



Vision: Christ's transforming presence in healthcare and the nation through Christ-centered medical professionals.



CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

An Anguished Bearer

Reading: Luke 2: 22-40

Simeon's story must have had a significant impact on Rembrandt. He painted 3 different versions of the painting. One at the beginning of his career and the last still incomplete when he died. The painting shown here is an early one painted when Rembrandt was 25. Rembrandt captures well Simeon's gravitas and intensity as he speaks to Mary: "This child is chosen by God for the destruction and the salvation of many in Israel. He will be a sign from God which many people will speak against and so reveal their secret thoughts. And sorrow, like a sharp sword, will break your own heart"¹. Mary is staring at child Jesus in amazement and incredulity. Anna, the prophetess is jubilant as she lifts her hands in praise while gazing at the child Jesus. Joseph is in the shadows kneeling with Mary with his back to the viewer. The scene is of joy and celebration yet with an undertone of trepidation.

The overall focus of the painting is Simeon's conversation with Mary on the extraordinary upheaval the child is going through. Simeon prophetically points to the destabilising nature of Jesus. The destiny of nations and its people is going to hang on their response to the claims of Jesus. James Russell Lowell's hymn written in 1845 captures well the essence of Simeon's words:

*Once to ev'ry man and nation
Comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of truth and falsehood,
For the good or evil side;
Some great cause, some great decision,
Off'ring each the bloom or blight,
And the choice goes by forever
'Twixt that darkness and that light*



*'Simeon and Anna Recognise the Lord in Jesus'
- by Rembrandt van Rijn*

And, individually, Jesus confronts us with the reality of our inmost thoughts laying bare our true nature and character. The message grates our normal human sensibilities. It does not yield to our efforts to contain it. The choice before us is either to surrender or to go our own way in rebellion. Jesus does not offer a middle path. This is what makes the message confrontational.

Simeon implies the heavy price Jesus will pay as the 'stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall'². And Mary would be an anguished bearer of this Rock. Mary's own song - 'magnificat'³ is utterly subversive. It talks about the world and its systems already turned upside down. Such a message cannot be borne lightly or declared with ease. We carry this 'divisive' message of Christ in anguish.

We celebrate Christmas with much joy and celebration. Rightly so, because the birth of Jesus is a 'good news of great joy'. The good news to us comes at a price. And so will be to us as we become 'good news' to the world. That is precisely the pathos that Rembrandt captures in this marvellous painting.

Varghese Philip

¹Luke 2:34-36 GNT ²1 Peter 2:8 ³Luke 1: 46-55

HIGHLIGHTS FROM STAFF

Bibin Benoy: Field Partner - Karnataka

Bibin has been visiting the fellowships in Bagalkot, Bijapur, Hubli, Davngere, Bellary, Naregal and Belgaum apart from the fellowships in Bangalore. He encouraged the students to attend the retreat at Bengaluru in July. It was a small group but they were able to have a meaningful time of prayer and fellowship. Apart from this, he was also involved in mobilising the students for the state conference and the SHILOH missions conference at Vellore that a good number of students attended.

Devakumar: Coordinator - Training

Deva was involved in organising two DOWNLOAD's (a one day retreat on Biblical Doctrines), a couple of Marriage seminars and the Tamil Nadu state Missions conference at Pachalur. In addition to his regular visits to CMC, Vellore, Deva could visit Dimapur, Nagaland as well. He had a blessed time meeting, interacting and encouraging the doctors there. On his return, he visited Dr Helen's home in Kolkatta and addressed the fellowship that meets there. Deva could visit a private college in Chennai and share in the fellowship and also invite the students to the DOWNLOAD program.

