



Help the Helpless Triannual Newsletter

Summer, 2020

Special Needs

If you could help support any of these special, urgent needs, we would be so grateful.

***COVID-19 Relief Fund in Ecuador**

These funds will be used to offer temporary aid to families who are in need due to the economic effects of COVID-19. Many families are struggling to be able to provide food, to pay their children's tuition or pay for other daily living expenses due to the loss of jobs.

***COVID-19 Relief Fund in India**

Many families in India have approached the Headmaster of St. Mary's, asking for financial assistance and food. Many of these people are daily wage earners who can no longer work due to the lock down for COVID-19. These funds will provide immediate help to these families.

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Update from Chone, Ecuador

Dear Friends and Benefactors from Help the Helpless,

Although the emergency situation continues, the city is returning to its normal situation. Businesses have reopened, jobs are already underway, small food stalls and street vendors have been running for the last weeks. All with the “certain conditions” of security measures to avoid new infections, but obviously, in many cases these hygiene and protection measures are still something merely superficial or external in order to continue daily life and not starve.

Many of the families that we have been helping with food baskets have already been able to start their “jobs,” either by cleaning windshields at traffic lights, selling food on the street, or “with the star business:” the sale of face masks. Everyone is trying to get their daily food.

We continue to help them with the delivery of food baskets that we bring directly to the homes of the families. For this and for many more things, we count on the help of the volunteers. Thanks to them, we can carry out all this work for those most in need.

A thousand thanks from all the people who benefit from your generosity, a thousand thanks from all our dear poor, a thousand thanks from our community that is nothing but your hands in Chone. God bless you and reward you abundantly in Heaven, where our eyes and our hearts are placed.

Servant Sisters of the Home of the Mother, Chone, Ecuador



Corpus Christi procession in Guayaquil, Ecuador

Dear Help The Helpless Friends and Benefactors:

It has been a very hard time for everyone; this hardness increases even more for the poorest, since to their poverty were added insecurity, fear, hunger, which in this time have been tremendous.

After three months without being able to visit the families, we were finally able to meet with them again. It was an immense joy, both for them and for us. How I wish I could transmit to all of you their gaze, their gratitude, their hugs. In many homes, the first thing they said was: “Thank you, thank you... we have survived thanks to the food you sent us.” What is most tremendous is that it is not a figurative starvation, but real. They have been rationing daily what we sent them every 15 days.

One of the first experiences that we have been able to have has been the celebration of Corpus Cristi. We were not allowed to go out in procession, but Father David felt moved to do so, and we went out with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Our Lord had his procession!

It is difficult to imagine, but Jesus wanted to be present among the most miserable. We passed through an area where there are a lot of drug addiction and drug sales. There was the Blessed Sacrament followed by a small group of nuns and young people saying, “Blessed be Jesus,” and throwing rose petals. The Lord wanted to walk among these young people, with their faces marked by suffering and the vice of drugs. Surely it was their first and only encounter with our Lord. Perhaps this encounter with Jesus means the salvation of those souls. How much suffering, and how much Mercy!

We finish by thanking you. None of this would be possible without you, and you would not carry your hands full when you present yourself to the Lord if you did not listen to the suffering of these little ones.



Delivery of special treats to the children in the poorest area of Guayaquil. These leftovers were donated from a local dining room.

God Bless all of you and your families,

The Sisters from Guayaquil, Ecuador

An Update from St. Mary's School in India

Dear loving friends and benefactors! Greetings! We are so grateful to you!

I hope you all are safe in the name of Our Savior, Lord Jesus Christ! Thank you for your continued support and prayers for the successful running of our schools for the poor and disabled. We believe in God's love and the late Rev. Fr. Antony's invisible blessings. As St. Paul said to the Ephesians, "I have not stopped giving thanks to God for you. I remember you in my prayers."

I wish to give you an update as to how COVID-19 has affected our schools, children, and families. In February, the first cases of COVID-19 were identified in India. By March 23rd, a lockdown was instituted, and it has been this way since then. Our schools were immediately shut down, and all the children returned home where they currently remain. Even now, all religious places, educational institutions, and private companies and agencies remain closed. The lockdown is set to end August 31st, but as with many times before, it will most certainly be extended again.

At present, our staff continues to come to St. Mary's according to the government regulations (only 50% of the teachers can be on campus at a time). For grades 10-12, the teachers delivered books to each family for distance learning. Since April, the government has also provided educational instruction for students on the TV. Online instruction for students at St. Mary's is not possible as many families do not have access to a computer or the internet. However, they do have access to a TV for the government instruction.

We are preparing the school for when we can re-open. There are many new government regulations that we must follow. Therefore, we have to make many large scale modifications, such as hand washing stations and limiting the capacity of the classroom to 50%. Additionally, some of our students do not know basic hygiene practices, so we will have to teach them. However, we are very eager to have our students back with us as soon as we are able.

