



Christmas Season 2009

Dear Friends of Shoshana,

Much has happened in the last few weeks; I will try to communicate the essentials.

I started in late September, along with Karen Ibach, who accompanied me for two weeks. Here she relates some of her impressions:



*“Especially with the younger lady sewing instructors I could sense how proud and happy they are about their new responsibilities. Besides the security of regular wages they learn to take on the responsibility to lead other women. Not an easy task, but there is growing self-confidence!”*



*Anitha is the youngest sewing instructor. She has the figure of a supermodel and natural grace. She graciously and patiently showed us how to put on a sari - wow - very complicated! By traveling around the area to the projects I have in two weeks learned much about rural life both on and off the road and especially about the fate of many women. That the housing conditions, even of the somewhat better-off sewing instructors, are very cramped and modest and the sanitary facilities usually still quite primitive, you know well. But did you know that a married woman in India wears her wedding ring on her second toe and not on her finger? Whoever wants to know whether a woman is married or not, therefore, must look at her feet.*

*I was surprised how few people speak English today. Actually, only those who have at least attended college have a command of it.*

*Luckily, Bindu is an attentive, patient translator. Without her, understanding would be extremely difficult, even if Martha is also trying at least to understand Telugu. Bindu pleased me greatly. Although she seems rather reserved, I noticed how much self-confidence she has.*

*She can certainly criticize her charges fairly and firmly. And that she can get things done, I have seen with my own eyes while riding on the back of her motor scooter through the hectic swarm of Chirala traffic. I believe that in her Martha really has a good representative on the scene.”*



*In my last Information letter I wrote about Swetha, the young woman who had just completed her MBA. She is quite happy with her sewing school and is enthusiastic.*

*Hopefully her father will find a good husband for her and she will remain.*





Naveen, the boy with the difficult Intestinal surgery, is finally enrolled in the first grade of a private English Medium School. This is a hopeful new beginning.

Although the school building reminds me of an open garage, Naveen so far is happy going to school.



English Medium School



Another new project is in Visadala, a small village of 8000 inhabitants located about 15 km from Guntur. The elderly wife of a local landowner from the village sought to establish a sewing center, and she hopes Shoshana will also set up a medical center to improve the health situation in the



remote village. The new sewing teacher, Viyakumari, is still somewhat uncertain, but she will be fine once she has gained some experience.

From Bindu's brother, I learned about a young pastor who shares his house with six assistance-dependent elderly persons. He lives with his wife and two daughters in one room; the elderly live in another, somewhat crowded room. The pastor's wife cares for them, and some church members donate money and supplies. I think that's just great, and we will provide support in every way possible. In any case, they get free medical care at our medical center in nearby Lohiyapuram.



Bindu, Mithun, her brother & Martha in "Old Peoples Home" Pastor's wife and Daughter John, the Pastor

The Zeisberger tour group visited us one day in Chirala. Even in so little time, they got a good insight into some of our projects.

On my subsequent trip through southern India, on the second day I caught a viral infection. But I had excellent treatment by the travel agency of Expenova and have received many beautiful and lasting impressions.

For all your support in prayer and financially, we thank you from the heart and now wish everyone a happy, blessed Advent and Christmas season.

Your

*Martha B. Jörd*