Linu Zachariah: Field Partner - Tamil Nadu

Linu could visit fellowships in Chidambaram, Karaikal, Madurai, Theni, Puducherry, Coimbatore, Salem, Sivagangai and spent time with the doctors and students there. Dr Sam Sidhartha accompanied Linu to some of these places. He also attended the wedding of a young doctor couple from Madurai along with the fellowship members. It was a good time of bonding with the fellowship. At Kanyakumari, Linu attended the fellowship along with Malcolm from Andhra Pradesh who addressed the gathering. At Coimbatore, Linu was encouraged to see the PG students also meet together for fellowship. He covets your prayers for the growth of this fellowship. There was also a gathering of doctors at Coimbatore. This is a new beginning and we hope that these doctors would take up the responsibility of caring for the student fellowships in the neighboring places. He was also part of the leadership seminar at Christian Fellowship Community Health Center, Ambilikai where a few key graduates from South India met for a time of discussion, planning and prayer.

Solomon Raju: Field Partner - Andhra Pradesh

Solomon visited fellowships in Anantapur, Ongole, Vijayawada and Guntur in addition to his regular visits to the Kurnool fellowship. He along with MV Rao were able to be part of the one-day Zonal retreat held at Vijayawada in July and another one at Ongole. Senior doctors from Hyderabad and CMC Vellore were the resource people at these retreats. Solomon was encouraged to see many doctors from Guntur and Mangalagiri also attend the retreat. In the fellowships, he has been helping the students study the book of Zechariah.

Chandy Issac: Associate staff - Karnataka

Though Chandy was held up with various family commitments he was able to mobilise prayer for the one day retreat on August 15th and the two day camp at Naregal. The fellowship that meets in his house continue to study the series, 'Lead like Jesus.' At Ejapur, the fellowship that meets in a hospital continues to study the book of Acts. Chandy along with Bibin visited and encouraged some who attended the SHILOH conference at Vellore. Chandy also visits the CSI hospital in Bangalore regularly.

George Suchiang: Field Partner - North East India

George has been engaging the students in the fellowships by leading them to study the life of Jesus. The students are very receptive and he is encouraged to see them grow. He was able to minister to the Doctors in Dimapur along with Deva. Students have found a home away from home at George and Dafa's house where they share a meal, have fellowship and are mentored. He visited Jowai, Guwahati and Tezpur and ministered to the students in their hostels. George was also able to attend the 'Kingdom of God' seminar conducted at Aizawl by Dr Mathew George.

KT Paul: Coordinator - North India

KT has been visiting many places in North India encouraging the young graduates and their families in their walk with the Lord. He visited Lucknow, Herbertpur, Meerut, Guwahati, Dimapur, Kanpur, Jhansi and other places. It was a time to recollect the goodness of the Lord in the lives of the doctors as KT has known most of them for many years and some even from their student period. He encouraged many young doctor couples working in the EHA hospitals. In some of the fellowships, he has been discussing the topic of Peer Pressure and the seriousness of walking with the Lord. As many were facing exams KT could encourage them not to regret about the past and worry about the future as God is in control. He encouraged them to use the present prayerfully. Though he had pain in the site of the screw in the knee joint, God enabled KT to complete all his travels.

Michael Sandersingh: Coordinator - Pastoral Care

Along with the regular visits to the medical college fellowships in Delhi, Michael also hosts missionaries, pastors and Mission hospital doctors as they pass through Delhi. It serves as a time of refreshment, encouragement and ministry both for Michael and Grace as well as the doctors. He could also organise a get together in his home to welcome the newcomers / freshers of the fellowship. Apart from this Michael interacts with the leaders of other organisations like EHA, EFICOR, FMPB, World Vision etc. He was part of the EMFI team that visited Rajasthan to initiate/explore opportunities for Healthcare Missions there.



Pratik Sindhu: Coordinator - Madhya Pradesh & Chhatisgarh

Pratik visited Bilaspur, Indore, Durg and other places encouraging the students to attend the North India conference. He made frequent visits to Bhopal to finalise the venue and make necessary arrangements for the conference and also encourage the Bhopal fellowship that had taken the responsibility of hosting the conference. Though there was a little struggle in finding a suitable venue, God in His mercy provided the right place for the conference. At Bhopal, Pratik was encouraged to see the students spend an entire day in prayer in preparation for the conference. He writes, "It was a blessing to see the students kneeling down before God and asking for His favour over the conference." In the fellowships, Pratik has been discussing the topic of 'Meekness'.

