



Serving the Poorest of the Poor

The 2018 medical team from the US and UK brought medical response care to children, staff, Evangelists and Bible ladies of IREF, as well as remote villagers. IREF has successfully provided medical care to Southeast India for close to 30 years because of selfless medical professionals who have put the needs of others before their own. These teams bring medication, medical tools and much talent in order to perform the highest quality of medical care that is normally unavailable in rural India. It is no easy task transporting all this equipment and baggage 8,000 miles to IREF via airplanes, trains and automobiles. However, their goal is to follow God's calling to care for the poor and needy which is a calling that is not compromised at any point during the trip.

After five days of thorough checkups (health, vision and dental) on IREF students and staff, the team ventured out into two remote villages. The first village, Utagundam, is the where IREF's elementary math teacher - Yohan, is from. The villagers were desperate for medical attention as many had never received this kind of care in their lives. The second village, Mollagunta (which literally mean the farthest corner hole) is a highly impoverished and forgotten village which lacks running water and electricity. The villagers walk over 4 miles each day for water!

16 Health care team members along with 21 IREF nursing students treated over 1,000 patients, extracted 350 teeth, distributed 900 toothbrushes and provided 400 glasses for those with vision needs - all in a week's time!

IREF wants to thank every member of this year's 2018 medical missions team and the sacrifice they made to treat so many children, elderly and staff. With the help of the US and UK teams each year, anyone can see that the IREF children look and feel healthy. The teams are truly a blessing from God and we thank them for their faithfulness to support God's ministry.



2018 Youth Conference While the medical team was busy running the clinic, the annual IREF Youth Conference was underway. Young people traveled from near and far to join IREF students in five days of worshipping in song and hearing the word of God. The messages preached and the authority of God's Word fanned the flames of faith for many students. Students moved forward toward the altar at the end of each evening session with tears of repentance and praise. The power of the Holy Spirit was undoubtedly working among the

hearts of these young people. 25 of these students were baptized in the Krishna River on the last day of the Youth Conference.

Praise be to the Lord for the messages He supplied each speaker with this year and to all the team members who gave their testimonies to inspire each student to truly believe that God has love for them as well. Please keep these new believers in your prayers as they continue to practice their new found faith in Christ and share it with family and friends.



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25 Years of Providing Education and Opportunities for Hope

IREF had a vision for providing college level education at minimal cost to the poor over 25 years ago. The goal was to provide the children from destitute and broken homes with education that has the power to break the cycle of poverty and in turn allow students to serve as agents of change to root their families and communities in Christ.

In 1993, IREF made the vision come to life and began Repalle Christian College, with the objective of providing high academic standards and career-based education in the most cost-effective manner possible. Classes were conducted in a renovated chicken farm. Application fees were 10 rupees and tuition per year was 30 rupees (equivalent to 47 cents). Today, classes are held in a three-story building generously funded and provided by a European donor but the costs still remain the same with government provided subsidies and scholarships to help students earn their degrees. Repalle Christian College is ranked 4th best college/university in the Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh (out of 395 total)!

This January marked Repalle Christian College's 25th anniversary. Over 2,000 alumni gathered to celebrate this milestone. Many of the former students have gone on to different fields of work - distinguished positions making a difference in society. They gave testimonies of praise that without their time at IREF, they would not be where they are today not only in their work but in their personal, family, and particularly their spiritual lives as well.

Mr. Z. Ratna Prasad, who started as a Zoology professor in the mid 90's, is now the principal of Repalle Christian College. He has made it his personal mission to "give the young people who come to IREF a chance to succeed in life. The reality is that each child who comes here is coming from desperately poor situations. Our mission at IREF is not only to provide care and refuge to the poor, but also to provide compassion, dignity and equality." May God continue to bless the college and students for many more generations to come!



February 2018
continued...

India Rural
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Prayer Requests and Praise

- Praise God for the hundreds of individuals who accepted Christ as their Savior at the 2018 Youth Conference and Gospel Meetings in Repalle.
- Please pray for IREF staff and students as they prepare to close the 2017-2018 academic year in March and April. Many of these young people return to idol-worshipping families for the summer holiday and need your prayers as they stand firm for Christ.
- Please pray for IREF teachers and staff as they work diligently each day to make a positive impact in the lives of the children at IREF.
- Evangelists and Bible Ladies will be gearing up for summer (April and May) Gospel meetings in over 100 villages to encourage IREF congregations and also spread the Good News throughout rural Southeast India. Please pray for lives to change, and the staff as they often face much persecution during this time.
- Please pray for the strength and prosperity of our supporting churches, businesses and sponsors.
- Praise God for His graciousness to this ministry and His sovereignty to provide for every need.