

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT OF WE CARE PRESENTED ON 30TH JANUARY 2000

Dear Trustees, Donors and Friends of WE CARE,

Greetings of peace!

INTRODUCTION: Our Trust, WE CARE, is one year old today! This has been an eventful one year - many things have happened, which we need to share with you.

TRUSTEES: Exactly a year ago, on the 30th of January, 1999, WE CARE was born. It was duly registered as a Public Charitable Trust in Bangalore, Karnataka. We began with the auspicious number of seven Trustees and immediately after registration co-opted five additional Trustees. WE CARE now has twelve dedicated and committed individuals, ordinary people from various walks of life, who comprise the Board of Trustees. The Board is assisted by Mrs Anne Noronha, who is the Executive Secretary of the WE CARE.

OTHER LEGAL FORMALITIES: Immediately after registering WE CARE as a public trust, we got busy with the other legal formalities. WE CARE has been registered under the provisions of the Income Tax Act, 1961. The Department has issued a very good certificate declaring WE CARE as a " WHOLLY CHARITABLE TRUST " - an honour not given to many organizations.

WE CARE has also been registered under the Foreign Contributions (Regulation) Act, 1976, which enables us to now receive donations from any foreign citizen or foreign country or foreign association or society. This registration has opened up a wide door for receiving the generous offerings of people living abroad. This is important for us, because in recent days, many people of Indian origin and nationality have migrated to foreign shores and have also taken up foreign citizenship. Without this registration WE CARE would not be able to accept donations even from Indian who have now become foreign citizens. WE CARE is now able to receive donations from all people all around the world!!!

We are now patiently waiting for our application to be registered under section 80G of the Income Tax Act. After WE CARE has been registered under section 80G, all of you, our donors, will be able to receive tax benefits under this section. We hope and pray that the Income Tax Department will expedite our application.

FIRST NEWS LETTER: During this time we were also busy working on our first news-letter-cum- brochure. The first number of the first volume was released in the month of August 1999 under the able, creative and skilful hands of Ms Selena Nunes. On behalf of the Board I extend my heart-felt thanks to Ms Selena for her hard and generous work.

LOGO: Coming up with the right logo for WE CARE had its share of birth pangs too. We finally settled on a "branch of fresh leaves" that flow forth from the word "care". This is to symbolize that service rendered in a spirit of love and care will always produce new life, bringing joy and hope in the lives of people. The logo was designed by one of our

Trustees, Ms Angeline Sunderraj. Angeline, my heart-felt thanks to you for your very creative and meaningful design.

Both the News letter and logo have been well appreciated by many people.

PUBLICITY: The news letter was the first step in bringing WE CARE to the public gaze. The response it has received from all who have laid their eyes on it has been very very encouraging.

In order to make WE CARE known to people we inserted advertisements in various magazines during the Christmas/New-year week. The advertisements brought in a few surprises and contributions as well.

FUND RAISING: Within a short span of six months, from August 1999 to January 2000, we have received donations and contributions of over Rs.4,50,000/- from local and foreign sources. We are grateful to each and every donor for their generous contribution. We are aware that every naya paise makes a rupees and therefore at WE CARE we not only accept small contributions but accept them with a sense of gratitude.

I was touched by one contribution - that of school children of the 9th Std from a school in Goa. They wrote me a letter, which I read for you: "Dear Rev. Father, Our class Teacher, Tr. Alice had spoken to us about WE CARE somewhere in September. Usually before we go for X'mas holidays we exchange small gifts. this year instead of doing that we thought of sending our small contribution to you so that you can help at least one child - Students of 9th B."

It is not so much the money that they sent me that mattered. I was touched by their sense of sacrifice and generosity to share their little with those who are less privileged than them.

There are many persons or associations who have made some very significant contributions and donations towards the objectives of WE CARE. I mention a few:

The Franciscan Province of Korea has made a very significant donation of USD 5,000/- towards WE CARE's option for the poor.

The Franciscan Sisters of Mary, Bangalore have made a significant contribution of Rs.25,000/- towards the Care of Women. They have promised to contribute more towards this cause.

Ms Liz Machado - Rs.25,000/-

Mrs Ida Smith - a contribution of Rs.10,000/-

Many many others.

PROGRAMS: We were waiting to consolidate our finances before initiating any programs or taking up any ventures. Now that we find ourselves in a fairly comfortable position, we are ready to reach out in love and service.

The first cheque will be paid out to meet expenses in educating people on the dreaded disease of leprosy. I am very happy that such a thing has happened. People suffering from leprosy are the most despised and ostracized ones. They began to suffer from physical disabilities and then experience human isolation. A small step to educate our fellow human beings on this will add one small leaf to uplift the suffering of these patients.

