

# St John's Campus, Neerpair

NEWS LETTER - Jan - March 2026

Rev. Fr. John Suresh Social Projects



**" Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you." - 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**

Dear Friends and Well-wishers,

Greetings from Nandhini Krishnan, Rev. Fr. Backia Regis, and Rev. Fr. Charles.

We trust this newsletter finds you in good health and joyful spirits. By the grace of God, and through your constant prayers, encouragement, and generous support, we are grateful to share that our mission and community continue to grow with renewed hope and strength.

In this edition, we are delighted to present a glimpse of the meaningful events, activities, and milestones from the past months. Each of these moments reflects the many blessings we have received and the shared journey we continue to walk together. We sincerely hope that these updates will help you stay closely connected with our mission and further strengthen the bond of friendship, solidarity, and support that unites us.

## Dr R Arulappa Higher Secondary School

### Pongal Celebration



Pongal, the traditional harvest festival of Tamil Nadu, is a joyful expression of gratitude to nature, the Sun, and the tireless efforts of farmers for a bountiful harvest. Celebrated in the month of January over four days, the festival holds deep cultural and spiritual significance. A central highlight is the preparation of the special dish "Pongal" (sweet rice), which is first offered to God and then shared among family and the wider community. Pongal beautifully symbolizes gratitude, prosperity, and unity.

This year, our school staff and students came together with great enthusiasm to celebrate this cherished festival. On 13th January, Rev. Fr. Charles concelebrated the Holy Mass, invoking God's blessings upon all. Following the Mass, a vibrant cultural programme was organized, showcasing the talents and festive spirit of our students. The celebration concluded with the distribution of sweets and noon meals to all the children, bringing joy and a sense of togetherness. It was indeed a memorable and meaningful occasion for everyone involved.

## Public Examination – 12th Standard Students



On 2<sup>nd</sup> March marked the commencement of the public examinations for 12th standard students across Tamil Nadu, which concluded on 26th March. Our school was assigned to the examination centre at Polambakkam Government Higher Secondary School. On this occasion, I, along with the Assistant Parish Priest of Neerpair, visited the centre. Father

offered a blessing message and conveyed his best wishes to all the students appearing for the examinations.

## World Forest Day & World Water Day Celebrations



On 21st and 22nd March, Dr. Arulappa Higher Secondary School, Neerpair, in collaboration with the Forest Department, organized programmes to observe World Forest Day and World Water Day.

As part of the celebrations, drawing and quiz competitions were conducted to create awareness among students about the importance of forest conservation and water management. Tree plantation activities were also undertaken to promote environmental responsibility. The initiative aimed to instill in students a sense of duty towards protecting natural resources and preserving the environment for future generations. Prizes were distributed to the winners in recognition of their active participation and achievements.

## A New School Bus: A Gift of Care from Our German Friends

In the year 2025, our friends from Germany generously sponsored the purchase of a new school bus for Dr. R. Arulappa Higher Secondary School. We have already placed the order, and we are happy to share that the new bus will soon be added to our school transport facilities.



At present, our school operates a single bus, which was also kindly sponsored by our German friends. This bus begins its service as early as 6:00 a.m. and completes its morning trips by 9:00 a.m., making three trips both in the morning and evening, serving nearly 120 students. However, due to the large number of students and the wide coverage area, this arrangement has been challenging. Our school is surrounded by several villages where public transportation facilities are limited and irregular. The existing bus services morning, noon, and evening are often not convenient for students, making daily travel difficult for many of them. In this context, the addition of a second school bus will greatly benefit our students by improving accessibility, reducing travel difficulties, and enabling more children from nearby villages to attend school regularly. We sincerely express our heartfelt gratitude to all our friends in Germany for their continued support and generosity.

## St John's Home

### Bringing Smiles: Facilio Team's Visit and Contribution

On 29th January, *Facilio*, an IT company based in Chennai, extended their generous support to our school and St. John's Home. A team of employees, led by Mr. Anand, visited us on behalf of the organization. The Chief Executive Officer of the company, Mr. Prabhu, who is the cousin of Nandhini Krishnan, was instrumental in facilitating this support.



During their visit, they kindly donated a laptop to the school and provided essential items such as stationery, plates, and glasses for the students at St. John's Home. Their thoughtful contribution was deeply appreciated by all.

The students were especially delighted, not only to receive these gifts but also to spend meaningful time interacting with the team. The occasion brought great joy and encouragement to our children, making it a truly memorable day.

