Chapter – V

SOCIAL SERVICES OF LASALLE MISSION

De La Salle congregation is not only known for its educational services but also known for social services. They work hard for the uplift of the downtrodden people. They think that through the fundamental education they can do a lot for the poor people. St. De La Salle, the founder of the La Salle congregation started this organisation just to give education for the artisans’ children. The artisans were usually drawn from French farmers. Basically their children were abandoned by the parents. The children were not given proper care and concern. They were in the streets without any education. La Salle worked for those children and successfully spread his mission throughout France\(^1\).

The Brothers follow the foot prints of their founder. Their main target is to bring the poor children up through proper education. Though it is their main motto, they help the poor children through social work also. When one sees the spreading of the La Salle Brothers in Tamil Nadu, they are in the midst of the suffering and voiceless people. For example they are in Ramnad District in a place called “Suranam”. That place is known for its arid, dry climate. There is no water, proper road facilities and there are no basic facilities. But the Brothers are with the people and give good education to the poor children in the midst of their discomforts. Around this area there is no school to teach the students. Students from approximately 15 villages benefited from the service of the Brothers\(^2\).

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The Brothers started a new mission according to the demands of the time. In Kallupatti, Theni District there were many lepers. To eradicate leprosy Bro. Kimpton started a mission station. It was a welcoming home for the lepers. He worked among the lepers and now there is no symptom left of it. The lepers are cured from leprosy\(^3\). Near that village another brother started a mission to help the poor people. Now too he is helping the poor by giving loan for their business. Getting the loan the people expand their petty businesses and live peacefully. These are all some examples of the social services of La Salle Brothers\(^4\).

In Thoothukudi, the Brothers were invited to educate the children of fishermen. The Brothers accepted the invitation and started to give quality education. They worked around the suffering nearby villages. So they started a hostel for a comfortable stay at those village students. In this chapter we deal mainly with the service of De La Salle Brothers in Tamilnadu.

**Beginning and growth of the destitute home:**

The destitute home in Thoothukudi La Salle was established in 1976. It was started with 125 boys. When the home began, there was no help from outside, especially from the government. It was run purely by the hard work of De La Salle Brothers. Even they did not seek any sponsorship from abroad. The Brothers found it very difficult to run this Destitute home without any financial assistance from outside. Subsequently they prepared a project to submit a funding agencies for getting aid from abroad. The people were generous in helping the Destitute children. Yet the amount was not enough\(^5\).

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\(^3\) Leprosy Eradiction programme of Lasalle Mission, De Lasalle Archives, Madurai.


\(^5\) Donors Register 2000, Destitute Home, Thoothukudi.
In the meantime Brothers thought of asking financial assistance from the state and central governments. In 1981, the Central and State governments came forward to help fifty students. In 1983 the government extended their support to another fifty students. It has greatly reduced the burden of the brothers.\(^6\)

**Rules and regulations of the destitute home:**\(^7\)

1. The students should participate in the spiritual, sports and educational activities.
2. The students should follow the time table of the destitute home.
3. If the students don’t show interest in studies they will be removed from the hostel.
4. The administration will take action on the boys who steal and damage common goods.
5. The students should not keep money with them.
6. The student, should get the signature of the chief warden only in the progress report.
7. The students should get the permission of the warden before taking leave in the school.
8. The students will be sent home only when they are sick or on public holidays.
9. The students who go home should seek the permission of the warden.
10. The students who go out without permission of the warden will not be taken back to the hostel and then the administration is not in charge for them.
11. When the students go home for holidays, they should come back on the previous day of reopening at 6.00 p.m to the hostel.


\(^7\) Rules and Regulations Register, Common Board Management, De Lasalle Archives, Madurai.
12. The parents or the relatives of the students will be allowed to see only on second and fourth Sundays of the month.

13. If the students fail in the annual exam, they will not continue their studies for the coming year in the hostel.

14. If the students are absent in the school without the knowledge of the warden, the parents should meet the warden and the headmaster regarding it.

**Aims of the Destitute Home:**

The school is situated in the area of poor fishermen families and other poor families. There are many deserving destitute students waiting for admission. The families of these students have not got housing facilities. Most of them live in thatched huts along railway lines and slum areas. The management is bent upon solving these problems. They are convinced that the destitute children are a part of society and can be successful. The Destitute Home run by this management extensively serves this purpose. The mission of this home is to widen the horizons of destitute children helping them to know about the city and its opportunity, work experience and so good work – study programmes are used as valuable learning processes so that the destitute boys can prepare themselves for the world of work before they are thrown into it on their own and continue to stay in the destitute home and turn their eyes to what is beyond the home and School⁸.

**Objectives of the destitute home:**

i) To establish and promote educational and charitable institutions.

ii) To manage and maintain educational and charitable institution and activities of the poor and others through Schools, Orphanages, Boys welfare institutions, agricultural, industrial and technical

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establishments and schools and colleges, medical relief centers, youth hostels and other such institutions and activities and undertaking of an educational, social and charitable nature on behalf of the youth and adults of India without discrimination of religion, caste and colour.

iii) To acquire, hold, posses, receive gifts, develop, mortgage, invest, sell, transfer and alienate moveable and immovable property for and on behalf of the De La Salle Brothers in India.

iv) To rise funds by donations locality or from broad and otherwise for the above objects.

v) Training personal members and aspirant members of the Association for the purpose of fulfilling the above aims and objects.

vi) To do all such things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the objects or any of them.

