

March 2022



God Does Not Stop Hearing the Needs of His People

In December of 2016, we shared the story of Kaseem - a crippled man whom the IREF team met while caroling in Repalle. He was sitting on a local church porch and appeared to have muscular dystrophy. Kaseem showed them that his self-propelled rickshaw was in need of repair. IREF staff rallied together to present Kaseem with a new rickshaw.

IREF has come to love and care for Kaseem since the moment they met him. In the Spring 2021, Kaseem's mother passed away due to Covid when the Delta variant took so many lives in India. She was his only caregiver.

IREF has checked on Kaseem regularly and prayed with him. A few months ago, the small hut that Kaseem and his mother lived in collapsed. A neighbor let Kaseem live in their veranda so that Kaseem wasn't alone. But the space was not handicap-accessible.

Students and staff prayed about ways to help Kaseem. They again came together to see his living conditions, and found him to be in desperate need of help. IREF students washed his clothes, and his linens - a simple task that Kaseem cannot do on his own. But that didn't seem enough, so they prayed more.



God made it clear that Kaseem needed a home that he could live in on his own. So IREF staff, students and even vendors/suppliers rallied together and donated resources to rebuild Kaseem's home. They widened the entryways and created a concrete ramp for easy entry and exit; after reconstructing the walls of his home.



"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me," Matthew 25:35 - this was Kaseem's verse of gratitude to everyone who met him in his time of need, and showed him the love of Christ.

IREF is thankful for the opportunity to serve the community in ways like this, we believe it was God's design for the caroling group to meet Kaseem back in 2016 to extend God's hand of love to him, and continue ministering to him thru the years.



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IREF TOGETHER

YOU are invited to join us for IREF Together, an online global event celebrating hope and generosity. For the past two years, IREF Together has become a beacon of light for the people in rural India, raising over \$200,000 to provide safe housing, education, and hope for marginalized children.

You do not want to miss this inspiring event. Watch the event live at www.irefusa.org/together on April 2 at 10am CST.

**There is no registration needed for this event.*

Join us on Saturday, April 2 at 10am CST / 4pm GMT
at www.irefusa.org/together

Stay tuned for more information!





Christian Education in India Education can be the essential opportunity that helps a child, and their family, to break out of the cycle of poverty. IREF works hard to provide the rigorous academic and spiritual instruction that is necessary to empower students to succeed financially and to live with eternal hope. We operate schools from primary to the college level, including post-graduate courses. Education opens the door to employment opportunities that shape community leaders. Our hope is that every student who comes thru IREF's educational institutions will flourish in viable careers and become pillars in Indian society, not because of their caste, but because of their capabilities and the content of their character.

Christians make up just 2.3 percent of India's population and have a disproportionate presence in the country's educational, health, and social service sectors. Since 2014, India has been ruled by the Hindu-nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which has strong links to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a militant Hindu nationalist organization. Hindu nationalists often accuse Christians of using force and surreptitious tactics in pursuing conversions, often storming into villages and leading "reconversion" ceremonies in which Christians are compelled to perform Hindu rituals. Incidents of harassment against Christians and other religious minorities have increased over the past five years particularly in schools across India, with various Christians being detained or arrested for "attempted conversion," and places of learning and worship being vandalized.



These accusations and charges are not unfamiliar to IREF. In fact they've challenged IREF to work harder to identify the needs of God's people. The literacy rate in Andhra Pradesh is documented as the lowest among the states in India at approximately 67%. IREF sees that gap and is working with families in our communities to improve awareness levels, with the goal to ultimately improving quality of life, while producing a skilled workforce. We ask that despite the growing political pressures to stop proclaiming the Gospel, that you would join us in prayer, particularly for our students to not only grow in their education but more importantly find purpose and meaning through God's will for their lives.

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Gratitude Thank you to each of you that lifted us up as we battled Covid-19. It was extremely hard to be away from all the students and the needs of the ministry while we recovered, but the Lord protected us and our IREF family. Your prayer support is extremely critical to us each day as we face hardships and persecution but the Good News must be shared amongst the people here in rural India - it wouldn't be possible without you.

Thank you!
Emmanuel & Dee Rebba



India Rural
Evangelical
Fellowship

Prayer & Praise

- Pray for IREF staff and leaders. Pray for protection and health, as well as wisdom as they navigate changing guidelines and work hard to instill all preventative measures. Please also pray for the gaps in teaching staff this year to be filled as soon as possible. Roughly 600 students have returned to school and everyone has remained healthy since schools opened back up.
- Please continue praying for a movement that results in great unity among the global Christian community. Pray as IREF evangelists and Bible ladies concentrate their efforts on spreading the Good News in the new year.
- Please pray that believers in Repalle would have opportunities to show the light and hope of Christ to their neighbors.
- Please continue to pray for IREF evangelists and Bible ladies as they minister in rural villages. Many have faced incredible losses in their families and congregations. Pray that God would provide comfort and shine His light in, with and through IREF's evangelists and Bible ladies who are diligently working to spread the Gospel.