## With Gratitude: A New Jeep for St. John's Home



After a long period of planning and delay, we are delighted to share that a new jeep has been successfully purchased for St. John's Home. Initially, we considered buying a smaller vehicle; however, due to the challenging road conditions and the regular need to transport vegetables and other essential supplies, it was found to be impractical. Based on the guidance of Rev. Fr. Charles, Rector of St. John's Home, the decision was made to opt for a more suitable vehicle.

In this regard, Rev. Fr. Charles approached Most Rev. Dr. Neethinathan, Bishop of Chingleput, along with the diocesan administration, who generously provided partial support towards the purchase of the jeep. With this invaluable assistance, the vehicle was successfully procured on 5th March.

The Bishop graciously blessed the new vehicle, dedicating it as a means of service and support for St. John's Home. This jeep will greatly enhance our ability to meet daily needs and carry out various activities more effectively. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our German friends and benefactors whose generous support made this meaningful and valuable gift possible.

## From Exams to Excursion: A Memorable Getaway



The public examinations for the Class 12 students concluded successfully on 26th March. Following this significant milestone, the students from St. John's Home were taken on a refreshing tour to Pondicherry as a gesture of relaxation and celebration.

One of the highlights of the trip was a delightful boating experience in the backwaters of the Chunnambar River, which brought great joy and excitement to the students. The entire trip was thoughtfully organized by Rev. Fr.

Charles, making use of the new vehicle of St. John's Home.

The students thoroughly enjoyed the outing, cherishing every moment of this well-deserved break. The newly acquired jeep proved to be highly useful for this and many other purposes. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all the generous donors whose support made the purchase of this vehicle possible.

## A Step Towards a Safer and Healthier Campus

Every year, we regularly undertake the cleaning of the St. John's campus, including both the school and the Home, at least three times, as the campus is surrounded by forest and the bushes and vegetation grow very rapidly. Regular maintenance is essential to ensure a clean, safe, and healthy environment for the students and residents.



This year, after the monsoon season which further accelerated the growth of bushes and greenery, a thorough cleaning of the entire campus was carried out on 2nd February. The initiative helped in clearing overgrown areas, improving accessibility, and maintaining the overall hygiene and appearance of the campus.

## True Story

My name is Suriya, and I am 14 years old. I have been staying at St. John's Home for the past two years, and I am currently studying in the 9th standard at Dr. R. Arulappa Higher Secondary School. I come from Tindivanam, in the neighbouring district of Chengalpattu.



My father passed away a few years ago, and since then our family has faced many struggles. I have an elder sister named Shanthi, who is studying in her first year at a Government Arts College. My mother, Anitha, is the only person supporting our family. She works as a saleswoman in a textile shop and earns a very small salary. With this income, it is very difficult for her to take care of our family and pay for the education of both my sister and me.

Some of my mother's friends kindly suggested St. John's Home, and from last year onwards I have been staying here and continuing my studies. This home has become like a second family to me. The environment here is peaceful and very helpful for my studies. We receive three good meals every day, and the wardens and fathers take care of us with great love and concern. On weekends, we also spend time together watching movies, which makes us very happy.

Because of the generous support of kind-hearted donors and friends, children like me are able to continue our education and dream about a better future. Your support gives us hope, strength, and the opportunity to study without fear about tomorrow. My special Thanks to Pappa.

## WE Group

Dear Friends,

Warm greetings to all.

This year, the Tamil Nadu State elections are scheduled to be held on 25th May. As a result, the government has prioritized the election process, and consequently, all school and university examinations are planned to be conducted before 14th April. Our students are currently engaged in preparing for their semester examinations during this period.



I would like to bring to your kind attention a deeply distressing incident concerning one of the students from our WE group, who resides in Porur near Neerpair Village. On the night of the incident, their thatched house was completely destroyed by a fire caused by an electrical short circuit. The affected family consists of four members, two young boys, their ailing mother, and their elderly grandmother. Tragically, they have lost their home and all their belongings in this unforeseen calamity, leaving them in a very vulnerable situation.

The elder son is currently employed in a private company and is striving to support the family, while the younger son has just completed his final year of undergraduate studies and has applied for postgraduate education. This sudden disaster has severely affected their stability and future prospects. I visited the family the following morning and provided some immediate relief materials along with a small amount of financial assistance. Later that evening, I shared a voice message in our WE WhatsApp group, and in response, the students generously contributed whatever they could. The contributions were collected by our WE group President, Tamilmani, and Secretary, Ambrose. In addition, Dr. Hannes Datta from the Netherlands extended his kind financial support. Altogether, we were able to provide ₹50,000 to the affected family. Furthermore, Rev. Fr. Charles also extended support by providing essential relief materials such as rice and vessels.