TAMIL NADU STATE CONFERENCE - PACHALUR 2017

A short report by Sharon & Vineeth, CMC, Vellore

Jesus exhorted us to be the salt and light of the world, just as He was. And how would one do that -without ever so slightly becoming either hyper or hypotonic? These aspects were beautifully brought out during each session of this Conference. Surrounded by nature at the Morning rock, we heard afresh the various facets of the Cross – the central, focal point of Christianity by Deva Uncle, which left us in awe of the Savior's love for us. If you thought that you could do great things for God individually, you are mistaken, Dr Vinod said, 'Because God is interested in communities and works through them', just as He did in the case of Asha Kiran, Lamtaput. The sessions on Missions, taken by Drs. Deepak and Ashita Singh, brought out the fact that Christians being transformed by their own walk with God, strategically placed in various positions, as a side effect, transform others around them. For this to happen, we need to become His disciples, choosing to take up our cross, being poor in the Spirit and refusing to take pride in human havings, doings and sayings. Dr Chandra Singh spoke on identity 'Who Am I?' The talk on 'Taming the tongue' by Dr Sam Siddhartha was an encouragement to speak life, truth, liberation, healing and justice, to build up others around us just as Jesus did. Letting God prepare us for marriage by Dr Susheel Tharian, brought out the various aspects that we, as young people should consider before and after choosing our life partners and the various ways in which each of us are wired differently, yet reflecting His glory in being united in marriage.

Pachalur 2017 was a great time of fun and fellowship with over one hundred medical students from across south India, living and learning together. The delicious food, spacious accommodation and all the other arrangements were very organized and adequately prepared by Drs Anu and Philip from Christian Fellowship Hospital, Oddanchatram. The power of God's word to transform lives was very evident in that the sessions spoke to each of us individually, and yet the overarching message and challenge to us was very clear: God is on His mission, very much concerned and interested in today's world! The evidence of His working is abundantly clear to anyone who chooses to look and listen to Him. Are we willing to join Him and pour out our very lives, that the Lamb who was slain might receive the reward – the joy that was set before Him for which He endured the cross, despising its shame? Or are we simply content to miss this mission and live out our own mundane lives, concerned only about ourselves and not feeling God's heart which beats for the poor and oppressed people? Are we willing to become a part of His Story, loving His people, on His mission? The answers to these questions can change your life.

The rumble and tumble of the journey:

We left CMC, Vellore at 1 am in 2 busses in the wee hours of the morning. Added to the late departure, were the heavy, torrential rains and the dysfunction of the headlights of one of the buses we were travelling in. Waiting for dawn to break and the downpour to stop was one of the things we'd never thought would happen. After a successful journey and breakfast at Trichy, we, finally reached ODC, by God's immense grace, at 2 pm in the afternoon, had lunch and rested for a little while. The following three days were just phenomenal. And when we were going back to Vellore, we still had the headlights and the windshield of one of the buses to be repaired. One mechanic after the other turned the repair down, because it was a complicated issue, or so they said. Finally, one gentleman fixed it for us. Well, if you thought that this was all that had to happen, you're mistaken. The oil tank in the seemingly better bus seemed to have sprung a leak, and, we were stuck in the middle of nowhere trying to plug it. Half an hour and a series of prayers later and a stop for dinner, we were on our way to Vellore. Finally, exhausted, yet glad to have reached safely, we arrived at CMC at 4 am. Through all of this, one thing that struck me was; no matter how much you plan, God has His ways of stretching your faith. By taking us through difficult situations, He reveals Himself as a sufficient God and nudges us to trust in Him, when we either, are complacent in our own ways or in other words, in our comfort zone. And He safely leads us through.

The LORD watches over you—the LORD is your shade at your right hand;

The sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.

The LORD will keep you from all harm—He will watch over your life;

The LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.

Psalms 121:5-8



CHRISTMAS PROGRAMS 2017



Anantapur



Tirupathi



Vishakhapatnam



Chennai

RETREAT AT BANGALORE - 1st November

A one day retreat was organised for the medical students in Bangalore. There were about 27 students who attended the meeting which included some students from Kolar as well. Pastor Stephen Beanie was the resource person and he spoke on the theme, "Making wise choices."