Nature of services offered in the Destitute Home:

(i) **Boarding** : At present there are 135 children being maintained with the resources that are available with the management plus voluntary donations. It is beyond the capacity of the management to increase the present strength level of 125 destitute children despite the fact that there are many deserving students waiting for admission.

The boys they serve belong to poor fisherman families of Thoothukudi and its suburbs. Their economic condition is very low because most of them work in country crafts as coolies depending on the vagaries of the weather. Often they are not able to put the boats into the sea due to strong winds. Even on fishing days too, the fishing is not a steady catch. One day there will be good catch; on another day they come back with nothing. Some of them are in

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9 Board members Resolution No.15 of Destitute Home, 2003; Registration No.26/64, Destitute Home, Society Act 2003.

10 Destitute Home, Admission Register 2009, Thoothukudi.
debt to middle men. They do not get housing facilities. Most of them live in thatched huts along railway lines and unhygienic slum areas. They also suffer from unstable family patterns, occupational uncertainties resulting in social and emotional instability and other factors of personal disorganization. So the slum child develops a different attitude towards school. Aimlessness and lack of enthusiasm for school turn out to be negative factors. The destitute child begins to cultivate images of himself as a person who has to stop at a certain level of education and wind up at the lower rung of the occupational ladder.\footnote{Interview, Bro. Jeyaraj, Chief warden, Destitute Home, Thoothukudi date 15 July 2010.}

The school is used as the main weapon in improving the life changes of the children belonging to these inadequate families. Often there are accidents in the sea. The heads of families are drowned or carried away in the sea and the children and the widowed mother are thrown on the street. Such helpless children of this town and some others of the neighboring coastal villages are cared for with out any distinction of caste, creed or community.\footnote{Interview with Bro. Kennedy, Asst. Warden, Destitute Home, Thoothukudi, dated 15 July 2010.}

**ii) Education**: Education has a great social significance for the management. Since earliest times, they have devoted to it a good deal of attention. The objective of education which the management is aiming at is the completion of the socialization process, the transmission of cultural heritage, reformation of attitudes and the occupational placement. The P.M. Ornellas High School is one of the most ancient schools in the town. True to the meaning of the objective of education, it has produced noble people who have excelled in all walks of life. Elevated as High school since, 1964 it has a total strength of 675 students including 125 destitute children in divergent classes from IV to X standards at present.\footnote{Admission Register 1964, St. Lasalle Higher Secondary School, Thoothukudi.}
iii) **Vocational Training:** Destitute children studying in the High school are provided with facilities for training in much useful crafts like weaving and book binding. The management of De La Salle Brothers is known for educational activities world over among the unfortunate population. It commands possession of experts among its religious staff trained in engineering and vocational trades. Services of a few members of such staff are available to the destitute children who are practically trained in engineering and vocational trades when they are off the schools hours.\(^{14}\)

iv) **Recreation:** Recreation facilities and activities gather momentum. Their interest and expenditures for radios, record, musical instruments and film shows have doubled during these days to make our destitute children happy. Their interest is in concerts, theatres, newspapers and magazines have also doubled. They have both neighborly recreation and family recreation, offering the children a variety of rich entertainments which their family is unable to provide due to prohibitive cost. Care is taken to see that such rich entertainments are not attributed to juvenile delinquency, family instability and several other social evils.\(^{15}\)

Entertainment that they organize has its virtues. Recreation in a comprehensive sense includes every activity of students, which infuses them to go to study with fresh enthusiasm. It creates in them a zeal for study. The students’ physical and well-being is preserved. Thus they organize sports, games and gymnasiums, providing suitable amenities for recreation. Special efforts are taken to preserve traditional forms of recreation such as folk songs, folk arts, folk dramas, folk dances. The indigenous sports that they conduct have a healthy influence on communal life among the destitute children. Some of the leisure time of the students is spent in various pursuits like discussion on

\(^{14}\) Information Record – Application for Sanction of Grant Under the Scheme for Destitute Children – General Assistance 1979, p.2.

\(^{15}\) Interview, Bro. Jeyaraj FSC, Chief Warden, Destitute Home, Thoothukudi, Dated 15 July 2010.
problems of religion, community work and improvement in general education\textsuperscript{16}.

\textbf{v) Case Work Services:} This is being carried out by the voluntary members of the management by way of periodical visits to the case of children proposed for enrolment. Attention is given to remove the barriers between the school, the parents and other slum residents who have formal education. The volunteers of the management visit them, impress upon them the necessity of education and remove the feeling that the school is them. The trick is to make the school “us”\textsuperscript{17}.

\textbf{vi) Medical Aid:} In Thoothukudi there are many hospitals and clinics where the children get the required aid. A medical practitioner is engaged to visit the children on appointed time. This services went on very well. The management has a kitchen garden with coconut groves and vegetables. During their Leisure, the children feel happy and relaxed\textsuperscript{18}.

\textbf{Members List:}

\textbf{1. Name of Society :} P.M. Ornellas Destitute Home for Children Society was registered under society Act of Tamilnadu in 30.06.2003. The administration of destitute home is under the control of a Lassalian brother. He is called member of the destitute home. The members post is transferable. At present 19 members have served in the home in various periods. A list of members and their period of services given in table\textsuperscript{19}. The following table clearly shows the member list.