We sincerely thank each and every one of you for your prayers, compassion, and generous contributions towards supporting this family in their time of need

## Success Story

### Greetings from Santhiya. G



Warm greetings to all our friends from Europe, and especially to dear Pappa. I am very happy and proud to share a part of my life story with you.

I come from Neerpair Village, where Dr. R. Arulappa Higher Secondary School is located. My two elder sisters and I completed our schooling there. My father is a daily wage labourer, and his work is mostly seasonal. During the rainy season it becomes very difficult for him to find work, and at times our family struggled to meet even our basic needs. However, my mother worked with great courage and dedication to take care of our family.

For children like us, education would have been very difficult without the presence of Dr. Arulappa Higher Secondary School. The school has been a great blessing for many villages in our area. It not only provided us with education but also helped us develop self-confidence, leadership qualities, and the courage to dream about a better future.

After completing our schooling, with the support of the WE Group, my elder sister Pavithra and I were able to continue our higher education. I completed my Bachelor's degree in Commerce (B. Com) and later my Bachelor of Education at Sri Malolan College. Today, I am working as administrative staff at TATA Electronics in Mahindra World City, Chengalpattu. My elder sister Pavithra is also working in a private company.

With our income, we are now able to support our family. Through this support, we were also able to arrange the marriage of one of our sisters. What once seemed impossible has become possible because of the encouragement and support we received.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all our European friends, especially Pappa Dr. Johannes Mispagel, and to every individual who supports the WE Group. Your generosity has profoundly transformed countless lives. Because of your kindness and unwavering support, young people like me, coming from underprivileged backgrounds, are able to live with dignity, grow in confidence, and look forward to a brighter and more hopeful future.

With sincere thanks and regards,

**Santhiya G**

## Voice for the Voiceless: Celebrating the Silver Jubilee Legacy of Rev. Fr. Dr. John Suresh



Rev. Fr. Dr. John Suresh was ordained to the sacred priesthood in 2001, embracing the inspiring motto, “*To be a ransom for many.*” In 2026, he completes twenty-five years of priestly ministry his Silver Jubilee an occasion that invites us to reflect on a life fully dedicated to service, justice, compassion, and the upliftment of humanity.

I (Nandhini Krishnan) had the privilege of meeting Father in January 2001, even before his ordination. For the past twenty-five years, many of us have journeyed along the path he envisioned, inspired by his courage and unwavering commitment to the marginalized. Though he passed away in 2021, his vision and mission continue to guide and inspire us in our efforts to promote the dignity and empowerment of oppressed communities.

Fr. John Suresh was not only a devoted priest but also an extraordinary human being with a deep sense of social responsibility. He dedicated his life to education and empowerment, enabling thousands of students to access opportunities that transformed their lives. With the support of friends and well-wishers, especially from Europe, he also facilitated the construction of houses for poor families, restoring hope and dignity to many.

In times of natural disasters including the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, Cyclone Thane, Cyclone Vardah, and severe floods, he was always among the first to respond. Through his leadership, extensive relief efforts provided food, shelter, and essential support to affected communities. A courageous voice against caste discrimination, Fr. John Suresh stood firmly for justice and equality within the Church and society. His persistent efforts helped open the doors of several churches to all, especially to the Dalit community, notably in places like Thatchoor, K.K. Pudur, and Eriyur.

He was also a thinker, cultural activist, and theatre practitioner who used art as a powerful tool for social change. Through *Adavu Kalai Kuzhu*, he mentored many young artists, nurturing both creativity and social awareness. Deeply inspired by the ideals of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, he encouraged people to uphold the constitutional values of justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity. A lover of nature, he actively promoted environmental care by planting trees across various regions, believing that caring for nature is integral to caring for humanity.

Fr. John Suresh’s legacy continues through the many movements he initiated, including the WE Group (*With Education*). As we commemorate his Silver Jubilee, we remember his life with gratitude. On this occasion, Most Rev. Dr. Neethinathan, Bishop of the Diocese of Chingleput, will celebrate the Holy Eucharist in his memory. As we mark this sacred

milestone, let us pray for the eternal repose of his soul. Though he is no longer with us physically, his spirit and guiding light continue to inspire us in our journey toward justice, equality, and human dignity.

