

# inTouch

Official Magazine of The Leprosy Mission New Zealand

Issue 444 / Autumn 2019

Thank You from Nepal

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Zero Leprosy  
Transmission by 2035



The Leprosy  
Mission  
New Zealand

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# Welcome

Welcome to the Autumn edition of *inTouch*!

It has been a whirlwind first part of the year here at the Leprosy Mission New Zealand office, yet it's so evident that God's hands are over the Mission's work.

I would like to take this opportunity to apologise for the technical errors that occurred early this year, firstly with our World Leprosy Day Appeal mailing, and secondly problems with our phone lines. The beginning of the year is an important time for us as we connect with supporters like you, and we were disappointed by the services of our printing and phone company. Yet I am so grateful that people like you have been fabulous in understanding the situation and continuing to support us. These issues have now been corrected and I want to say a heartfelt thank you for your incredible support and continued prayer.

As the new year begins, I am excited to start our new strategic plan for 2019-2023, as well as our new project in Indonesia. Indonesia has the third highest number of leprosy cases in the world, and we felt a strong calling to undertake a project there last year. Praise God for the open door which enables us to partner with Netherlands Leprosy Relief and local organisation, to carry out the Mission's work in Indonesia. Pray that through this project, we will be able to see a breakthrough in reducing transmission of leprosy through 'contact tracing'.

I feel truly blessed to be able to continue working with amazing supporters like you and our partners around the world, as we strive to bring an end to the transmission of leprosy by 2035.

As you sit down and enjoy reading the stories in this magazine, please know that they are wonderful outcomes that simply could not happen without your prayers, love and support.

God bless,



Gillian Whitley  
Executive Director



Gillian meeting Sita and Shanti at Anandaban Hospital, Nepal.



Cover Photo: Image of Mamata from Nepal.

*The Leprosy Mission New Zealand Incorporated is a Registered Charity Number CC37638*

*The Leprosy Mission New Zealand, relying on the grace of God and motivated by Jesus Christ, exists to join in mutual partnership with individuals, families, communities and organisations to share resources, experiences and learning in order to eradicate the causes and consequences of leprosy, and actively supports the right to a life of dignity for all people. inTouch is published twice a year by The Leprosy Mission New Zealand.*

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Thank you to Bruce Millar, Jane Walker, Jasper Oei, Prashant Chaudhary and Ronnie D'Souza for the amazing photos we feature.



# Niran's Cure One Journey

*Daily physiotherapy will help prevent Niran's hands from becoming more clawed.*

Niran's brother and sister-in-law brought him to see the doctor when they discovered there were white patches on Niran's body. The whole family were devastated when they found out Niran had leprosy. Niran cried for days.

Only 11 years old, the leprosy bacteria had already taken a hold of Niran's little body. White patches developed all over Niran's body and his hands became clawed. Leprosy also damaged Niran's left eye, leaving it unable to close.

Thanks to our incredible Cure One supporters, **Niran is now completing his 12 months of multi-drug therapy - the medication that will cure his leprosy for good.**

## Cared for by you!

Niran started to isolate himself from everyone when he found out he had leprosy. He was insecure about the white patches on his body. He didn't want his friends to know.

Thankfully, after receiving counselling and care from the Leprosy Mission Hospital staff, Niran felt loved. He started to see a hopeful future - one without leprosy.

***"We left Niran here (at the Leprosy Mission Hospital) for a month. Everyone took care of Niran just like family," Niran's sister-in-law says, "we trust the hospital and care here."***

Niran receives regular eye treatment to stimulate the muscle movement around his left eye, and physiotherapy on his hands.



## Niran's next steps

Niran loves playing cricket. His eyes light up when he talks about cricket. But now, he finds it very difficult to hold the cricket bat and catch the ball.

Through the Cure One programme, Niran can receive reconstructive surgeries to correct the clawing on his hands. He will be able to play cricket with his friends again.

## Thank you for being part of Niran's story.

It is wonderful to share his progress with you; it is because of amazing supporters like you, we are able to bring light and hope into Niran's life.