\textsuperscript{16} Interview with Bro. Kennedy, Asst. Warden, Destitute Home, Thoothukudi, dated 15 July 2010.
\textsuperscript{17} Interview with Jeeva, Warden, Destitute Home, Thoothukudi, dated 15 July 2010.
\textsuperscript{18} Interview with Selvam, Warden, Destitute Home, Thoothukudi, dated 15 July 2010.
\textsuperscript{19} Destitute Home, Board members Register, Thoothukudi, 2003.
Board Members List of Destitute Home, Thoothukudi:

Table 5.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No.</th>
<th>Name of the Member</th>
<th>Date of Entrance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Rev.Bro.Christopher</td>
<td>19.06.2003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Board Members Register, Destitute Home, Thoothukudi, 2003.

The Churches Council for Child and Youth Care Boys:

‘The Churches Council for Child and Youth Care’ (CCCYC). Actually this society is registered in Karnataka and the head office is in Bangalore. It acts in partnership with Kindernothilfe e.v., Duisburg, Germany. The Churches Council for Child and Youth Care sponsors the boys for their studies. Sometimes if the boy is eligible, they help him for his higher studies too. From this The Churches Council for Child and Youth Care more than 60 students benefit in our school. To be a The Churches Council for Child and Youth Care
boy, the boy should be an orphan. If the boy has parents, they should be poor economically. The parents should not be government workers. The boy should not get any other scholarship from the Government\textsuperscript{20}.

**Procedure of adopting a boy in the Churches Council for Child and Youth Care:**

The boy should give all the details about himself in writing. The details will be sent to Bangalore, the head office. From there they should send it to Germany. There they discuss the issue with a family or individuals accepts to sponsor the boy’s educational expenses\textsuperscript{21}.

Each one should contribute Rs.350 per year\textsuperscript{22}. It will be sent to Germany. It is to lessen the burden of the foster parents and the contribution of the students. It fosters the responsibility of the boys. And it helps the students to become responsible students in the society.

The boy can get the amount as cash or he can get as things for the amount which is needed for him.

**Programme done by the Churches Council for Child and Youth Care:**

Once in a year a medical check is done for the boys. A group consisting of Dentists from Germany come for dental check up once in a year. The boys are taken for a short tour. The Churches Council for Child and Youth Care provides a set of uniform and colour dress for Christmas Celebration. They celebrate X’mas and distribute cakes for all the The Churches Council for Child and Youth Care boys. After receiving the gift the boys are expected write a letter of thanks to their foster parents. Each month The Churches Council for Child and Youth Care sponsor oil, bathing soap and washing soap and teach the

\textsuperscript{20} The Churches Council for Child and Youth Care Society Register, Bangalore 2006.
\textsuperscript{21} Interview with Mr.Tharumar, Co-ordinator of CCCYC, 20 July 2010.
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid.
students how to make soap and sweater. They train the boys to maintain the garden and take care of other home pets. The Churches Council for Child and Youth Care will pay all the fees of the boys\(^{23}\).

The boys are selected for The Churches Council for Child and Youth Care from various sections and standards. Forty Five students have been selected during the year 2009-2010.

1 student from VII standard
19 students from IX standard
17 students from X standard
6 students from XI standard and three students from XII standard

**Lasalle Tsunami Services:**

“To live, to suffer, to survive is to find meaning in the suffering. If there is purpose in life, there must be purpose in suffering too”\(^{24}\).

The day after Christmas – 26\(^{\text{th}}\) December 2004 was – “The black Sunday”\(^{25}\). With much hope and love the whole world was expecting the New Year. It was the day, the Brothers began their annual retreat. The unimaginable thing happened. The towering and giant waves took away many human lives from Indonesia up the our South Indian Coastal areas. The word Tsunami was a terror to many. It devastated South Asia, killing nearly 1,50,000 human lives\(^{26}\).

Brothers who were at the retreat were disturbed and with this disturbance raised their hearts for the “human souls” and the suffering. News and condolence messages started coming from the all over the Lasallian world.

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\(^{23}\) Destitute Home, Programme, Papers File No.5, Thoothukudi.


\(^{25}\) The Hindu, dated 27 December 2004.

\(^{26}\) The India Express, dated 30 December 2004.
They wondered, worried about the school in Thoothukudi and the children. Thank God nothing had happened to them. With relief brothers continued their retreat and started working on the strategies to be undertaken.

They wanted to respond to the needy ones at once. With a prayerful note, the Brothers had a serious discussion over their response to the needy ones. It is the most devastating experience for the people who live in coastal areas. “Life became meaningless to many”. It is in this situation, La Salle Brothers in India responded to the people during retreat\textsuperscript{27}.

Every Lasallian experienced the pressing need for the people who suffered. Superior General, Vicar General, General Councilors, and the Brothers expressed their love, solidarity and support for the victims.

A special session was conducted for the Tsunami affected people. Each community and institution gave their responses. Emergency council meeting was called for during the retreat. Then the Brothers volunteered to extend their work in Tsunami areas. It was decided to send brothers to four different places. Andhra Pradesh, Nagapatinam, Kanyakumari and Thoothukudi\textsuperscript{28}.