He said, "The choices I make now will determine whether I accomplish or abandon the Destiny God has for me. He referred to Luke 22:29 where Jesus addresses the dispute between His disciples about who is the greatest and reminds them that He has assigned them a Kingdom. In this Kingdom, we serve like kings and rule like servants - Servant Leadership. God uses people who totally depend on Him viz. Moses. Without Him, I can do nothing! The value of finding a godly mentor was emphasised.

In the 2nd session examples of people like Joseph, David, Daniel and Joshua who made wise choices and accomplished God's plan was looked at. From David's life, we learnt how he won many battles in private as a shepherd boy, before he won against Goliath in public. My character is formed by the choices I make in private.

The 3rd session was about the obstacles which come along the way, but God is able to handle them such that others see His glory. God, who is omnipotent has made the enemy impotent and enables His people to press on to fulfil His purpose. In closing, there was a time for questions and individual sharing too.

There was joy in the hearts of all who came and they went home challenged to make choices that will honour God.

Chandy Issac
Associate Staff - Karnataka



NORTH INDIA REGIONAL CONFERENCE - BHOPAL

The students of the fellowship at Bhopal organised and conducted the North India Regional Conference in October. Around 120 students from all over North India attended this conference. The theme for the conference was taken from Philippians 4: 13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

The topics that were covered at the conference were: The Call to Discipleship, The call to Eternal Life, Ethics in Medicine, Medical Missions, Integrity in Private practice, Media/Relationships/Sexuality. There was adequate time between the sessions for Group discussions based on the topics dealt with and also specific times of Prayer for the nation. Drs. Sunil & Mary Abraham (CMC, Vellore), Dr Jameela George (TCB, New Delhi), Drs Mathew & Latha George (EMFI, Chennai), Dr Shaji Thomas, Dr Prashanth & Dr Bertha Rathinam (Bhopal) and Dr Samuel Sidhartha (EMFI, Chennai) were the resource persons. The students had a blessed time of learning and also exhibited their varied talents in the Talent Night.

FEED BACK FROM STUDENTS

- Through the sessions, I came to fully understand, "How can I, a sinner, be born-again in the spirit and enter the kingdom of God."
- The Conference has helped me see that God does have a plan for me and I should let Him take control of my life and lead me wherever His will takes me. I do not know what are His plans for me yet, but I am willing to do His will.
- The session on Missions was very useful because I did not know until now that there are so many places that still lack a proper medical care center.
- The Lord called me to be a missionary doctor 3 years ago. But for over a year now I have been battling with the practical downside of being a missionary doctor. Today I was able to place this in the hands of the Lord. He will carry this burden for me.



- Before coming here I thought of working in a Government hospital located in an urban area, but now I want to serve the people in rural areas.
- The session on Media was very useful. It helped me realise that I've been prioritizing media over God.
- The session on Bioethics was very useful because we came to know many of the ethical problems that we will face in our profession and how to handle it keeping all our values and commitments intact.
- The session on Media, Relationships and Sexuality was very useful as almost every problem we face were addressed.
- Most of the speakers shared their personal experiences and this made it easy for us to understand and remember.
- I now have this clear vision that God is calling me. I am still a little confused, but I know that God will be with me. I am ready to be part of His Mission.
- This conference has changed me as a person and I am very happy to say that I am taking back with me Jesus Christ who is my personal saviour.
- Bioethics session stood out for me because I know that I'll be a doctor someday and the things I learnt from this session are the tools I need to be a good doctor.



MEDICAL NEWS- ETHICS Charlie Gard and the limits of medicine The Lancet(Published: 05 August 2017)

The heartbreaking story of an 11-month-old baby boy, Charlie Gard, has dominated newspaper headlines in the UK, and more widely, over the past few months. Last week, Charlie's parents, Connie Yates and Chris Gard, ended their legal fight to transfer their son to the USA for experimental treatment. After further court hearings to decide where Charlie should die, he was transferred to a children's hospice. On July 28, Charlie died.

