

HELP THE HELPLESS EASTER NEWSLETTER



Easter, 2021

Special Needs

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

***Purchase of 3 Additional Computers for Virtual Classroom in Ecuador - \$1,700**

The Sisters are anticipating that the 2021-2022 school year beginning in May will be virtual. Three of their computers are beyond repair and need to be replaced so they can continue to teach online.

***Repairs and Maintenance of School in Ecuador- \$4,045**

Holy Family School in Playa Prieta is in need of repairs and maintenance, from repairing cracks in walls to painting and fixing the rusted doors.

***Purchase of 44 Mobile Devices for St. Mary's - \$5,091.80**

Schools continue to remain online in India. Many of the students at St. Mary's lack the resources to go online as they do not have a device to access the internet. Your donation will provide devices for those students in grades 10-12.

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Update from Chone, Ecuador

“...If Christ has not been risen, then our faith is in vain.” (1 Cor. 15:14).

Dear friends and collaborators of Help the Helpless:

We write to you these lines of Easter greetings one day before leaving on pilgrimage, spiritual exercises, and get together activities that all the communities of Servant Sisters and Servant Brothers and Priests of Ecuador are carrying out. We have a few days of vacation ahead of us, and all the communities have organized some activities. How nice it is to have one heart and one soul. In Guayaquil, the Sisters have organized spiritual exercises for girls, and all the spots have been filled. In Playa Prieta, the sisters are going to make a pilgrimage. And in Chone, we will also have a few days of Mission, Prayer and Pilgrimage, a very complete program for the young women. And for these activities, the schedule is strategically calculated to make use of the two vans and the trucks that were donated to us from Help the Helpless, taking some, picking up others, etc... The vans and cars that you donated to us are making these activities possible, which are always a spiritual help for the young people. Since this is what we are about to do, this is the first thing that has come from our hearts in this email which was originally to wish you a Happy Easter, but it is also an opportunity to thank you for the help you provide us, which allows us and facilitates the apostolate with the people here.

As for the rest of the projects, we continue with our work that you already know about, such as family and children sponsorship, the different help for house repairs and construction, emergency aid with medicine, COVID tests, caskets, burial expenses and the construction of the multi-functional center, which we now call The Missionary Center. At the end of January, we finished the construction of the perimeter wall. Since we needed a space for the meetings with the adult and youth groups, a roof over a cement floor was built, and we use it for apostolate meetings, to prepare the monthly food baskets and as a garage.

Thank you for helping us and for allowing us to be your front line collaborators in this exciting mission of evangelization and service to the most needy in these areas of Ecuador where we are. May God bless you and repay you abundantly for all the good you do. “And whoever gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he shall not lose his reward.”

Happy Easter.

United in Prayers with a heart full of gratitude,

The Sisters from Chone

Update from Guayaquil, Ecuador

Dearest Help the Helpless Benefactors,

"If we die with Christ, we shall also rise with Him."

Once again we want to greet all of you and wish you a Happy Easter.

These are days to set our gaze on the risen Christ in Heaven.

This is one of our main tasks in Ecuador, to help people to raise their gaze, to raise it from all the suffering in which they are immersed, material poverty, moral misery, in the injustice that cries out to heaven, and to raise their gaze to God who loves them so much and who also for them says: “I am going to prepare a place for you.”

Once again, we thank you immensely for all that you do for these “little ones,” to whom it is so difficult to raise their hearts and eyes, because extreme suffering keeps them at ground level.

Here, we continue with the different projects that you know, and it always impresses us to see how our Lord uses, for example, the monthly food baskets to show His love to the poor. For them it is palpable how much He cares for them.

We continue with the two soup kitchens, and we are thinking of opening a new one in the same sector, Flor de Bastión, but in another area where there are many children who are on the street and suffering. We are working to find the volunteers and the place to start it. Please pray for this intention, so that we can help these children not only in providing a daily meal, but also in providing the most important thing, the spiritual nourishment so that they get to know they are children of God.

We have many stories to share, many miracles of Grace... just know that thanks to your help these people can experience the mercy of God, the providential Love of God. It gives them hope that they are not alone, that the crucified and risen Christ is with them, making Himself present through the charity of His brothers and sisters.

Rejoice
your
Hearts
in our
Lord!
God bless
you.
The
Sisters
from
Guayaquil



Preparation of food baskets by the Sisters and volunteers

An Update from St. Mary's School in India

Dear Loving Friends and Benefactors!

Warm Greetings and Easter wishes to all the Benefactors.

How are you all, Friends and Benefactors?

My heartfelt gratitude to you and all the benefactors for your prayers and constant support of St. Mary's. With the blessings of Rev. Fr. Antony Xavier and all your prayers and support, St. Mary's Schools are running successfully. This Corona issue makes the academic field more difficult, but the teachers have introduced new methods of teaching to reach the students who are all at home. When we began, it was the toughest task, and now all have adapted to some extent.

Our State Government has announced the opening of schools for grades 9-12 for non-disabled children. However, it will not allow the schools for special needs children like handicapped, deaf-mute, blind, etc because they say that these children may be more easily affected by COVID-19. So, we are unable to reopen our 2 schools for the special needs and deaf-mute. We miss them a lot. However, we are continuing online classes for them. St. Mary's children and their parents are safe in their homes. We have not had any persons affected with COVID-19 among the families. However, the families continue to face a severe economic crisis and unemployment. Corona has changed almost all peoples' lives here, including even the highest wage earners. Thank you for your support in giving to the Corona Relief Fund. To date, we have received more than \$17,000 to provide food, supplies and financial gifts to those families in need. We have been able to offer COVID testing to our employees and teachers who continue to come to the school. A total of nine staff members have been infected with mild symptoms and have recovered. Thank you so much to HTH and all the benefactors for your prayers and support.