**Piloting teams and report:**

The camp formulated four piloting teams to four affected places. They went on the 3\textsuperscript{rd} January and 5\textsuperscript{th} January 2005 to study the situation in respective places. On the 5\textsuperscript{th} January, piloting teams from Nagapatinam, Kanyakumari and Thoothukudi held a special meeting with Brothers Delegate and President.

\textsuperscript{27} Bro. Thomas Michael, A Report on Lasalle Tsunami Services, 2005.

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid.
Andhra Pradesh – Bro. Doss and two Lay Staff
Kanyakumari – Bro. Freddy and Bro. Felix and two Lay Staff
Thoothukudi – Bro. Thomas and Bro. Christopher & two Lay Staff

Each team gave their report. Brothers Thomas, Robert and two lay staff were commissioned to work out the plan and strategies to extend their help in these areas.²⁹

**Lasallian Volunteer Team:**

Three junior novices, thirty three aspirants and eight postulants along with the twenty nine student representatives from St. La Salle Higher Secondary School, Thoothukudi and St. James Higher Secondary School, Suranam were magnanimous to extend the help and they sent twenty two boys and two staff. Brothers Freddy, Felix, Vinnoly and Jeyakumar, Dharmar from St. Lasalle, William and Louis from St. James were the force behind them. They all gathered at Lasalle on the ⁷ᵗʰ of January 2005. A troop of 103 La Sallians (brothers, teachers, students and formers) under the chairmanship of Brother Thomas Michael were ready to set off for the mission.³⁰

**Lasallian’s Outreaching Programme:**

In Thoothukudi, La Salle brothers do reaching out programme as part of their service. This is an extension programme of the Tsunami programme. And this is a generous service to the poor those who are affected by Tsunami as well as poverty.

Thoothukudi Centres:

1. La Salle Nagar
2. Lion’s Town
3. Fathima Nagar
4. St. Thomas Church

The above mentioned places have the tuition centres run by the brothers. The brothers support this programme economically. The local people assist this programme by giving their places for the tuition centres\(^{31}\).

Aim of the Tuition Centres:

Aim of the tuition centres are to encourage the weak students to learn. First the brothers visited the places and studied the situation of the students who are not able to study at home and for whom there would not be enough facilities at home to study. So the brothers came up with the idea of starting tuition centres. Even the brothers encouraged the students those who would like to study. Basically the tuition centres give great opportunity for the poor children to study well, and it helps them to train the students for coming up in life\(^ {32}\).

Programme of the Tuition Centres:

Everyday there are games held at 5.30 p.m. It is for an hour. The study starts at 6.30 p.m. It goes upto 8.00 p.m. During the study hour the students do writing and reading practice. The animator conducts tests for the students. The brother who is in charge of the tuition centre will visit the centre twice a week. Once in a month there will be a parents meet\(^ {33}\).

\(^{31}\) Interview with Bro.Sekar, Co-ordinator, Lasallia Out Reaching Programme, Dated 20 August 2010.
\(^{32}\) Resolution, Common Board of Management, De Lasalle Archives, Madurai, 1970.
\(^{33}\) Resolution, Common Board of Management, De Lasalle Archives, Madurai, 1971.
Structure of the Tuition Centres:

Each tuition centre benefits minimum 30 to 40 students. There are two animators to animate the students and their qualification is 10th completed. They will be paid Rs.800 per month. The records about tuition centre should be maintained. This is the main duty of the animators. It will be submitted to the head of the brothers.  

La Salle Nagar:

It is a place created by the brothers for the people who are affected by the natural calamity ‘Tsunami’. This plan came to exit after few months of Tsunami. From this service more than 60 families are self sustaining now. The brothers have built houses for all these 600 families. They have put up cement roads and street lights. The brothers have worked for the water supply. For the self sufficiency of the people there is a community hall and a chapel. For the students those who are in La Salle Nagar the brothers provide uniform and educational assistancy.

Balwady:

The brothers have created another important facility for children, that is a balwady and there are 30 small children here. The children are taken care of from 9.30 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. The children will be trained to recite alphabet and rhyme. There will be a teacher and a cook. The teacher is paid Rs.1000 per month and the cook gets Rs.600 as salary from the management fund. There is a chief co-ordinator and a co-ordinator supervising the balwady. Hence it has blended Christian values into its teaching and administrative process. In this direction all the schools run by the De La Salle brothers combine the

inculcation of values, morals and ethics with the teaching of the academic subjects.

The spirit of the De La Salle order is visible in the various outreach and society oriented programmes such as National Service Scheme, Youth Red Cross and community development activities and awareness programmes. The tsunami relief and rehabilitation programmes which demonstrate the long term commitment and involvement of the order. They have proved that service to the poor and the ready is service to God himself for god manifests himself in his creations.

This is only a generalised version of the young service rendered by the Lasallian mission towards Social and Educational upliftment. St. Joseph’s Development Trust and “Reaching the unreached” are two major organisations working expansively towards the forsaken humanity’s empowerment and enhancement. With Brother Kimpton at the helm of affairs it is worthwhile to study the exhaustive work done by these two phenomenal outreach programmes.

