

**GOSSNER EVANGELICAL – LUTHERAN CHURCH
IN CHOTANAGPUR AND ASSAM**

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Reply No. 38

Date

ALL CHRISTIAN CONGREGATIONS, FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS
OF THE NATIONAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF INDIA.

DEAR FRIENDS,

On this day the National Missionary Society of India seeks to unite all Christians in India in a common act of intercession and dedication for the task of evangelising India. In these days of political and communal strife, social re-thinking, and efforts to grapple with the problems of economic distress and unemployment, there is a wide unrest in the hearts of our people. Much of the life of India, despite its traditional hunger for God, is unrelated to religion, and no human quest can lead to an abiding peace and a sense of victorious living, unless men turn to the source of all true life. What Jesus said to the woman of Samaria is true today in our lives as it was in hers. "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again. Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life". (John 4, 13-14). What the Society calls upon the Christians of this land to do is to bring into the lives of our fellow-countrymen, this water of life, and the bread which cometh down from heaven, that they may eat thereof and not die. This Call to Prayer is being sent out to all Christian congregations with a view to mobilise the whole Church in India in this great ministry of bringing all men and women into a life of fellowship with Jesus, in which fellowship alone true life can be found.

Besides sending consecrated workers to serve in select areas, the Society has from the outset sought to quicken in the Indian Church a missionary spirit. Practically every section of the Christian Church is carrying on missionary work on a larger or a smaller scale. We rejoice that it has been possible for the Churches to use the N. M. S. as their agency to

carry out certain tasks as a supplement to their own work. Lutherans and Mar Thoma Syrians have selected fields outside their own areas, and have found it a great blessing to provide for the work in those areas under the direction of the Society. The Anglicans of Cochin and Travancore and the St. Andrew's Mission in Bengal have found their connection with the Society a source of real inspiration. The Ashram at Tirupattur is a unique experiment in Christian service unconnected with any particular denomination, and has brought to the Society and its workers and to the Churches much spiritual help, and it is noteworthy that such an adventure has spontaneously attached itself to this Society. In several fields, members of various denominations have come together in planning and directing the work of the field, and this inter-denominational co-operation has been a very practical demonstration of the essential unity of all Christians. While the Society does not discuss Church union in its conferences and committees, the Society has for about 30 years been used by our Lord as a blessed means of demonstrating Christian unity in the essentials of our faith, and the practicality and wisdom of securing unity in missionary service.

We are grateful that the President of the Society, Dr. E. Forrester Paton of the Ashram at Tirupattur and Rev. Joseph John of Katpadi undertook an extensive tour among the Churches in North India, which did much to quicken the spiritual life of the congregations visited besides arousing fresh interest in the work of the N.M.S. The Society has from time to time received valuable help from numerous friends who have done voluntary deputation work during their holidays. We have also to remember with much thankfulness the work done by Dr. Stanley Jones in stirring up in our Christian people a spirit of dedication for the task of winning India for Christ. It is our prayer that the Church should grow deeply evangelistic.

Owing to reduced income we are not able to maintain in each field an adequate staff, and as a result a great deal more is thrown upon our present workers than in the past. Miss Sircar's most devoted services in Bethleheer (Punjab), have had many

blessed results testified to by numerous friends, but the strain upon her has been far too much and for some months on account of a breakdown in her health, she has had to be away from the field. Though by God's infinite grace, she is well again, it will take a long time for us to dare let her face the onerous responsibilities at Bethlehem. Rev. S. Gnanabaranam, our only missionary at Murwahi, in spite of the devoted help given to him by his helpers, had to be sent away from the field for a short time and even though he has returned to the field, he is still not strong enough to undertake any strenuous work. The Society is much distressed to see that the present financial situation is proving a very serious handicap, and we trust that our brave and self-sacrificing missionaries will soon receive adequate relief. In spite of depression, our missionaries have persevered faithfully in their ministry in all the fields of the Society.

Let us praise God, for the labours of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew in Bengal under the leadership of Father Chakravarthi ; for the ministry of Padri Prem Chander and his colleagues in the large Montgomery field in the Punjab ; for Achan Philipose and his associates in North Kanara ; for the work of Rev. Waghmare and helpers in Western India ; for Rev. Gnanabaranam, Dr Nallathambi and their co-workers in Murwahi and Jharsugudah ; for the labours of brothers Thomas and Eapen at Parkal in the Nizam's Dominions ; for our Doctor brothers and volunteers in their devoted ministry at the Tirupattur Ashram ; for the work of Rev. Gopalasamy, Miss Taylor and their colleagues in Puram, Jalarpet and other centres ; for the secretaries in their deputation, financing and other difficult tasks and for the other office-bearers and committees in carrying out their varied responsibilities. Let us also thank God for the small bands of Christians entrusted to the care of our missionaries and for the large number of praying groups of supporters throughout the country.

One of the welcome achievements of the current year has been the Headquarters building at Madras, which was made possible through the generosity of Rev. Canon Goldsmith. It is a matter for joy and thanksgiving that after working for 29 years in rented quarters, the Society has now a building of its own at its

headquarters. Another important advance during the year has been the taking over of the management of St. Andrew's College, Gorakhpur, without any financial commitment on the part of the N.M.S. We have been fortunate in securing the services of Rev. E. C. Dewick, M.A., as Principal. If the best men of our community will come forward to share in the work on Brotherhood lines, the College has a great future.

The Church in India is richer because in the poverty and weakness of our Society, the riches of His Grace and of His strength have been constantly experienced. The Society labours under a heavy debt; we need about Rs. 45,000 towards current expenditure having cut short our expenses to the barest minimum. Again and again in critical situations God's special providence and guidance have been with us. The present situation calls us more than ever before to intercede before the Throne of Grace and to give of our substance for the work of the Society.

Numerous and varied are the opportunities for service that are afforded to the members of the Church in India; and the N.M.S. is ever willing to be used as an organ of the Christian Church in India in the great task of evangelisation. May the observance of this Day of Prayer bring fresh visions and new blessings to the N.M.S. and to the Church in India.

Yours on behalf of the Society,

(BISHOP) ABRAHAM MAR THOMA, *President.*

N.M.S. OFFICE, A. C. MUKERJI, *General Secretary.*
Royapettah, Madras. J. C. DAVID, *Hon. Treasurer.*

NOTE—Please remit promptly N.M.S. Sunday collections and other contributions to The Hon. Treasurer, N.M.S. Building, Royapettah P.O., Madras.