**You can become a Cure One regular supporter today, please visit [cureone.org.nz](http://cureone.org.nz) or contact Kiri on 0800 862 873 or email [kiri.debeer@leprosymission.org.nz](mailto:kiri.debeer@leprosymission.org.nz)**





# Lorna's Trip to Nepal

We were honoured to have presenter Lorna Subrtizky from Coast radio station, joining us on the Leprosy Mission New Zealand Supporter Tour last year. She had the opportunity to witness the positive impacts on the lives of people affected by leprosy, which were only made possible because of kind supporters like you.

*"Coast FM has done annual appeals (for Leprosy Mission NZ) for the past four years... but there is nothing like seeing what they do and realising that the money we give is actually genuinely changing somebody's life." Says Lorna. \**

Apart from meeting patients and staff at the Leprosy Mission Anandaban Hospital, Lorna also visited Khokana leprosy village. She admits as a mother of three herself, it was difficult to see children affected by the illness.

*"It was very emotional. My youngest daughter is only 9 years old and I met a lot of girls around her age." \**

Lorna was however overwhelmed by how positive everyone she encountered was.

*"We cry about our first-world problems, like our internet's down, and here were people who had limbs missing, terrible afflictions and whose families had disowned them..." \**



Lorna stands with a man who is scarred by leprosy but his smile says he is not defeated by it.





Whilst Lorna was in Nepal, she also met Maya and her daughter Mamata whose story we shared with you last year.

Maya was lost and hopeless when she first discovered she had leprosy. Her hands became clawed and she had trouble gripping, and carrying out even simple everyday chores.

Thank you for making really good things happen. Because of you, Maya was cured of leprosy and received reconstructive surgeries on both of her hands.

She was also given a Really Good Gift of a sewing machine.



*"Thank you Leprosy Mission for this sewing machine... I can use my hands to make clothes and earn money."*

Maya completed a 6 month design course and learnt to sew beautiful garments. She can now sell clothes in a nearby community and earn a living to support her family.



Your love and kindness also means Mamata (now 5 years old) received an educational scholarship. She enjoys going to pre-school and she has a lot of friends. Mamata is so excited that she is going to primary school next year.



*"She would not want to miss a day without going to school, even when she was sick!" Maya says.*

Praise God that 12 years ago Maya heard the gospel at Anandaban Hospital and gave her life to the Lord.

She now travels 40 minutes on the bus to go to church every week with Mamata. She feels blessed and has a sense of belonging at church.

*"I'm happy to be part of a supportive church community," Maya smiles, "I love to sing hymns."*

*Dhanyabaad* ('thank you' in Nepali)

Your prayers and support bring hope and a brighter future to people affected by leprosy, like Maya and Mamata.

*"God bless you, and thank you people in New Zealand." Maya says thankfully.*

Every year in July, Coast FM raises money for the Leprosy Mission New Zealand through Really Good Gifts Day. This year we are delighted to have the opportunity to be back in the studio for our next Really Good Gifts Day with Coast.

Please pray for and listen in to this special day of compassion and generosity, as we seek to raise awareness and funds for people affected by leprosy.



# Her smile says it all

**Thank you for choosing to join hands  
with Shanti on her road to recovery.**



Last year, we wrote to you about Shanti, a young woman from Nepal, whose fingers were severely burnt and infected when she arrived at the Leprosy Mission Anandaban Hospital.

Shanti was diagnosed with leprosy at just 11 years old. She took medication back then and believed herself to be cured, but she wasn't.

Two years ago, Shanti was cooking with hot oil and burnt her hand. The blisters became infected and were simply not healing like they were supposed to.

When Shanti went to her local hospital, they told Shanti that her injuries were so serious they would have to amputate her fingers.

She was terrified, in a state of shock.

**Her only hope was Anandaban Hospital which  
your generous donations support.**

Gratefully, Shanti was put in the kind hands of doctors and nurses, and she did not need to lose her fingers. She also received a skin test and the result showed that there was still leprosy bacteria in her body.