The study reveals that the De La Salle order functions with a vision and a mission. They are inspired by the teachings of their founder St. John Baptist De La Salle. As the founder was a visionary with a purpose, so also, his followers have a concrete plan of action. Their work and service have brought relief and happiness to millions of homes all over the world and their continued presence and place of prestige in Thoothukudi is a living proof of this fact. The De La Salle order and its spirit will continue its service for humanity for the future too.

Reaching the Unreached is the brain child, of brother James Kimpton. Service minded, he decided to construct New Balwadi for the benefit of the
poor children. What is very vital to remember is that this would not have eventualized, but for brother Kimpton; simple humble and polite frame of mind. This deep conviction proved to be a challenge to the mothers at Madurai. So any function organized had to be on a very low profile keeping in mind the Reaching the Unreached testament of its aims and policies. But for his singular minded devotion to this venture this would not have been realized.  

Reaching the Unreached is secular service organization working in rural areas of middle of Tamil Nadu since 1974. It was registered under Tamil Nadu Societies Act 1978 with the Headquarters in the tiny village G. Kallupatti at the foot hills of the Western Ghats. We are concerned for our neighbours as dignified individuals who have the right to a decent life and therefore a right to our assistance to a better life, especially women and children, the old, the sick, the homeless, the unemployable, those in need of houses or water.

**Children’s Programme:**

Reaching the Unreached children’s village programme started in the year 1978 with four abandoned children. Today it has grown into a complex programme. Now we have four childrens’ villages with 536 children, they are keen taken care of 76 faster mothers in seventy six independence houses. Children upto housed in the families, the number of children in each family is seven or eight. Boys and girls above thirteen years are sheltered in separate hostels located with in Reaching the Unreached premises. Now we have girls’ hostels and two boys hostels. There are 227 youths in these hostels. In admitting children the priority is given to abandoned destitute orphans and children infected by HIV/AIDS. All these children are completely integrated into the village families and schools. As the HIV children are in need of more security, affection, total acceptance and excellent care, they are pooled together

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37 Interview, Bro. James Kimpton, Founder Reaching the Unreached, Theni, Dated 12 August 2010.
38 Reaching the Unreached, Project Report, 1984, Theni.
39 50 years of Service in Asia, A Souvenir, Lasalle Publication, Madurai.
in twelve houses at Sirumalar Children’s village. They are taken care of by volunteered faster mothers. The child is given extra milk, fruits, eggs, meat and money amounting to 300 Rs. per month. What is heart rendering is president mother James Kimpton resides in the childrens village to supervise and direct all the health programmes. Two residential nurses stay within the campus for full 24 hours. A specialist is employed to visit counsel and treat the children.\textsuperscript{40}

Children above thirteen years of age graduate to hostels they continue the education and complete their higher secondary studies. Now the Brothers have four Girls Hostels and two Boys’ Hostels.

The table shows the strength of Annual reports in Children’s village G.Kallupatti, Theni.

\textbf{List of Children’s Village / Annual reports of Reached the Unreached:}

\begin{table}[h!]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Name of the Children’s Village} & \textbf{Boys} & \textbf{Girls} & \textbf{Total} \\
\hline
Anbu Illam & 43 & 130 & 173 \\
\hline
Nirmala & 38 & 60 & 98 \\
\hline
Miriam & 33 & 70 & 103 \\
\hline
Sirumalar & 55 & 107 & 162 \\
\hline
\textbf{TOTAL} & \textbf{109} & \textbf{367} & \textbf{536}\textsuperscript{41} \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}


\textsuperscript{40} Interview with Bro. James Kimpton, FSC, dated 12 August 2010.
\textsuperscript{41} Annual Report of Reaching the Unreached, 2006-2007, G. Kallupatti, Theni.
The table shows the strength of Hostel and Students in G.Kallupatti, Theni.

List of Hostels and Students Strength:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table No.</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Hostel</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miriam Girls Hostel</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Velankanni Girls Hostel</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josephine Girls Hostel</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pushparaj Girls Hostel</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Boys Hostel</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sirumalar Boys Hostel</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Schools</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Studies</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>40</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Reaching the Unreached 2008-2009, G.Kallupatti, Theni.

All religious, National and International Women’s Day and world AIDS Day, festivals get celebrated. September 18th is celebrated as Reaching the Unreached day and May 23rd as Bro. Kimpton’s birthday are festivals that get annually celebrated

Children are encouraged to participate in indoor and outdoor games to make them physically fit for their future, Children Village competitions held in other schools to enrich their experience.

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43 Resolution No.10, Reaching the Unreached, 2008-2009, G. Kallupatti, Theni.
Clinical Services:

Mobile clinic services started in 1974 provide medical facility to many remote villages. The team of Doctors, nurses serve the inmates and out patients daily during morning hours. The afternoons are utilized to serve the patients in different remote villages as per schedule\textsuperscript{44}.

The founder brother Kimpton does the unique job of serving lepers through mini clinical services. Stationed in boys village. Three decades of his services has virtually eradicated leprosy and polio at Kallupatti. They impart the health knowledge and the consequences of HIV/AIDS and their epidemic among the rural folks. Awareness education is taken to home through media aids such as video films, street theatre and counseling\textsuperscript{45}.