Reflections on why decisions about Charlie's care ended up being made in court are important. Fundamentally, it was because no agreement could be reached between his parents and his clinical team. Charlie had a rare form of encephalomyopathic mitochondrial DNA depletion syndrome (specifically the RRM2B mutation) and was a patient in Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH). There is no proven treatment for his disorder. For most of his short life, Charlie was ventilated in the intensive care unit, in December, he began to have severe seizures. The GOSH team concluded that his brain damage was severe, and that his life support should be switched off. But Charlie's parents disagreed, saying that he did not have irreversible brain damage and that he was able to respond to their touch. Charlie's parents argued that they had the ultimate right to make decisions about Charlie's care. They raised more than £1.3 million to pay for experimental nucleoside therapy in the USA. With no agreement between his parents and his clinicians, GOSH applied to the High Court, and, on April 11, Mr Justice Francis ruled that it was in Charlie's best interests to stop life support. Charlie's parents then lost their appeal against the judgment, and pursued their fight in the Supreme Court, then in the European Court of Human Rights, to no avail. In July, Pope Francis and President Trump offered support to Charlie's parents. The doctor who had offered to give nucleoside treatment to Charlie in New York reviewed the case details and retracted his offer. Meanwhile, the staff at GOSH, their families, and Charlie's parents all received abuse and threats.

At the heart of this sad story is a breakdown of trust and communication between Charlie's parents and the clinical team at GOSH, but also fundamental disagreement over the extent of Charlie's brain damage, and about who has the right to make decisions about his care. Since February, GOSH's position has been that every day that passed was a day that was not in Charlie's best interests. For Charlie's parents, however, hope (perhaps given in vain) and love sustained their fight for their son. They believe that had their son received the experimental treatment sooner, he would have had a chance.

When the limits of medicine are reached, communicating those limits to parents falls to paediatricians or intensivists, and is undeniably difficult to do. Clinical decisions are rarely black or white, and communicating the shades of grey can be extraordinarily difficult, especially when a baby is involved. Finding the right time and place, allowing time to reflect, ask questions, and revisit the conversation are all essential, and it is a hard skill to learn. The level of pain and suffering, and whether any treatment can prolong life, has to be taken into account. Faith-based considerations might be important to discuss, especially if either parent holds a strong religious point of view. Usually, an agreement can be reached, and it is rare that lack of consensus ends with a court application. Mediation between all parties might be valuable to consider as a step before coming to court, and the Judge in Charlie's case suggested it should be compulsory, although at times it too may fail. The overriding principle in UK law is to consider what is in the best interests of the baby; this is not the case in all countries.

When no treatment for a disease exists, Dominic Wilkinson and Julian Savulescu in a Comment in this issue propose an ethical framework for deciding on access to experimental treatment. However, clinicians should avoid giving false hope. "The child first and always", GOSH's slogan, has to be at the heart of clinical decision making.

Charlie's legacy could include further work on best practice guidelines for mediation between clinical teams and parents, agreement on a framework for use of experimental treatment, appropriate and timely focus on palliative and hospice care, and encouragement to clinicians offering an alternative treatment to ensure they have full knowledge of the facts of the case. For now, though, the grief of Charlie's family and of all those who knew and cared for Charlie must be respected.

[http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(17\)32159-1/fulltext?dgcid=etoc-edschoice_email_aug5](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(17)32159-1/fulltext?dgcid=etoc-edschoice_email_aug5)
downloaded/accessed on 4.8.2017

For Charlie's parents' website see <http://www.charliesfight.org>



FAMILY NEWS

BIRTHS

- Drs Sirisha & Thompson were blessed with a baby in August
- Drs Justin and Asisha were blessed with a baby girl on 19th September.
- Drs Immanuel and Satyashree were blessed with a baby boy on 1st

WEDDING BELLS

Dr Ravi Teja wed Dr. Beulah at Ongole on 28th August.

MOVEMENTS

- Drs Shirley and Robin from Makunda Christian hospital to Scudder Memorial Hospital, Ranipet, Tamil Nadu.
- Drs Herold and Suchita from AshaKiran Hospital, Lamtaput, Orissa to Scudder Memorial Hospital,

GROUND REALITIES - WHEN THE TYRE HITS THE ROAD

This week we are looking out for a house in New Delhi, as we have been relocated to the Country Office of The Leprosy Mission Trust, India and hope that we will find one very soon and continue to make it an open home.

