

FEAST, (which stands for **F**or **E**ducation **A**nd **S**ocial **T**ransformation) is an aid project in Tamil Nadu, Southern India set up and administered by Father Jeremias George which our partner church in Stegaurach, Germany, supports through sponsorship and which is now also supported by members of St Nicholas Church, Arundel.

Education

The people are desperately poor and, unless they go to school, there is no chance that children will ever be able to do more than scrape an existence in a leaky palm-leaf hut. They just want the chance to do so, but have to provide the school uniform, (very basic) schoolbooks and stationery—and this is just out of the question for the majority. Sponsors pay for this for them and so give them the opportunity to change their lives. The project has been running as a trust since 1998, and through supporting over 5000 children and their families, has helped 20,000 people.

'Adopt-a-Granny'

Many families have not enough to feed the children, let alone elderly relatives, so often widows are neglected and left to fend for themselves, often being homeless and forced to beg . Father Walther from Stegaurach suggested a new idea -

if a family will take in (usually) their mother, the family receives 100 rupees and 2 kilos of rice per month, and everyone benefits. The family gets financial and food help, and the grandmother has companionship, gets to know her grandchildren, and is part of the family once more. It transforms her life.

The scheme is a great success - but has to be funded, and there are many more needing help.

Housing

Another way in which these 'poorest of the poor' people have been helped is that generous donations and fundraising by the sponsor parishes have enabled the project to build new houses , especially for a leper colony.

Seven sponsors from Arundel visited the project area last November, where , in addition to meeting their sponsor children and their families, they were able to see at first hand the successes that FEAST has been and is achieving, and the difference it has made to so many lives.

If you are interested in sponsoring a child for £6 per month—the money gives **all** the children of the family the opportunity to go to school—or would like to know more about the Adopt-a-Granny scheme, (£4.00 per month which also pays towards medical costs where necessary) - please contact Jayne Scrimgeour or Sherian Morgan at St Nicholas Church (stnicholas-arundel@btconnect.com).

For a fuller description of the aims and achievements of the Trust, please see

A Short Report of the Activities of the Trust by Father Jeremias George (2009)