The trust gives special priority to antenatal care in the form of knowledge on nutrition, immunization, anaemia and family planning. Besides providing enough knowledge on worm infestation, reading, alarm signals form a mature approach to delivery. At the post delivery stage, child care programmes are given due importance. Regular and cyclical immunization programmes are made good and compulsory use of. The team of doctors visit the target villages and records the weight and other parametric measures below 3 years to further follow up like providing nutritious care to underweight and malnourished children\textsuperscript{46}.

Day Care Centre:

To cater the needs of the employed women the Brothers started Day Care Centres and Balwadies. Balwadies by which Day Care Centres are known

\textsuperscript{44} Annual Report of Reaching the Unreached, 2008-2009, G. Kallupatti, Theni.
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{46} Project Report of Reaching the Unreached, 2008-2009, G. Kallupatti, Theni.
comprise children below three years who are cared in five day care centres. It provides the necessary morale boosters for the women to be employed learning the children in the custody of the day care centres. Children are groomed into disciplined hygienic, talented girls to be streamlined into participating in community and cultural programmes. The general knowledge taught, make them self assertive, independent children\textsuperscript{47}.

**Education Programme:**

Brother Kimpton introduced a novel way of motivating children to attend school with his programme supplementary school. The children’s interest was sparked off by little food and pocket money. Gradually, this innovation spread like wild fire resulting in 3 primary schools, one high school, 11, kindergarten and study centres in remote villages. The children are also taken on exposure visits. This helps them to understand the industrial sectors better\textsuperscript{48}.

These schools can be roughly grouped as follows.

**A. Pre School:**

This school caters to children in the age group of 3 – 5 years, nutritious food supplied, for them to healthy, they also learn basic skills such as reading, writing and speaking, as they are properly cared for. The parents are able to be at their workspots without any anxiety.

**B. Full time Schools:**

Full time schools also known as primary schools, they are three numbers namely:

\textsuperscript{47} Programme, File of Reaching the Unreached, G. Kallupatti, Theni.
\textsuperscript{48} 50 years of Service in Asia A Souvenir, Lasallian Publication, Madurai,
A. Peter’s Primary School  
B. Arul Malar Primary School and  
C. Nirmala Primary School

Worth mentioning at this juncture is Nirmala Primary School which is run for physically challenged children.

St. Peter High School:- Upgraded as High School its highlights are

1. Play way method of teaching  
2. Corporal punishments are band here  
3. Integrated note books to reduce children burden

Differently abled children are generally the targets of abuse, discrimination and neglect. Denied of their rightful opportunities, they are helpless when it comes to victimization and irrational prejudice. Major initiatives are undertaken to rehabilitant them to their families and residential facilities are provided for them to develop their confidence to face an unknown uncertain future. Training programmes such as physiotherapy, games and experiments, craft, project and light entertainment keep the mentally retarded children happy\(^{49}\).

**Mobile Science Lab:**

Mobile Science Lab, another major venture by Reaching the Unreached is in its operation since 2003. A Jeep is in regular service to take laboratory equipment to different village neglected schools. Besides the vehicle is equipped with mini power generator and necessary science equipments. Nearly forty two schools are covered with in a space Fifteen days\(^{50}\).

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\(^{50}\) Programme file of Reaching the Unreached, 2004.
Additional Skills Development:

For the underprivileged rural youths, to empower economically, various income generation trades are taught systematically. Unemployed youths are encouraged to learn, Tailoring and Computer Application. After completion of the course, they are motivated to start their own business by providing them small loans as incentives\(^{51}\).

The status of illiterate women is improved through women Self Help Groups (SHG) such as Sangam. They move towards financial independence by getting credit facilities. Effectively utilizing their spare time they are initiated into small business ventures in areas of Tailoring, Sericulture, Agro Forestry, Oil seeds, fisheries, poultry, crop credit, Khadi and cottage industries. At this important juncture, it is fitting to quote the American poet Long Fellow. The heights of great men reached and kept were not attained by sudden flight. They while their travelers slept, were toiling upwards in the night. La Sallian Mission is abandoned on faith and the waged a struggle to reach the goal on faith and he waged to read the goal. The brother guided by De La Salle is a mediator between God and his children their outreach programmes testify to his zeal to be understood as self appointed Savior to be understood\(^{52}\).

St. Joseph Development Trust:

Brother I. Sebastian founded a charitable trust in the 1992 and appropriately named it as St. Joseph’s Development Trust with the office of the trust located at St.Joseph Boys Village, Ganguvarpatti right from its inception he was both the managing trustee and the Executive Director of the organisation\(^{53}\). Thus he is the author founder and Executive Director and the various roles made him solely responsible for its affair growth and success and failures.

\(^{51}\) Programme file of Reaching the Unreached, 2004.
\(^{52}\) Interview Bro. James Kimpton, FSC, Dated 13\(^{th}\) August 2010.
The objectives of the trust are

1. Promotion of formal and nonformal education\textsuperscript{54}
2. Promotion of overall development of the weaker sections of the community such as the women and children
3. Progress of the health status of the poor
4. Enhancement of healthy environment
5. Acceleration of the rural technology

The trust has the freedom to handle any charitable venture that its trustees think fit. Again written permission from the CEO Mandatory for any person to be considered the member of the trust. It was much later that De salle Mission recognised the Existence of St. Joseph’s Development Trust and recruited brothers as staff\textsuperscript{55}.

The fourth delegation chapter of the De Salle Mission took some administrative, measures regarding St. Joseph’s Development Trust. They are as follows.

