



*Dear friends in India, dear Nandhini, dear Fr Suresh, dear Fr David,  
Best wishes to all of you from Arivu-Team Nienburg, Germany!*

A very special year is coming to an end. We look at it with mixed feelings. Many of us will be happy when this year is over and a new one will start. But we don't give in. We stay confident. Many activities had to be cancelled. Lessons at school are difficult – but possible so far. Since Monday schools are closed for three weeks of winter holidays until January 11<sup>th</sup>. Now we might even enjoy the season to prepare for Christmas. Christmas the fest of love and hope! We hope this newsletter finds all of you in good mood and health! Enjoy reading it!

### **Christmas decorations at school create warm atmosphere in dark wintertime**



Despite of Corona, the ASS-building is decorated with some advent decoration like the school community does every year. A big advent wreath with bulbes instead of candles is hanging under the ceiling. Each Monday, one more „electric candle“ was illuminated. In the main hall of both buildings a christmas tree welcomed the pupils, the teachers and the staff every morning.

In december, it's still dark when we arrive in the morning, because sunrise is at about half past eight. On december 21st, we undergo the shortest day and the longest night, which means about 7.5 hours of daylight and 16.5 hours of darkness. So, the illuminated tree was a nice and warm welcome. The pupils of standard 5 and 6 folded or cut some stars out of paper in order to decorate the windows of their classrooms. On 6th of december, the pupils' speaker group has distributed little chocolate in shape of Santa Claus to the younger pupils.



## Selling advent wreath

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Many plans for fundraising must have given up for this year. The more we were happy that at least one traditional outdoor activity was finally allowed: november 21st, we sold advent wreath, some decoration stuff, homemade jam and lots of pairs of warm socks knitted by Edda all around the year.



For two weeks, also one corner of the teacher's assembly room was an indoor place to sell the same things. Besides, we had a „selfservice indoor flee market“ where especially games and books donated by our students and teachers found new owners and readers. So, we finally collected some money to continue sustaining your projects.

## Fundraising activities at Wannsee Parish

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As we reported in former Newsletters in summer, Arivu has a special cooperation this year. A parish in Wannsee (part of Berlin; 300 km away from Nienburg) has chosen Neerpair-projects as their annual project for 2020/21. Therefore they asked for collaboration with Arivu.

The contact was made by one of our teachers Mrs Elisabeth Vogels and her sister Catharina in Wannsee. Due to Covid-19-Pandemic many events and fundraising activities were canceled this year – also in Wannsee. But at the beginning of October a harvest festival market was held around the church. It is always the first Sunday in October (end of harvesting time) when in all churches in Germany thanksgiving services are held.

There was a booth with information and photos about the projects and they sold shawls and soapstone pendants from Mahabalipuram. The people from Wannsee were very interested and impressed by the work of Mrs. Nandhini Krishnan and Father Suresh and their team!



### Christmas preparations in times of Covid-19



In the period before Christmas usually many concerts, Christmas parties and other beautiful festive events at school, in church and elsewhere take place. This year everything was canceled due to the corona pandemic. Therefore this year many people decorate their houses particularly beautiful to feel comfortable at home and to overcome their feelings of depression.



Even the center of the city was decorated beautifully with lots of lights.



A lot of traditions during Advent relate to the long period of waiting for Christmas. Many children have an advent calendar for the 24 days until Christmas. Some of these calendars are postcards with small windows. Each

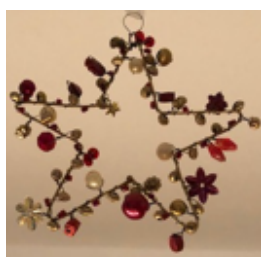


day you open one of these windows and you find a nice picture

behind. Some children have a calendar with 24 small presents. Each day in the morning they unwrap a small present or open a door or a sack or stockings and receive a little surprise, e.g. candy or a poem.



Christmas itself is traditionally the festival of families in Germany. Usually everyone visits their relatives. This year, to protect against Covid-19, it is not allowed to meet with more than 5 people. Now everyone is planning and thinking about how to celebrate in a small group and still stay in contact with all beloved ones. Many families meet, for example, for video conferences - and many letters and parcels are sent by post. Due to the dark winter times candles and lights play a vivid role in decoration our homes. A special tradition is the advent wreath in every family. Each Sunday in Advent we light one more candle. So when we light the forth candle we know Christmas is near.



*Dear Nandhini, dear Fr Suresh, dear Fr David,  
We send our seasonal greetings to you and all our  
Indian friends! To all children in St John's home, to  
all teachers, students and staff of Arulappa Higher  
Secondary School and to all members of WE-Group  
we wish:*

***Merry Christmas**  
and a happy, healthy new Year 2021!  
for Arivu team Andrea, Hilde and Kathrin*

