



November 27, 2015

To: All the Friends of the House of Onions

Subject: A Trip to Change Lives

Just returned home after 10 days in Andhra Pradesh, a state in South India. While completely exhausted I can honestly say that these few days have changed my life in ways never before imaginable. Before detailing some of the more important information gathered, I would like to share some thoughts, in general, for those of you who may consider visiting Father YL in the future.

- 1) The flight was excruciatingly long and painful (both ways). Unless you are under 5'3", fly 1st class!
- 2) Ground transportation is scary, to say the least (Particularly the water buffaloes you meet almost everywhere. Goat herds on the freeways are also extremely exciting.) You'll never forget the sound of car horns.
- 3) 1.1 Billion people cannot fully be comprehended! Just know that they are everywhere.
- 4) You will see poverty that cannot be explained in words and your appreciation for the USA will grow 1000 fold. Trust me!

From the moment we landed in Hyderabad, our adventures began. We were met by Father YL and a fellow Priest (Fr. Jeny) who acted as chauffeur and guide for the next 6 to 8 hours of our first day. This set the standard for each of the following 9 days to come and began one of the most emotional roller coaster rides ever taken, one I find myself still wondering if it really happened and not just a dream. Either way, this is one ride that will remain with me the rest of my life. Words and pictures can never say all the emotions I experienced in just 10 days. One man's vision and dream is responsible for this experience and I will always be grateful to Father YL Marreddy for bringing me along this journey.

For those of you that may not be familiar with the House of Onions, I invite you to visit our web site at www.houseofonions.org at your earliest convenience for the background and objectives of our 501(c)(3) foundation.

Mrs. Tracy Candelaria and I took this exploratory trip to see exactly what, where and how the project was proceeding and to learn more about the true needs surrounding the goals and objectives set by our Board members just over a year ago. What we found is rather overwhelming! In a country of over 1.1 billion souls, 350 million are at or below the poverty level. The numbers alone are staggering, but to see what this looks like in person is beyond belief. While our stated goal was to provide a home for 30 young males on an ongoing basis, the truth is this barely covers the multitude of orphaned children in just a 50 mile radius of our construction site at Dhulipalla. What began as a rather small undertaking has now grown to a lifetime commitment. There is a need for hundreds of centers similar to the one we are building. I am not naive, however, and realize we cannot save all the children. What we can do is help as many as is feasibly possible which requires speeding up the construction process and, more importantly, bringing this concept to many more for assistance in funding the entire project over many years.

One item I was particularly concerned about was finding the right people to man the center once completed. This, I can now say, should not be a problem. Throughout the entire trip, we visited several similar operations. Some were connected to a Parish school, others simply hostels for children with no family and others that included combinations of home, schooling and nutrition/medication. We also visited post high school training programs for job related skills. In every case the people we met were extraordinary - the missions they have undertaken is awesome and so dearly needed in our ever growing world. The Sisters, Priests and all that are involved with the caring for the children and the respective Parishes they minister were, in every way, an inspiration to both me and Tracy. The compassion and love so visibly shown on part of the staffs was so honest and sincere, it could not have been just for our benefit. And the reactions to the staffs by the children was truly remarkable to see. Priests, Sisters and teachers were all about providing the very best care with extra love thrown in for good measure.

Sincerely,

Carl Dye
Board President

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The House of Onions HC 30 Box 757 Concho, AZ 85924