St. Joseph’s Development Trust has been fully incorporated as a responsibility and apostolate as inforce in St.Pius XI Boys town and St. Joseph’s Boys village. The delegation should have atleast three brothers assigned to St. Joseph’s Development Trust to form a separate community with one of the brothers assigned special training and work assignments to make possible the transition to managing trustee with four to six years. Its nature of activities\textsuperscript{56}.

The rural people on the whole turn out to be very vulnerable to remind of their basic rights to education, the medical facilities and a proper

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., p.11.
environment to actively participate in social activities. One reason is village structuralism and its traditional approach. Women are sidelined to child bearing, child caring. This is the major factor retarding the growth of the family. The Joseph development trust has broken through the cordon of formalism by making women get involved in empowerment programmes. It has done a yeoman service to mobilise the women and bring about harmony within\textsuperscript{57}.

The programmes organised to bring about transformation and evolution in thinking level, attitudes level and practice levels are worth looking into:

a) Mobilisation and establishment of community based organisations  
b) Awareness generation on the concept of self help groups Group Formation and Income Generation Activities  
c) Promotion of Self Help Group  
d) Creating job opportunities by means of skilled training and availing Micro-credit  
e) Making them able to keep Accounting Keeping, Banking and Resource Handling  
f) Equipping women group as Resource Group for actions at the grass root level in the village  
g) Federating them with other such form towards enhancing knowledge and participation\textsuperscript{58}

Thus positive thinking has promoted closeness with the Institution. The understanding and comprehension of women and children from different contexts has ushered in more viability to fulfill their needs.

The Farmer’s Forum:

This organisation has many goals in mind:

1) To get all the farmers under one unit
2) To enlighten them with the environment they are in and show ways to get out of their condition
3) To impart skills
4) To obtain government assistance

Since the farmers operate under finance constraints and are under the mercy of money lenders who charge interest the St. Joseph’s Development Trust has made them avail credit loans and has also imparted training programmes to them. The skills imparted are training programmes to farmers in the form of arid farm cultivation techniques, seed and soil treatments, High Yielding Varieties improved seed basal dose of fertilizer, and production measures which in turn have proved beneficial.

Youth Clubs:

Most of the youths in the target villages prove to be vagrants. To make them get into the main stream of life and lead purposeful lives youth clubs have been established by St. Joseph’s Development Trust. The programmes chalked out are catered to meet the demands of youth.

a) To render the youth trades’ skilled towards finding employment
b) To organise games and sports to keep them united
c) To contribute their might to the villages and develop them
d) To inculcate in them value based habits

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Tuition Centres:

St. Joseph’s Development Trust is of the view, schools are ideal forums for creating awareness and education can work wonders. So it has started tuition centres in target areas. As the parents are illiterate the children are bereft of guidance. To build up and spark off the latent talents quality education is provided for the youths to benefit. There are early – Tuition centres with – as beneficiaries of their efforts.\textsuperscript{62}

The children are trained in indoor and outdoor activities. Awareness meetings are organised for term to develop a sense of well-being Children are held together through awareness meetings on topics like dowry infanticide, child labour, small savings and alcoholism. They are beneficiaries of free note books, school uniform and bags.\textsuperscript{63}

Day Care Centres – Balwadies:

Working women feel secure in leaving the children in day-care custody of trained personnel. The proper ambience to create happiness has been reached. They are taught alphabet numerals and are trained in extra curricular activities. Moral lessons are imparted with the aid of charts and songs.\textsuperscript{64}

Health staff offer medical services and lessons in hygiene are imparted. Nutritious food is provided to them to combat malnutrition.

Puduvasanatham:

Abandoned, Destitute, uncared, orphaned, stranded and uncared children get a free lease of life in Girls school Puduvasanatham and Pallapatty. Girls from all nationalities, regardless of race, nationality creed get accommodated to

lead a good self reliant lives which fosters in them self independence. The trained staffs in child care and management promote affinity among the children, for them to be imbubed with the necessary care and compassion\textsuperscript{65}. Apart from their regular studies, moral classes and social gatherings are provided for the children. Brother I. Sebastian by visiting them frequently makes them feel wanted. Their monotonous lives are broken into by taking them for pleasure trips. They are taken to Bangalore, Velankanni Church and picnic spots like Athisayam and Kodaikanal.

**Street Children:**

Street children prove problematic as they refuse to be part of St.Joseph’s Development Trust’s Dropout centre. Their inmate phobia, caused by fear, anxiety and desertion have made them wary of good opportunities. Alternative psychological methods such as cajoling, food beverages and play materials are employed to make them inmates. They are given counseling and incase they are deserted from the family they are accepted as prodigal sons\textsuperscript{66}.

Thus the Drop-in-centre where love and food facilities are supplied helps them to get recognition from social agencies. It is a sanctuary for development of body and mind. Those children who are not in favour of formal education are initiated into vocational training for them to emerge as skilled labourers\textsuperscript{67}.

**Working Centre – Puduyugam:**

Puduyugam, a satellite project of St. Joseph’s Development Trust is virtually a Renaissance for the working children at Dindigul. It has been initiated with the goal to put an end to the social Evil of Child Labour\textsuperscript{68}.