WE CARE is co-sponsoring a "Poster Contest" which is being held right now at Media Centre, Bangalore.

The 30th of January every year, is also celebrated as ANTI-LEPROSY DAY. In honour to mark this day and become conscious of the sufferings of those who bear the stigma "leper" we have instituted a fund of Rs.50,000/- for the Care and Rehabilitation of Leprosy Patients and their Families. Mrs Theresa D'Souza, the foundress of WE CARE has presented a cheque of Rs.25,000/- towards this cause.

On the 6th February, 2000, the WE CARE HOMEOPATHIC CENTRE will be inaugurated at Belgaum to provide free medical care to the poor and to organize health education programs.

WE CARE has entered into an understanding with EMATS to sponsor about 100 students to participate in general knowledge tests which they conduct in schools all over India. WE CARE is of the firm conviction that the less privileged children should also be able to participate in extra-curricular activities and should not be left behind for the want of money.

WE CARE has initiated the SAVE N STUDY programme. Charity should not destroy the dignity of the beneficiary. Hence we have worked out a program that will help us to walk with the poor rather than make the poor walk behind us!

WE CARE will also reach out to assist many students during the beginning of the next academic year beginning 2000 June.

During the rainy season of June - September, WE CARE wishes to introduce an AFFORESTATION program in Chotanagpur area, where forests have been destroyed which in turn is threatening the lives of animals and human beings.

A FEW CLARIFICATIONS: We wish to make a few things clear for the benefit of all.

First, WE CARE is a non-religious, secular organization. It is not associated in any way with the Franciscan Order, except for the fact that some Franciscan friars are associated with WE CARE!

Second, WE CARE is open to all human beings and has at its foundations the development and growth of human persons. WE CARE makes no distinction or discrimination on the basis of religion, caste, creed, language, colour, etc. We have only one distinction: WE CARE has opted to be on the side of the poor!

Third, WE CARE is not a family trust, it is a public charitable trust. Some persons are under the impression that WE CARE is a family trust as it began with the D'Souza family. It is true that the original idea of WE CARE was born in the D'Souza family with an intention to honour their father and mother, John & Theresa. However, WE CARE is more than a family trust - it now encompasses the entire human family and will live only for one purpose, namely to bring glory to God and to serve humankind with love.

OUR DREAMS FOR THE FUTURE: At WE CARE we believe that no human endeavour should ever be undertaken if it is not going to benefit people and bring glory to God. We are keeping this principle as a constant reminder of the task ahead of us.

WE CARE is looking forward to generating funds from the public for the benefit of the weaker sections of society. For this we need two things:

First volunteers who will help us out in fund raising. We will appreciate any gesture from your side towards volunteering your services and time in helping us to raise funds. Those who would like to become volunteers can contact us at any time.

Second, we need the commitment of people towards making regular contributions. It is not the large donations that we are looking forward to. These donations are important in creating a financial base for beginning programs. But to sustain these programs, we need a continuous flow of donations from the public. Even a small contribution, say like one Rupees a day, will make a big difference.

WE CARE also believes in two other principles: Accountability and Transparency. We can assure you that every naya paise that you donate to WE CARE will be carefully spent for the benefit of the poor. We will also keep you informed about the happenings of WE CARE – pur programmes, donations, events etc. from time to time. Accountability and Transparency are going to become the two pillars of WE CARE.

WE CARE wishes to network with ALL PEOPLE OF GOODWILL. We are getting acquainted with various like-minded individuals and groups. Today's world is a world of "connections" and "networking". There is no room today for people to live and work alone.

Networking is the mode and WE CARE will develop a network of people over the years. In this connection any information about like-minded people or groups will be most welcome.

THANKS: I would like to conclude this report here with a word of thanks. Firstly, I thank each and every one of you for coming this morning. Your presence assures us that you are indeed people who care.

I thank my co-trustees for sharing their valuable time and energy and giving me all the encouragement and help I need. In a special way I would like to thank Fr. Babujose who works very closely with me.

I also thank those who have volunteered their services for WE CARE. We have a number of people who are getting interested in WE CARE. And I can assure you that one day you will feel proud that you are part of WE CARE. I would also like to thank my Provincial Minister, Fr. Scaria Varanath for his encouragement and support.

There are two unseen persons I must thank – St. Anthony and St. Joseph. It is through their divine interventions that WE CARE is making progressive steps. Finally a very big thank you to God who has shown us His path and who is walking with us on the way. May His name be glorified in our lives.

Thank you.

Fr. Trevor D'Souza

Managing Trustee.