



«Namaste» ! «Danyevad» !
Get a warm welcome from these children of *Kahuchuan*. We told them you are ready to help them !

We received a project proposal from *Father Benny*, a catholic priest, who is in charge of a Parish in a remote tribal village called *Kahuchuan* in the *Sundargarh District*, in the state of *Orissa*. This place is more than 1000 Kms away from the project area of *Saint-Anthony School*. *Orissa* is one of the most backward states in India. The population of *Sundargarh Dist* comprises of tribals and backward castes, who are at the lowest strata of the society. Children in this area hardly have access to education.

The Parish of *Fr. Benny* is running a primary school called «*Chattamba Primary School*» from class I to class IV. He feels the need to extend it at least up to class VII. However, that could not be done without external support...

After considering the project, *Mr. Jena*, our social worker who is originally from *Orissa*, working with us for the last two years, visited the place and studied the area. Here is the report based on his findings.

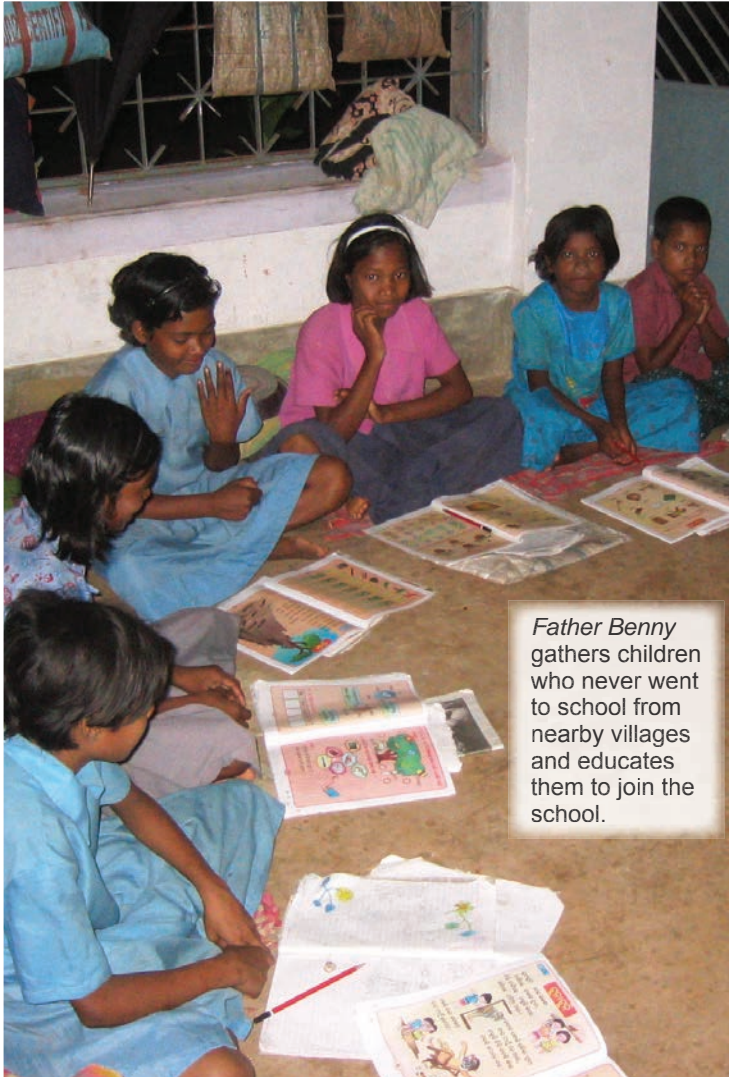
Kahuchuan is a mountainous terrain covered with forest on all four directions. The place is yet to be connected with minimum requirements such as proper roads, electricity, telephone and other amenities. The usual mode of travel to the nearest town *Rajagangpur* (25km) for marketing and official works is by bicycle and by foot. The people of this area are very poor and the literacy rate is 35%, which is 30% below the state

literacy rate. Most of the people in this area live in houses made up of straw and local made tiles. The number of school dropouts and non-school going children is alarmingly high.

The people earn their livelihood by engaging themselves in small scale farming, working in agricultural fields as labourers, cutting and selling the firewood, collecting forest products, working in the factories which are situated in peripheries of *Rajagangpur* town. They earn an average of forty to fifty rupees a day (1 €). The earnings generated through these works are very meagre and they often struggle to meet both ends. Many of the boys and girls who are unskilled from this area also go to metropolitan cities such as *Delhi*, *Bombay*, and *Calcutta* in search of employment and end up as housemaids, building workers, peons, and at times as sex workers.

The parish school is open to all the people of this area and is supported by the local Bishop and the Parishioners. However, the children after class IV don't have access to higher classes. Since the parish has no income the Bishop has expressed his inability to bear the expenses for this extension. Knowing the situation *Fr. Benny* approached us to see if we are able to take up this project. He can provide the parish hall for the three new classes so that the expense of a building will be cut down. He expects to have 35 children in each class, that is 5th, 6th and 7th.

We put forward this project and welcome your help to develop this project. If we could reach out, it will bring a big change not only to these children, but also to the whole community over there.



Father Benny gathers children who never went to school from nearby villages and educates them to join the school.



On August 15th, India celebrated the 60th anniversary of its freedom from British rule. A lot of commemorations were organized all over the country. This was an occasion for our children in *Saint-Anthony School (Dugawar, U.P.)* to conduct some program and invite the villagers. *Fr. Borgia* hoisted the flag and spent some time in the school with the children and staff and shared his views with them.



Joseph and his wife have 3 boys and 3 girls. They live in a house made of mud in the village of *Kahuchuan*. Since the income he gets from the piece of land he owns is not enough to sustain his family, he collects leaves from the jungle and sells it in the near by town. (People in the villages dry certain leaves and use them as plates to serve food in the shops). His two sons, *Alekshyea* (18 yrs) and *Praful* (15) went to the cities in search of jobs. His third son *Jaslem* (12), his daughters *Karishma* (10) and *Manju* (8) are studying in the parish school. Though they might complete their primary school, it will not provide them any base to build up a future.

Joseph's wish is to educate his children further, he knows it is an unachievable dream. He feels bad that he has nothing to offer his children... neither skill nor a piece of land to cultivate.

Karishma (in blue on the above picture) will be forced to stop her studies next year as she has no access to higher education. When *Jena*, our social worker, asked her what would be her wish if she had a chance to go for higher education, she replied that she would love to become a teacher. It is a shocking reality that these children cannot even dream of a better future, they know no world other than the little village they live in.



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