I, (Famkima) did my medical studies in MGIMS, Wardha, Maharastra and joined the ECOS Eye Hospital, Berhampur, Odisha as an ophthalmologist. Joydeepa (my wife) did her medical studies at SCB Medical College, Cuttack, Odisha. We got married in 1995. "Our home was always an open home where students would come for Bible study and for any other thing and it was always a good time." Deepa worked in the hospital for Women and Children (CNI) in Berhampur too. I worked as an associate staff worker for the EMFI visiting three medical colleges in Odisha at that period for bible study and fellowship. The most exciting time would be the State Odisha EMFI Conference, which we usually held at Puri Beach or Gopalpur by the Sea.

In 1998 we moved to Bolangir, western part of Odisha to work in a CNI hospital. This was in obedience to God and disobedience to many of our friends (as they discouraged us). Western Odisha is a poor and backward district in terms of development and economy but no less in terms of Spirituality. We continued to involve ourselves in the Church, started English Sunday school and spoken English class for the EU students. We always believed that if there is nothing, start something. God is ever more than willing to pioneer and walk with us. In 2001 we moved to Purulia, West Bengal to join The Leprosy Mission Hospital. Purulia is known for two reasons: the Arms Drop and the oldest leprosy center. This hospital is 129 years old today and a consecrated place started by the German missionary Rev. Uffman. But leprosy work is never glamorous with lots of discrimination (even among health care providers). But because of this very reason, we continued to work, as we believed that people affected by leprosy are also created in the image of God. But we never left the work among the medical students. We visited the students of the nearby medical colleges, invited medical students to our home and the hospital and moved on. For three years I was a married bachelor (not anymore) as Deepa went to CFH, Oddanchatram to do her Family Medicine.

Now the Leprosy Mission hospital provides Dermatology, General Medicine, General Surgery, Ophthalmology and Orthopedics apart from comprehensive leprosy care.

Having worked 26 years in Mission Hospitals we can say it is difficult, painful, disappointing, challenging but at the same time rewarding and satisfying as it draws us closer to God and to also see people that society neglects/rejects, cared for. What other joy can you expect when you see a young girl rejected and thrown out of her home due to leprosy, back with a smile, looking upon you as family with joy and hope? This is what we are called for. Are Mission Hospitals still relevant today? Only an insider who has worked with the needy, poor and neglected will say YES. And those who look at medicine as a glamorous status symbol will say NO. The need is even more than IT WAS! The daily news is enough to challenge us that truth, values and love are non-existent. If you and I do not stand for it, Who Will? We believe that's why God has called us to this profession. Young students, please note: If you want to follow God and do good, you only need one reason to do it. If you are not interested, you will have a hundred reasons (excuses) not to do it. Either way, there are consequences.

We are blessed with a daughter Abigail doing her PG in Advertising and Marketing at Xavier's Institute of Communication, Mumbai.

Hopefully, we will get a house soon and all are welcome if you happen to be in Delhi or visit Delhi.

Famkima & Joydeepa Darlong



PRAISE GOD FOR:

- The doctors meeting at Ongole (17th September)
- The students who attended the One day retreat on Basic biblical doctrines called DOWNLOAD at Chennai (17th September & 5th November)
- The young couples who attended the Marriage enrichment seminars (22nd - 24th September, 6th- 8th October, 17th - 19th November and 8th - 10th December).
- The students who attended the one day retreat at Bangalore (1st November)
- All the young graduates who attended the AP Zonal retreat at Vijayawada (5th November)
- The time of prayer and planning that the EMFI staff of south India could have at the EMFI office in Chennai (9th November)
- The doctors who could attend the Christmas get-together at Chennai (26th November)



TREASURER'S NOTE

We have come to the end of another year and we can say with the Psalmist in Psalm 107 "Let them give thanks to the LORD for His unfailing love and His wonderful deeds for men". Yes, this is our song at the end of every day and month and year. Despite all our shortcomings God has wonderfully provided for all our needs this year. Let us step into the New Year with a new zeal to do all we can to proclaim the Good news which we celebrate in this season of Christmas. Let us work with a sense of urgency as we see the signs of His return all around us.

