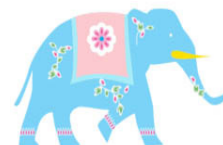




The Grail Trust

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



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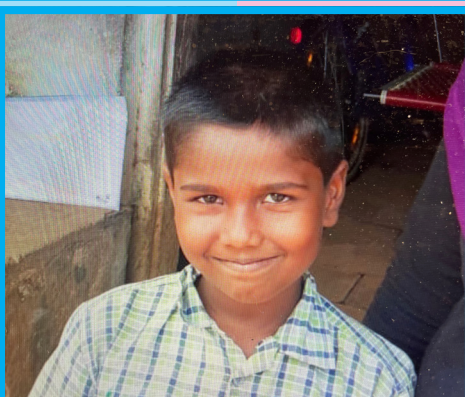
Other trustees: Mr Jerry Hughes, Mrs Lynda Chugg
Website: www.grailtrust.org

Summer Newsletter 2022

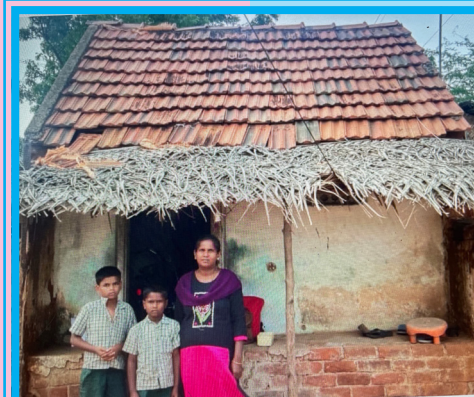
Dear Friends and Supporters

Lynda Chugg and I have not been able to visit our project since early 2020, just before the Covid pandemic. Covid cases in India have exceeded 43 million and caused over 526,000 deaths. Since March the situation has eased with a national average of 2,000 new cases a day over the last three months after a spike of 30,000 in the first three months of this year. We remain very grateful to our Indian partners and staff for their commitment to maintain family support and increase payments when possible.

June saw the start of the new school year and our normal admission of new children. We are highlighting four here with photos to show the situation for these families; the basic facts and the sight of the accommodation- houses might not be the best word for some of them- speak for themselves. *The new four make up 110 children, our agreed total figure for support based on our finances ie your kind donations (we have minimal UK expenses) and our pledge to support children from age 6 right through schooling and further education including university.*



NITHISH KUMAR is 7 years old and attends the Hindu Primary School in Alangulam. Father died from kidney failure last year. He has a brother Sathish Kumar two years older. The tiled dwelling near Eruvadi is rented and mother Poochendu earns a



few rupees from rolling beedi, a sort of cigarette, and from housekeeping work.



JESSICA is an only child, 6 years old, and in 1st standard at Holy Cross Catholic Middle School, Vallioor, with her mother Chitra who owns this basic but clean and well maintained house in Kulathy Kudiyruppu outside Vallioor, our main town. Mother works in a shop; father died of heart disease a year ago.





DHANU SREE is also 6 years old and attends Muthammal Hindu Primary School in Kadambankulam. She has a younger brother Dhanshick and the family live in grandmother's house. Mother Muthu Lakshmi rolls beedi cigarettes;



there are so few opportunities for women at home to earn money. Father Jegatheesan committed suicide last year; sadly, indeed, several fathers have despaired of life, and turned to alcohol, gone to the cities to find work and never seen again, or taken their life.



ANTO ABISHEK is 7 years old and in 3rd standard at St Aloysius Primary School in Nadu Arupulli; we see here also his younger brother Vishwa aged 4 and her mother Pemila Kepsi and grandmother. His



father, Anthony Johnson, died of sickness last year. The "house" is theirs; there is no sanitation, nor indeed in most homes.



In partnership between **All Saints Infants School in Tilford** and the church there where I have been the priest for three years, two large consignments of children's books for basic English skills, books that were being replaced, were sent to two schools where a good number of





our Indian children attend, the **Salvation Army school in Vallioor** where our charity is based, and to the **Hindu Middle School in Malaiyadiputhur**. This second school is right in the country in a poor village near the foothills of the Western Ghats where tigers are still occasionally seen - and where snakes are common. It has very limited facilities or provision for books. The Salvation Army school is a little better resourced but still in need of good quality teaching materials and, as you can see, desks and chairs! English is the second official language of India, after Hindi, and is compulsory in all schools, and the teachers we meet are dedicated but most of our children need more help to progress. Many of the books they

have are dog-eared and outdated, and we could consider spending on supplying good quality teaching materials. These could, of course, be resourced in India but where there are stocks in UK, shipment can be arranged quite cheaply. *If you think this would be a good project for Grail Trust to encourage let us know and if you have involvement with primary and secondary schools we could make useful links.*



The GT chairman in India, **Mr Natesan**, is a Vallioor business man with several shops. He



Kandhan, now studying at 10th Standard, with his mother is a member of Lions and

an influential community figure. He has long made a commitment to give regular counselling sessions to our students to motivate them, listen to their problems and seek to help them. Here are photos of some of these sessions which keep the children, families and Grail Trust India connected and working together for the best result.



Rebuilding lives and aspirations after the prolonged Covid



Jeba Rose, also studying at 10th Standard, with her mother

setbacks is a special challenge. We are most grateful that our two other Indian trustees, **Dr Abraham** and **Mr Gregory Retnaraj**, who along with Mr Natesan, are so committed to helping our Grail Trust children. They give very generously of their time and support.



If any of you, our supporters, can help us with fundraising ideas, contacts, organising an occasion for one of us to speak to a gathering, or if you would like to know about the possibility of sponsoring a child for his or her years of education with the exchange of letters and photos, then please get in touch.



Muthu Karthish, with his mother

Our Indian Trustees meet regularly with all the children and their families. This develops practical support and mutual



Thanga Suji, with her mother

trust. As the photos show, these meetings are welcomed and much appreciated by the children and their families.

We thank you so much for your continued interest and support. Any donations can be made via our website, or sent direct to our treasurer Michael Jordan (address on page 1); cheques are payable to 'The Grail Trust'.

**Bank transfer details are to our HSBC account:
sort code 40-44-27;
account no: 61070479**

Our Indian partners join us in these thanks, and they also wish you all to be safe and well.

With all good wishes,

Neil Fairlamb

**Look out for further news of The Grail Trust - visit our website:
www.grailtrust.org**

