1TX.** I can also be contacted for any further information at any time.

Lynda Chugg and I will be visiting the project in January, 2020, to liaise with our Indian partner trustees and to meet all the children we support.

Your continued support is extremely welcome, of course, and thanks from us all for all your help. Any donations can be made via our web-site, or sent direct to the treasurer Michael Jordan (address above); cheques are payable to The Grail Trust.

**Bank transfer details are to our HSBC account:
sort code 44-44-27; account no: 61070479**



As promised, here are just some of our new intake this year:



G Pradeepa is studying in 5th Standard at Panchayat Union Middle School, Seelathikulam, and is 9 years old. Her elder sister is studying in 6th Standard. They live in a rented house and her mother supports the family by the rolling of 'beedi'. A beedi is a cheap cigarette, and Pradeepa's mother will have to make very, very many of these to just scrape a living. The

constant, repetitive work leads to early-onset of rheumatoid arthritis. She is the only provider for her family: Pradeepa's father died in an accident.



S Ajaykumar is 12 years old and studying in 7th Standard at Annai Matriculation School, in the Grail Trust's local town of Vallioor. He has an elder sister studying in 9th Standard and a younger brother who is of Upper Kindergarten age. His mother works as a 'coolie' - a labourer - who is paid daily a very low wage. They do own a small concrete house, but there is no father to support them all. He died in an accident. *Road accidents are sadly all too common in India.*



T Arul Johnson is just 5 years old and he attends the Salvation Army School in Vallioor, in 1st Standard. He has no mother - she died giving birth to him. *All medical treatment in India has to be paid for and maternity care is no exception to this.* His father re-married

and as is often the case, the child of the first marriage is abandoned. This little boy lives with his aunt.



S Udhaysakthi is studying in 1st Standard at Vivekananda Kendra Matriculation Higher School in Vallioor, and is 6 years old. She lives with her mother in a small tiled house. *A tiled roof is supported by wooden beams. In that climate the wood is not resilient and will warp and eventually rot, causing the tiles to shift accordingly,*



resulting in inevitable leaks when it rains. Her mother works as a tailor - think of her the next time you wear something labelled, "Made in India"! It's a lot of hard work for a very small remuneration. Udhaysakthi's father died in a road accident.



R Suruthika is studying in 5th Standard at Maravar Middle School, Malayadiputhur, and is 9 years of age. She has a younger brother in 1st Standard and a father who is very ill and unable to work. Her mother died when her brother was very small. She lives with her grandmother, in a small concrete house, which her grandmother owns.



A Thomas Maria Abish is 8 years old and he attends the Nehru National Middle School, Vadakkankulam, studying in 3rd Standard. He has one younger sister and they live with their grandmother in a rented house. His mother supports them by working in a printing press. She is the sole source of income to her family. His father died some years ago. *As with all the photographs featured in this newsletter, the family looks to be well dressed. The taking of a photograph is seen as an important occasion, and hence the need to dress in their best!*



S Laxmi Madhu is studying in 1st Standard at St Theresa R C Middle School in Pushpavanum and is 6 years old. She lives with her mother and younger brother in a small tiled house. Her father died in an accident.



Counselling: Vital help for our students studying for their 10th & 12th Standard Exams



R Agin, M Viswa, T Anthony Raj and S Joswa with Mr Natesan

As any parent will know, there are important decisions to be made when their children are studying for their GCSEs or 'A' Level exams. Our Managing Trustee in India, Mr Natesan, gives freely of his time to help the children in our care. A successful businessman, Mr Natesan came from humble origins himself and is therefore passionate about improving the lives of our Grail Trust students. Agin, Joswa and Anthony Raj are 10th standard students and attend the Walker Higher Secondary School in Dhonavur; Viswa is also 10th Standard and attends St Aloysius Higher Secondary School in Kallikulam. Srynithi is another 10th Standard student in the NVC Government Higher Secondary School in Radhapuram. Divya is a 12th Standard student in the Government Higher Secondary School in Vallioor. *N.B. The prefix letter to the students' names is the equivalent to a surname: it stands for the first letter of the father's name.*

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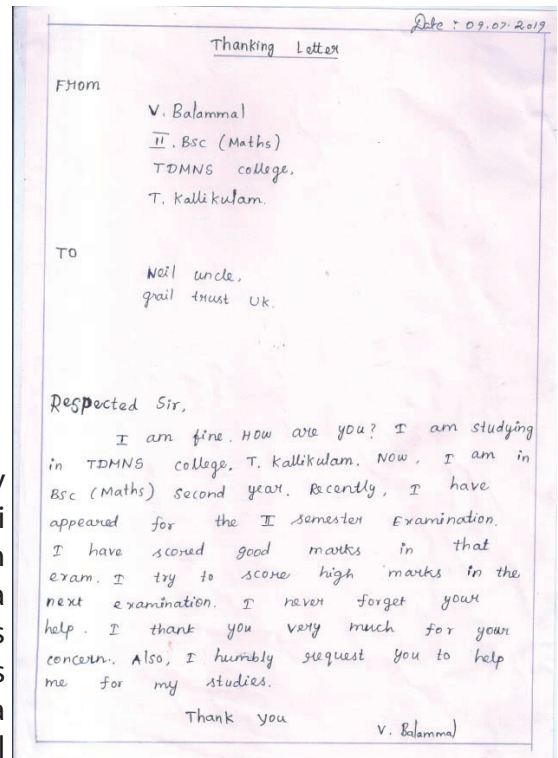


V Divya, E Srinithi, S Joswa, R Agin, T Anthony Raj & M Viswa

Just a couple of our Higher Education students:



V Balammal is 19 years old and has been supported by the Grail Trust since 2013. She attends the Tirunelveli Dakshina Mara Nadar Sangam (TDMNS) College in Kallikulam and is in her second year of studying for a B SC (Maths). Her gratitude for what the Grail Trust is doing for her is self evident and it is your donations that have made it possible for this young lady to have a future she could only have dreamed about. Balammal is pictured with her mother outside their home.



A Karthik is 17 years old and is one of our longest supported students. When he joined the Grail Trust in 2008, he was not quite six years old! His father died when Karthik was very young. He attends the Hi-Tech Polytechnic College in Samugarengapuram, Tirunelveli and is in his second year of studying for a Diploma in Mechanical Engineering.



*With all good wishes from
Neil Fairlamb,
the trustees and our partners Grail Trust India.*