

9,572 NEW BROTHERS AND SISTERS



Photo: While her son watches, Santhanaraj explained the significance of the baptism once again before this lady was immersed into Christ.

In January 2018 the goal was set and we determined by the grace of God to baptize 9,000 souls into Christ in 2018. As of January 31, we were so thankful to count 9,572 who had been added to the body. God answered our prayers and blessed the sacrificial efforts of these brothers. Praise be to our loving God for salvation made available to all men (Titus 2:11).

The Indian brothers gathered in January for a two-day planning session for 2019. Don taught leadership classes for two extended sessions and one session was focused on keeping these new saints in the faith. Many programs are in place to be sure our new brothers and sisters grow in knowledge to insure these *“hold the beginning of our (their) confidence steadfast unto the end”* (Hebrews 3:14).

Two hours of the gathering were devoted to outstanding stories of conversions during 2018. It was an exciting time. Muthusami came forward to explain how they had entered a certain village several years earlier and were threatened by a denominational preacher who came aggressively wielding a machete. A number of months passed and Muthusami and Enbaraj returned to the village and managed to arrange a study with the angry preacher. After numerous sessions, the denominational man was baptized. Our school of preaching in Manimadurai now meets on the roof of this man’s house and he is one of the students. Muthusami chuckled as he explained

how recently this preacher told him the story of how he ran two men out of his city with a machete. He still apparently does not realize the two men are actually the ones who eventually baptized him and now teach him in the school.

Photo: The evangelists in the school in Manimadurai. Muthasami is seated in the front row, far left.



CYCLONE RELIEF UPDATE

I stood staring at the heap of rubble that had been home to a sister in Christ (photo below). Of all affected by the cyclone, more than 450 families were our brethren. Understanding we are *“to do good to all men, especially unto them of the household of faith”* (Gal. 6:10), the initial work was geared toward, but not limited to, feeding the saints.



The brother pictured beside his wife in the photo above is blind. Their house is in shambles. They described the night of the cyclone as they huddled together with their three children in the corner of their hut. They felt sure they were going to die.

As of now, there have been 121 souls baptized, having seen our brothers good works and glorifying God (Matt. 5:16). People were amazed to see our brothers working to serve them even while their own homes were in ruins.

Very little assistance has been offered by others, including the government. Electricity has now been restored in most areas and our work has turned to replacing thatching and repairing homes. The victims, along with our brothers and sisters, are so

thankful for the compassionate American brethren who have given so generously.

NEW SCHOOL NEAR TRICHY



We anticipate more boots-on-the-ground as we observe the beginning of a new school of evangelism near Trichy. This school is located in an area where very few congregations exist. The teacher, Shakespeare (left), is a proven evangelist. His father, Arokiyadass (far right), is one of the greatest Bible teachers in Tamil Nadu. He has successfully taught the gospel to hundreds of souls and has started many congregations. He will be assisting Shakespeare with this new effort.

It was my privilege to meet five of the men who will be sitting for entrance exams in May. We anticipate fifteen candidates. The entrance exam includes fifty-four memory verses, three written exams and a personal interview. Lord willing, the first classes will begin in June. Pray for this new effort.

ANIL'S D.A.I. KAPADI TEAM

When I heard about it, I thought it sounded more like a script out of a movie. A kapadi tournament was being held in our local city and our junior high and high school boys from our Deva Anbu Illam children’s home decided to enter the competition. The fact that most teams consisted of much older college boys did not deter them from their enthusiastic quest.

The boys totally took the initiative, not asking the staff for any help. When it became essential to have uniforms, the boys scraped and worked wherever possible to earn the necessary five-dollars for each of their shirts. They named their team the DAI Boyz.

Anil, the boy in the front who holds the trophy is credited with forming the team and keeping them together. Every player credits him fully, calling him their coach. When they were too tired or too hot to practice, the boys explained how Anil pushed and drove them to eventually win the first-place trophy not only in one competition but two.

Anil has been with us for many years. He suffers from a severe case of scoliosis. Recently, the government denied him entrance to college, demanding a caste certificate (another form of Christian persecution). There are no castes in Christ and providing such a document is impossible. Worried, and with tear-filled eyes, Anil came to ask me for help. Education had been his hope for the future as he cannot be hired for physical labor.

We were able to secure entrance for Anil into a vocational training program. He will graduate this year. I don't know where he will go from here, but I feel confident a great success story is in the future for this young enthusiastic entrepreneur. I am thankful to God for our DAI campus and for the compassionate brothers and sisters who support this work. Otherwise, where would Anil be?

That night, I sat watching Moses, one of our boys who is in charge of Bible training at DAI, as he gave Bible awards to our outstanding children. Moses' parents died when he was very young and he has been with us since he was eight. His shirt read, "Never Give Up." It was a testament, a perfect summary for the day. I thanked God for these children and their love for one another, a family, a body of team players.



Photo Left: Anil, second from the left, holds the first place trophy. Karunakaran, the director for the home, is pictured on the right. Photo Right: Moses encourages the children as their big brother. Moses is in college. His major is English Literature.

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TAMIL NEWS

NEWSLETTER FOR
DON AND CATHY IVERSON



Photo: These are the men who came together in January for planning the evangelism program for 2019. These are some of the greatest evangelists in the entire world. This is their work, and part of their program is learning to plan, lead and set positive goals for self and the churches they serve.

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