



## Meet Joseph

Often IREF takes in kids who have no one or who feel like they have no one—no one who quite understands their faith, no one who truly cares for them. Sometimes, we welcome true orphans—kids who might have a story like Joseph.

Joseph grew up near Hyderabad, and as a young boy he lost both of his parents. With no family to care for him, Joseph has lived with two separate pastors—one in Hyderabad who died of COVID and one in Gunter. Eventually his story intersected with IREF after the pastor in Gunter brought him to our school.



Joseph's story is filled with one heartache after another, and his pain is so obvious. As he told his story, he did not hold back his tears. So many kids with painful stories do that; they mask the pain. Not Joseph. Dee pulled him close to herself, touching his arm slightly as she told us, "He is a strong boy."

has friends who make him laugh, teachers who care for him, the Rebba family who will fight for him, and a church that pours into him. When we asked Joseph what his favorite verse is, he told us Exodus 15:2. "The Lord is my strength and my defense; he has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him."



Joseph is an incredibly strong boy with a painful reality. As Dee told us, he has no one in his life, but at IREF, he

This verse is one of hope, and it's obvious after hearing Joseph's story why this is one of his favorites. Someday, Joseph hopes to be an evangelist. This boy who once had no one will welcome people all over India into the Kingdom, into the family of God.

**Scan the QR Code to Hear Joseph's story**



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## Thank you for making this a special IREF Together!

YOU helped make this an incredibly special year for IREF Together. During this event, we had the opportunity to champion the people who transform students' lives every day at IREF—our teachers. We heard the stories of teachers like Ranadheer who was once an IREF student himself. Today, he loves being part of IREF's ministry as a teacher. We heard Naomi's story too. Naomi came from extreme poverty, but because of her education at IREF, her life has completely changed. As a teacher, she loves pouring into the lives of students just as she once experienced on IREF's campus.

Our goal was to raise \$75,000 to support our teachers and provide them a salary that will help them thrive. By God's grace and your generosity, we exceeded this goal and received the \$10,000 grant given by an IREF board member. Thank you! We couldn't have done it without you!



**Visit [irefusa.org/together](http://irefusa.org/together) to watch the IREF Together replay.**

May 2024



**School is out** at IREF! All our students have made it through their exams and will wait to find out the results in the coming weeks. In the meantime, most of the children have gone home for the summer. Some will not return to IREF for a variety of reasons—graduation, marriage, work, etc. We hope and pray that many will return at the start of the next term. More than anything, we pray that students will stay rooted in Christ no matter where life takes them.



Before our elementary kids started school break, they participated in VBS at IREF. Natalie Rebba and our VBS team kept the kids active with games, crafts, stories, and action songs. The church was packed with kids expectantly waiting for the next activity as they learned about Jesus.

This year's theme was based on Romans 5:8 and Ephesians 2:10. The kids learned about their identity as children of God, God's plan for our lives as Christians, and the hope of eternity with Jesus. Over the two days of VBS, it was obvious that the Lord was stirring in the hearts of the kids.



Sagarika and Niharika are new to IREF this year, and they've never been part of anything like this. These two had a blast doing all the activities of VBS. More than that, though, they learned how to talk with God and what it means to be a child of God. At a young age, these girls are discovering important, foundational truths. Our hope and prayer is that every child will take what they were taught at VBS to their homes, families, and communities.



**SAVE THE DATE** for IREF's 12th annual Illinois Golf Outing on **Saturday, August 3, 2024** at Bonnie Brook Golf Course. We apologize for the incorrect date in April's newsletter.

Save 20% with the early bird discount until July 1. Last year, the Golf Outing sold out, so don't miss your chance to join us!

Register today at [irefusa.org/golf](http://irefusa.org/golf).



May 2024  
Continued

India Rural  
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### Prayer Requests

- Pray for students as they are home for break. Many children are unsafe in their village, don't get the food they need, or are the only Christians in their family. Often, school break is challenging for IREF students. Pray for strength and safety for them.
- Pray for the Rebba family who will be traveling to the U.S. at different times in the coming weeks.
- Pray for the India elections coming in May.
- Pray for Emmanuel as he leads many Pastors Meetings throughout the summer. Pray for strength for Emmanuel and for renewed vision and purpose for the pastors he teaches.

### Stay Connected

Do you struggle to find us on social media? Due to persecution in India, our Facebook and Instagram pages are private. Join our group or follow us for updates and ways you can pray for the ministry and events occurring in India. Scan the QR code to the right to stay connected.