***Shanti was put on multi-drug therapy and  
she was cured of leprosy!***

**Thank you for keeping Shanti in your  
thoughts and prayers!**

Last year, Shanti received reconstructive surgeries to correct the clawing on both of her hands. Shanti was also taught to do regular physio exercises to ease the stiffness of her hands.

***"I'm glad that we found Anandaban  
Hospital. Doctors and nurses here take  
good care of Shanti." Shanti's father says.***



***"I can hold a pen now.  
I want to go back to  
school and finish my  
studies. Then I want to find a job!"  
Shanti smiles.***



Shanti became good friends  
with Sita while they were at  
Anandaban Hospital.

Shanti is overjoyed to know that there are people like you in New Zealand who care about her.

**With your support, we can reach more people like  
Shanti and Sita (featured on the cover letter) ,  
and give them a brighter future.**



# Perfect Love Casts Out All Fear

Thank you for the incredible response to the World Leprosy Day Appeal which helps transform lives of people like Abu in Bangladesh.

Abu was only 13 years old when he contracted leprosy. Due to the terrible stigma surrounding the disease in his community, Abu was thrown out of his home. Without any support, Abu was forced to leave school and beg for food.

The effects of leprosy meant both of Abu's hands became clawed, and his feet developed awful ulcers. To add to the nightmare, villagers in his community threatened him with physical violence, leaving Abu fearing for his life.

*"Go away," they said, "or we will throw you in the river."*

It is heartbreaking to think of Abu as a child - terrified, confused and completely alone. Thankfully, this tragic part of Abu's story ends, all thanks to kind supporters like you.



Abu uses his hands to scoop ingredients like rice and flour for customers.



Abu is married and has two children.



Abu joined a Leprosy Mission self-help group where he was taught physiotherapy for his hands, and how to care for the ulcer on his foot. He felt love and a sense of belonging for the first time.

Abu was also given business development training and a loan to start up his own modest grocery shop. His store is functioning well. It is a busy place with food, tea and general trade goods.

*"I can now earn enough money to provide for my family, and buy school materials for my children," Abu declares.*

He is now being respected by his community and being referred as a 'sowbager' (meaning 'businessman'). Many people buy from Abu's store - **the stigma is gone.**

## Confidence to speak up for others

Abu is also the president of his self-help group. Despite the pain he has gone through, Abu's heart is full of love and he advocates for and helps others who are affected by leprosy in his community.

*"People affected by leprosy need help, not the rejection that I experienced as a child. Let's not leave them in that place," Abu says.*

It is only thanks to amazing people like you, Abu's life has undergone this radical transformation.

Your kindness and compassion also means others like Abu in Bangladesh, can be helped through the Chittagong People-led Development Project.



# Lives transformed in Bougainville - thanks to you!

In our last Spring inTouch magazine, we shared with you the visit we had from Ruby Mirinka, director of the Bougainville Healthy Communities Programme (BHCP).

Today we want to share with you the incredible story of Elijah whose life was changed because of your wonderful support for Bougainville.

Elijah, is just like any other 14 year old boy – full of energy! He lives in a small rural village, only accessible by very rough roads and terrain. Chipped mugs, kerosene lamps and a traditional shack made from sago leaves and bamboo complete the picture of subsistence living for Elijah and his family.

Elijah's favorite hobby is fishing and he loves learning from his mother who is a very experienced fisherwoman, providing vital income for their family. One day he hopes to be as good as she is!

Life was hard but not unlike that of the other residents of this village. Until leprosy struck Elijah. That day, Elijah's happy childhood could have been cut short.

**But thanks to your support,** Elijah's aunty had been trained as a village health volunteer to recognise cases of leprosy. When she saw the telltale white patches on Elijah's face, she quickly brought him to a health facility for diagnosis where he was prescribed the antibiotics to cure leprosy.



***Praise the Lord! Elijah was diagnosed early and now cured of leprosy!***

It is all thanks to wonderful people in New Zealand like you, Elijah's leprosy was diagnosed early, ensuring he didn't develop any disabilities.