\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{65}]Annual Report 2009 – 2010, St.Joseph Development Trust, Genguvarpatti.
\item[\textsuperscript{67}]*Ibid.*, p.10.
\item[\textsuperscript{68}]St.Joseph Development Trust, Project File No.5, Evil Child Labour, Genguvarpatti.
\end{itemize}
Various methods have been adopted to make the people guilty and conscious of Child Labour and its consequences. Many of the exploited children are being prepared for skill oriented programmes. This is done with the view towards improving the economic status of the family and reduce the burden of working children. Micro credits have been made available to the parents of working children towards pursuing income. The drop in centre is a real alternative to the staying streets. The motive is to bring about a whole personal recovery\(^{69}\). The special school started for children affected by mental retardation was started in the year 2003 as Puthu Uthayam\(^{70}\).

Pudu Uthayam also houses mentally retarded children from the age group of seven to fourteen years. They are trained to speak, read, write and draw. The training programme includes Physiotherapy and medical treatment. The children are trained in Gardening, Cleansing, maintenance of home and caring of things Parents-meetings are held periodically to make the children conscious of their own homes\(^{71}\).

St. Joseph’s Development Trust also lends a helping hand to the mentally ill children. The well-built infrastructure was built in consultation with District Rehabilitation Centre, Dindigul. The Rehabilitation Programme conducted have proved popular. In 2006, the programme has received the Certificate of Excellence in its service for the promotion of special education to children with mental retardation. St. Joseph’s Development Trust’s major focus is on their streaming them in society\(^{72}\).

In fact, in Theni and Dindigul Districts, these community based programmes act as pioneer projects of all Rehabilitation Programmes. The support of the funding agencies is holistic in approach. Acknowledgement has

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\(^{69}\) Annual Report of the working Centre, Puduyugam, 2005, Genguvarpatti.

\(^{70}\) Ibid.

\(^{71}\) St.Joseph Development Trust, Annual Report, 2009-2010, Genguvarpatti.

come in the form of foreign help, certificates and awards. 50 person with disabilities are being federated into a collective forum towards ensuring their participation in society with the help of Self Help Groups\textsuperscript{73}.

La Salle Pudhumanam Industrial School provides vocational skill education to the poor destitutes of youth in difficult circumstances. Government approval and recognition has been given to Tailoring, Embroidery, Computer and Electrician Courses project for the aged\textsuperscript{74}.

St. Joseph’s Development Trust considers itself accountable to give a lending hand to aged people. Information Technology has generated job opportunities to the younger generation. It has in the process boosted up the spirits of the talented and those in the corridors of power\textsuperscript{75}.

But it has its drawbacks too. The aged are benefit of human concern. They are packed to old age homes. The most inhuman cut is they are considered unemployable. The employers prefer the stronger and younger people. In the lower rung of society the stark poverty reduces them to a state of burden. Their health needs are not looked into and lack of nutritious food becomes a health hazard. St. Joseph’s Development Trust has established a programme to meet their basic needs. Every month a meeting is convened for them to gather at St.Joseph’s Campus. The day is eventful with them provided nutritious food, medical check up clothes, and given the much needed financial assistance which in turn proves a morale booster\textsuperscript{76}.

\textsuperscript{74} Annual Report of Lasalle Pudhumanam Industrial School, 2007, Genguvarpatti.
\textsuperscript{75} Annual Report of Lasalle Pudhumanam Industrial School, 2007, Genguvarpatti.
\textsuperscript{76} St.Joseph Development Trust, Annual Administrative Report, 2009-2010, Genguvarpatti.
Health Programme:

To counter the spread of common infectious diseases St. Joseph’s Development Trust conducts health awareness programmes. Medical Awareness Programmes, Health Awareness Meetings and film shows are its regular eye openers. Women related programmes such as Antenatal and Postnatal care proved to be specialities. Village health committees are installed and talks are given on Personal Cleanliness First Aid Services. Scabies, Nutritional food, Vitamin Deficiency, herbal medicines and Environment Protection.

Operation Handicapped Programmes:

Disabled people have been subjected to systematic discrimination and neglect. Stigmatised, they are deprived of their rights and denied opportunities and responsibilities. They are treated as victims of society’s concern and very often become the laughing stock of peculiar irrational prejudices shown towards them.

St. Joseph’s Development Trust through its outreach programmes has identified people categorized as

a) physically disabled
b) mentally retarded
c) visually handicapped
d) deaf and those who were a prey to congenital deformities.

The assistance provided were educational, medical boarding and lodging fees and self employment programmes and boarding as well as lodging fees. Annually Disabled Day gets celebrated. The gathering plunges them into a

77 St. Joseph Development Trust, Health Programme Project, Genguvarpatti.
world of opportunities and freedom opportunities become handy to express their talents hitherto unknown\textsuperscript{78}.

Thus De La Salle is entitled to be ranked among the advanced educators of the century. He can be also viewed to be one of the greatest thinkers and educational reformers of all times. His system embraces the best in modern educational methods. He gave an impetus to the higher educational progress which is the distinctive mark of modern times and bequeathed in general an educational system which is adaptable to the school going youth in every century. Like St. Ignatius Loyala, he imparted and practised the Christian doctrines for everyone to be enlightened.

\textsuperscript{78}St. Joseph Development Trust, Operational Handicapped Programme File, Genguvarpatti.