We are always praying for you, our dear benefactors. Also, we have requested the Montfort Fathers who live nearby to pray for you in their daily prayers and at daily Mass. Please pray for us.

With warm regards,

I. Mariaselvam

COVID-19 RELIEF FUND AT ST. MARY'S IN INDIA

Proper arrangements were not made by the government ahead of the lockdown in India, and so many in our area have been affected by economic struggles, particularly daily wage earners and farmers. They were not able to manage the situation. The shops initially closed, and people faced problems in getting basic necessities. They did not have enough food stored up. Additionally, the daily wage earners were not able to work to earn money to even buy food. Poverty and unemployment made the situation more critical, and as a result, starvation became even more prevalent.

As a result, parents of our students came to us as well as poor families from other institutions. They had tears in their eyes as they requested help. They said that when their children were at St. Mary's, they had food, safety, and shelter, but now they were not able to provide that. We helped by giving them money for necessities as well as food. But, over time, the number of those asking for help continues to increase.

In May, I approached Help the Helpless to ask for funding for a COVID-19 Relief program. The grant allowed us to give money to those parents in need as well as rice and groceries. All the parents who received aid were so very grateful to Help the Helpless. On behalf of St. Mary's, we are also very thankful and prayerful to all the benefactors because they gave their support, even those who are in the same situation. We are again arranging for parental support for the month of September, and we are asking for your prayers and generosity in helping us continue to give aid to those who need it.

Thanking you,

I. Mariaselvam

P.S. We are very sorry to say that we were not able to send the children's letters to their sponsors for this mailing as the children are at home. We do not have a way to get a letter from each child. We are hopeful that you will receive a letter from your child in the Christmas mailing.

Update from Playaprieta, Ecuador

Dear Help the Helpless Friends,

The school year has been up and running for 2.5 months, and we are very happy. It has been a challenge because we have distance learning with virtual classes and not all the students are able to connect online. However, little by little, the parents are making an effort so that the children can connect and follow the classes. For those children who do not have the means to connect, the teachers are sending them papers. The Ministry of Education (government) is waging a war against us, because they say we should not be teaching classes by subject. However, we are fighting to give the children all the subjects so they can learn. We are encouraging parents to be brave and responsible with their children's education. After this quarter, we are seeing that parents are making an effort to ensure that their children are doing their school work. The parents are saying that their children are learning. On Tuesdays, we invite the parents to Mass, and we are able to meet with the parents to see how things are going. There really is a family atmosphere. We are also very happy with how the teachers are doing with virtual learning. It is more work now for them, especially maintaining communication with the families, and they are working very hard.

The economic situation is very difficult for the families. In fact, there are still 100 students whose families have not been able to pay the tuition fees. In July, that number was nearly 300. However, they are confident that they will be able to get by. We know that the situation is very difficult so we only encourage them to pay what they can. We are very grateful for your donation to pay the teachers because at the rate that the parents are paying, we would not be able to pay the teachers their monthly salary.

We thank you for the sponsorship of the families during this difficult period. Yesterday when we brought them their food baskets, they were very grateful because for many of them, it is the only thing they have to eat.

Once again, thank you very much for everything you do so that we can continue to bring hope and above all the presence of God to so many souls.

Sr. Ruth Ibañez, Superior and Principal of Playa Prieta School

Note from Fr. Raphael

Dear GMHM benefactors, members of HTH:

We are so grateful for all your help! As soon as you heard about the crisis caused by COVID-19, you offered all your help for whatever was needed. What generosity! May God reward each one of you. I will put below some of the donations that you have sent this quarter:

1. Funding for woodworm treatment for the fourteen classrooms of the school in Playa Prieta which, as you know, are made of bamboo cane.
2. We have been approved to repair eight houses in Guayaquil, five of which are already finished.
3. Funding for the purchase of oxygen bottles used in Guayaquil.
4. 200 quick COVID-19 tests have been bought and distributed between Chone and Guayaquil.
5. We received funding for the salary of the teachers to be able to pay them \$450.00 per month.
6. Finally, you have approved the five new university scholarships for students who would otherwise be unable to afford to attend the university.

With all that has been received, you have made it possible for us to give hope to some children who will be able to leave behind their poverty and human misery. You can be sure that the Servant Sisters of the Home of the Mother and all the Home of the Mother will be very grateful to you.

I remind you that every 16th of every month, the day that our Sister Clare Crockett and five companions died in the severe earthquake in Ecuador on April 16, 2016, we offer Mass for our benefactors. You, the members of HTH, are first in line! You will reap the fruits of your generosity on the day you stand before the Lord and hear from Him: "Come, blessed of my Father and take possession of the Kingdom, for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink..."



One of the Servant Brothers teaching the children in Ecuador.

With all my appreciation and love for you, I bless you paternally,

Father Rafael
Alonso
Reymundo,
President of
Home of the
Mother