We observed the Christmas celebration for the Teaching and Non-Teaching staff on December 23, 2020. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, we could not gather with the students. We also observed Rev. Fr. Antony Xavier's third death anniversary on February 18, 2021. Fourteen priests came from our diocese and celebrated mass for the repose of the soul of Rev. Fr. Antony Xavier, the founder of Help the Helpless and St. Mary's Schools. At that time, we issued welfare assistance to some of the St. Mary's families. We had intended to do this at Christmas time, but due to the heavy rains and COVID restrictions, this was delayed. We will give aid to all our families but will have to do this over the course of time due to the gathering restrictions.

Our country is in a severe economic crisis. The introduction of the Goods and Services Tax, COVID-19, and heavy rains during the harvest season have changed the economic level of the country for the worse. Due to the rains, the crops are damaged and most could not be harvested. Farmers are now expecting help from the Government. The petrol and diesel price also increased significantly these past few months. The farmers have been protesting for nearly four months. The daily wage earners suffer a lot. Now there are many protests against increasing petrol and diesel prices. We look ahead to the State Government elections in April, 2021. Please pray for the assembly of better Governance in our state.

We are always grateful to Help the Helpless. We are praying for all the benefactors. Please pray for all our St. Mary's children for their success in the forthcoming board examinations in the next month. We thank all of you for your prayers and support. We love you all. Once again, we wish a Happy Easter to you and all the benefactors. Thanking you.

Yours in Jesus.

I.Mariaselvam



Deliveries of food and aid were made to families who could not come to St. Mary's School



St. Mary's families receiving food and aid made possible through your generosity

Update from Playa Prieta, Ecuador

Dear Benefactors,

Happy Easter to all of you from Playa Prieta. We are now ending the school year here at Holy Family School - classes end on March 5. It has been a difficult school year because all the classes have been virtual, but thanks to the effort of the parents and teachers, we are happy because we have been able to advance in subjects and maintain the family spirit. Twenty-one students are graduating this year. Now we are giving them extra classes to prepare them for the university entrance exam. For the apostolate with them, we are having get togethers. The boys are having a soccer game with the Servant Brothers and Priests, and we are also organizing small group pilgrimages for the older ones. God willing, next month, we will have a day camp for the little ones and a camp for the older ones. We give continuous thanks to God for this school that allows us to carry out different activities with the young people, both academic and spiritual.

At this time, everything indicates that the 2021-2022 year will remain online. The Ministry of Education speaks of returning to face to face classes in a progressive manner and only with the older students from 8th grade through high school.

The number of families in Playa Prieta who need sponsorship continues to increase. Many families make a living from the lemon harvest, but prices have dropped so low (from \$13 to \$4 per sack) that it is not even worth it for them to pick the lemons. However, the good news is that some of the sponsored families are getting closer to God thanks to the monthly food baskets that your sponsorship provides. Several have started going to Mass on Sundays, and one has started attending the formation meetings we have every Sunday. Thank you all for making this possible.

We wish for you that Our Lord fills your hearts with the joy of His Resurrection. God Bless you, and we keep you always in our prayers.

The Sisters from Playa Prieta



Virtual Class of Holy Family School in Playa Prieta, Ecuador

Note from Fr. Altier

Lent is always a very blessed time, but also a difficult time as we strive to overcome our sins and weaknesses. The glory of Easter reminds us that the difficulties not only come to an end, but they also result in something wonderful. If we have been faithful to our Lenten program, we should find ourselves freed from the shackles of at least one sin which has held us bound for some time. This, in turn, will result in a greater ability to pray and to serve the Lord; it also brings with it an increase in grace and a greater share in our Lord's glory.

All this is intended to prepare us mentally and spiritually for the day we enter into the mystery of death. Our Lord's resurrection has destroyed death, but the prospect of death still remains something frightening for many people. Our small doses of dying to self that take place in Lent with the freedom and joy that follow at Easter help us to know we do not need to fear death because the freedom and joy God promises will be immeasurably greater than that we experience in our Lenten/Easter death and resurrection.

Our Lord has established the pattern of life for us. He left the glory of Heaven to come to earth where He lived a relatively mundane life before He entered into His Passion and death. Most of us also live ordinary lives, we suffer various trials, and eventually we die. But our Lord's resurrection has opened for us the way to eternal life. With our sins forgiven and our confidence in Jesus, we can follow where He has gone. Death, then, is not to be feared, but it becomes the means for us to obtain that greatest of all treasures that we should desire with all our heart: eternal life with our Lord.

The Church teaches us that our faith in Jesus must also find its expression in charity. As we recall our Lord's love for us demonstrated in His Passion and death, we are grateful for the profound charity you have demonstrated through your generosity to those in need. The Board of Help the Helpless thanks you on behalf of the children and teachers in India, and on behalf of the families and the Sisters in Ecuador. Your kindness has done much to help improve the lives and circumstances of many people who have benefited from your assistance, but it has also helped the members of our Board whose faith is bolstered by your example.

I think I can speak for the other Board members when I tell you I am in awe of what you have done for these beautiful people. May the grace of our risen Lord fill your hearts and minds abundantly in this glorious season. I pray that God will bless you and your family members with the fullness of His truth, grace, and love. God bless you,

Fr. Robert J. Altier