## Extending Care to Pudu Nagar: A Mission of Compassion

Near our school in Neerpair, there is a small village called *Pudu Nagar*, where the entire community has long been affected by leprosy and continues to live under very challenging conditions.



During his lifetime, Rev. Fr. John Suresh extended consistent and compassionate support to the residents by providing rice and essential groceries every month. However, after his passing, it has become

increasingly difficult to continue this regular assistance.

In the years that followed, I have been visiting the village during important occasions such as Christmas and Easter, offering rice, clothes, and other basic necessities. Over time, many residents have passed away due to age and illness, and currently, around 30 people remain, living in very difficult circumstances. The small pension provided by the government is not sufficient to meet their daily needs, particularly for food. Last month, I visited the village along with Rev. Fr. Charles, and witnessing their situation deeply moved us. We felt a strong need to restore regular support for them.

With this intention, we have begun providing rice to the residents every month. For the past three months, we have been carrying out this small effort, hoping to bring some relief, care, and dignity to their daily lives.

## Visit and Safe Return of Mrs. An Jacob (Belgium) and Ms. Sumaya



Mrs. An Jacob and her daughter, Sumaya, from Belgium, who are associated with Christu Roi College, visited us and stayed with us for a few days. During their visit, they spent time at Dr. R. Arulappa Higher Secondary School and the St. John's campus, interacting with the students and observing the activities. They had originally planned to return to Belgium on 28th February. However, due to the Iran war, their flight

was unexpectedly cancelled. As a result, they had to extend their stay, and they remained with me in Siruseri during this period.

After making alternative travel arrangements, we were finally able to find a different route for their return journey. They safely reached Belgium on 5th March. Despite the unexpected challenges, their visit was meaningful and memorable for all of us.

## Editorial Desk

Dear Friends,



In 2005, India made a historic commitment to rural workers through the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, introduced under the United Progressive Alliance government led by former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh. The idea behind this legislation was both simple and powerful: every rural household should have a legal right to work and a guaranteed source of livelihood during times of

economic hardship.

The program guarantees 100 days of wage employment each year to any adult member of a rural household willing to perform unskilled manual labour. For millions of landless labourers, marginal farmers, women, and workers from socially disadvantaged communities, it has served as a vital safety net. Beyond income support, it has helped build rural infrastructure, roads, water conservation systems, irrigation facilities, and land development projects, while strengthening the economic foundation of rural India.

Today, however, the future direction of rural employment policy is entering a new phase. The Government of India has proposed expanding guaranteed employment to 125 days while introducing a broader reform framework known as the Viksit Bharat - Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act, 2025. While the stated objective is to modernize and expand rural livelihood opportunities, aspects of the debate surrounding these reforms have raised important questions.

Some discussions have suggested linking employment opportunities with “traditional occupations” associated with specific communities. At first glance, promoting traditional skills may appear beneficial. Yet India’s social history reminds us that such ideas must be approached with caution. For centuries, occupations in India were closely tied to caste identity. Entire communities were confined to particular forms of labour based on birth, creating a rigid social order that limited freedom and reinforced inequality. Independent India, guided by the Constitution and the vision of leaders like Dr B. R. Ambedkar, sought to dismantle this system and establish a society where every citizen has the freedom to choose their profession.

If rural employment policies begin even unintentionally to reconnect livelihoods with historically assigned occupations, the consequences could be deeply troubling. Critics warn that such thinking risks echoing ideas found in texts like the Manusmriti, where occupation and social status were rigidly determined by birth. Public welfare programmes must empower citizens to move beyond historical barriers, not reinforce them. Rural employment schemes should expand skills, open new opportunities, and promote social mobility.

India's progress will ultimately be measured not only by its economic growth, but by the strength with which it upholds equality, dignity, and freedom of choice for all its citizens. Although this scheme bill has been passed by both the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament, it has yet to be implemented.

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*Dear Friends,*

*Wishing you a blessed and joyful Easter. May the glory of this sacred season renew our hearts with hope, peace, and compassion. May Jesus Christ, our Risen Lord, continue to guide us in faith and service, inspiring us to share love, kindness, and goodwill in all that we do.*

*As we bring this edition to a close, we sincerely thank you for your continued support and prayers. May God's abundant blessings be upon you and your loved ones, now and always.*

*With Warm Regards - Rev. Fr. G. Backia Regis, Rev. Fr. Charles, Ms. Nandhini Krishnan,  
and the Editorial Team (Nivi K & Shravanti)*