Grace Thomas



MONTH	INCOME	EXPENSE	FINANCIAL UPDATE
JULY	520660	754812	
AUGUST	914178	770054	
SEPTEMBER	601547	756356	
OCTOBER	845767	697489	

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UPCOMING EVENTS

9th - 11th February: Marriage enrichment seminar at SU Cornerstone, Chennai

9th - 11th February: North India EMFI Staff planning meet at Nagpur

24th February: EMFI Executive committee meeting at Nagpur

25th - 27th February: EMFI Staff meet at Nagpur

19th March: DOWNLOAD, a One day retreat on Basic biblical doctrines for the medical students of Chennai

REFLECTIONS FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The small group meetings with the students in Medical colleges have been the mainstay of the work of EMFI. Since we have but a small number of staff, the visits to these student groups happen at intervals several weeks apart. It has been encouraging to hear that students fondly remember these meetings which have influenced their lives. Staff also report that the high impact encounters have been times when they are involved in one-on-one discussions, often listening patiently to many issues of concern and offering counsel and encouragement. It brings people close and makes for a spiritual relationship that lasts for a lifetime. We need to strengthen these small group visits and these one-on-one encounters.

The North India Students' meet in Bhopal was blessed by the Lord. Many have accepted the Lord and have decided to follow Him. In addition, many have committed themselves to missions.

Graduate groups meeting together is the need of the times. Somehow, after a vibrant fellowship during the student years, it remains but a pleasant memory. How wonderful it would be if graduates can meet together again, in fellowship around the Lord! How blessed it would be if each graduate couple would take up the responsibility of a medical college fellowship, in terms of being a servant to these students! To our great joy, some graduates have met with students and have decided to meet frequently. This has happened in very unlikely places.

So many programs bless the students in the South. Special EMFI meetings like "Download", 'Upload', State Conferences, Mission camps, Leadership Seminars, Marriage Enrichment Seminars, Parenting seminars, Per-Marital Seminars and the like abound for those in the South of India and in the North East. How can we make them available to those in North India? To address this question, we have been considering having a coordinating centre in North India. Deliberations and trials are on. We need your prayers and involvement.

Some states in our country have been missing out on experience of His love through 'Organised Christian Healthcare'. We need to pray for men and women to arise and bless these States. The opportunities are aplenty.

The Saline Process is a wonderful way to care for the whole person by bringing to him/her the love of the Lord. It would be good for each of us to go through this training. If students/graduates can get together for a day, the Saline Process training can be arranged.

The Marriage Enrichment Seminars have brought a fresh fragrance into the lives of many a Christian family including ours. It is our wish that we will be able to bless every State with this wonderful program. Many of our friends have taken it and have been blessed.

The 'Kingdom of God Seminar' is an exciting discipleship course for Graduates. It offers a graphic view of God's mission rooted in Christ. The seminar is followed by a specially designed Bible Study course which can radically alter the way we go about our lives.

The Bioethics Book has begun to gain traction. Some groups of students have even completed the book with the help of senior graduates like Dr Starlin. In the recent conference at Bhopal, students reported that they were helped much with the sessions done by Dr Jameela from the Institute of Bioethics. The special feature of this book is that it is based on Christian Bioethics. It is heartening to see vigorous discussions on WhatsApp groups on these issues and to see answers emerging from this book. It would be an important value addition if this book is used once a month in our Bible Studies.

And 'Missions'. EMFI is often referred to as pro-missions. We have recently discussed this and realised that if we, members of the EMFI family do not talk about missions, then who will?! While encouraging every Medical and Dental student and graduate to be a witness where we are, we also have the burden to encourage everyone to engage radically with the context around, and one important way of such an engagement is 'Organised Christian Healthcare' or Missions. Let us all be partners! May His Kingdom come!

Sam Sidhartha

The
EMFI Family
wishes you a
HAPPY CHRISTMAS
AND A
BLESSED NEW YEAR, 2018



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