

Greetings to my sponsoring congregations! The last time I wrote to you, we were finalizing plans for sisters from the Missionaries of Charity to come to CMC and Sneha Deepam for training in the more medical areas of palliative care such as pain control and relief of common symptoms. I am happy to say that the training is going well with the first two Sisters. We only had 8-12 patients at Sneha Deepam for them to care for and of course they are used to being much busier, but they agreed that their founder, Mother Teresa, would approve of them spending quality and even quantity time with patients. They spent some time at CMC observing in the dressing room - a place that does up to 80 wound dressings in a morning.

Good news for us at Sneha Deepam - Father Johnny is buying a generator! It's a challenge here in India to provide power for all the new industry and businesses, so there have been daily power cuts, and once the generator is running, we will have power all day, every day.

The Fall Monsoon season has come and gone with some heavy rains. Our well at Sneha Deepam has been okay but other areas are running low. The monsoon rains should take care of that, and it is good to see our well filled all the way to the top.

In my last newsletter, I mentioned Martha, the nurse from Phebe Hospital in Liberia, who has come to India to train as a Dental Nurse Practitioner. I accompanied her to Duncan Hospital in Bihar and it was a long train ride! The hospital is old and they are building a new one but have to wait for funds to finish. The dental clinic is relatively modern and looks clean and bright. There is no one else from Africa there, but there are some foreigner visitors and everyone seems very nice. Martha will train there for six months and when she goes back to Phebe, she'll be able to do normal fillings and extractions. This will mean that patients can be seen on a regular basis and not just once or twice a month when a dentist is able to come.

Global Health Ministries emailed me to tell me that they are planning to send a container - one of those huge things that gets loaded onto a ship - to India and our Hospice is on the list of those who can order, so one rainy morning, we shopped the GHM warehouse list. If we get most of what we requested, it will be great! Earlier this year we got an oxygen concentrator from them which was a good thing!

I was invited to visit a Lutheran hospital in Padhar which is in the state of Madhya Pradesh in central India. I decided I would stop there on my trip to the Lutheran hospitals farther north that I had visited before. My trip started at 6:30 a.m. at Sneha Deepam and ended in the Padhar guesthouse a little before 10 p.m. and included three takeoffs, three landings, and six hours in cars - a very long day! The hospital is very nice with wonderful landscaping and gardens. This hospital was the first one in rural India to have a cobalt machine to do radiation therapy. They are still using the original machine from 1982. It still works well, but will soon be replaced by a more modern machine. The hospital has 200 beds and is served by 30 doctors - junior and senior - and they cover many specialties. I gave several talks to the doctors about breaking bad news, the importance of presence - of being there with the patient - and total pain management. I was joined by the daughter of the founder - she's a retired palliative care doctor from the UK. And I spent some time with their palliative care team which consists of a doctor, a nurse, and a chaplain. The chaplain and the doctor are married. We had a good session with lots of good questions and we saw a few patients.

From there, I went to Kolkata where I stayed in the Lutheran World Relief guesthouse which was a very nice place complete with early morning chai delivered to my door. That's where we'll pick up next time.

Until then, please continue to keep me in your prayers and also pray for the palliative care patients in India. Thank you. Rev. John Lunn