***"I'm so happy because my skin patches are now gone!" Elijah declares. "Thank you Leprosy Mission health workers for taking care of me."***

Without treatment, Elijah would have developed ulcers and clawed hands. It would have become impossible for him to walk down to the water to fish or hook a fishing line, destroying any chance he had to provide for his family.

Because of you, Elijah can also happily go to school, and play with his friends.

Thank you for giving children in Bougainville, like Elijah, the opportunity to grow up happy, hopeful, and with a brighter future.



***Your love and care has enabled BHCP to reach 95% of the population of Bougainville, even those in the most rural communities, like Elijah's.***



# Zero Leprosy Transmission by 2035

The Leprosy Mission Global Fellowship is part of the Global Partnership for Zero leprosy, joining with organisations like the World Health Organisation, the International Federation of Anti-Leprosy Association (ILEP) and the International Association for Integration, Dignity and Economic Advancement (IDEA), working towards ending leprosy transmission by 2035.



Every 2 minutes,  
someone is diagnosed  
with leprosy



1 in 10 people diagnosed  
with leprosy is  
a child



210, 671 new cases of  
leprosy were reported  
in 2017

## Why Now?

The introduction of effective multi-drug therapy (MDT) 30 years ago has made leprosy easily treatable. The reported prevalence of leprosy has been reduced by more than 95% - 16 million people have been cured of leprosy since 1981.

However, the number of newly diagnosed leprosy patients has remained above 200,000 per year for the last decade, including thousands of children. It is estimated that more than one million will be newly diagnosed over the next five years.

Through new research and improved diagnostic testing, we are working together to achieve zero leprosy transmission by 2035.

## New Indonesia Project

In our last inTouch magazine, we shared with you about our exciting new partnership with Netherlands Leprosy Relief (NLR) in Indonesia, which has the third highest number of leprosy cases in the world.

The need is both vital and urgent.

**In faith, we are starting a project in Indonesia.**



A combination of three drugs (Dapsone, Clofazimine and Rifampicin) known as multi-drug therapy (or MDT) kills the bacteria that causes leprosy.

This new Indonesia project has an emphasis on finding and curing people with leprosy. By implementing the approach of 'contact tracing' of leprosy patients, and providing one dose of antibiotic Rifampicin to those who have close contact with leprosy patients; it could bring a breakthrough in reducing the risk of leprosy transmission.

*Please join us in thoughts and prayer for the success of this new initiative in Indonesia, and for opportunities to replicate it in other leprosy-affected countries. Pray also for oneness in hearts and minds as we work towards the common goal of ending leprosy transmission by 2035.*



# Supporters Corner....

Thank you to everyone who took time to fill out the Supporter Feedback Form we sent out last year, and the notes and messages sent throughout the year. There were many heart-warming comments from wonderful supporters, so we just had to share a few –

I learnt about leprosy when I was 6 years old in Sunday School. It is terrible to think this disease still exists and feel I must contribute to its treatment and eradication.

Alison, Gisborne

I believe that people affected by this disease can be healed... it is the 21<sup>st</sup> century and such illnesses must be eradicated.

Lytvyn, Auckland

Thank you so much for the work you do. Showing the love of Jesus to as many as possible is the greatest calling of all!

Nicola, Carterton

## Join us on Supporter Tour 2019

Always wondered exactly how the Leprosy Mission works?

Now is your chance to enjoy a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

This November, you will have the opportunity to visit Leprosy Mission hospitals, training centres and community development projects. You will spend time with local people and immerse yourself in the community. Above all, you can see for yourself how people are cured of leprosy and lives are transformed through your prayers and compassion.

***"This tour has been an amazing experience! It has been heart-warming to see those affected by leprosy being given hope for a new future. Seeing the way they are treated with such kindness and dignity, it's like seeing the light of Jesus shining through the work of the Leprosy Mission."*** Carrie, 2018 Supporter Tour participant



To talk more about this opportunity, please contact Gillian Whitley on 0800 862 873 or by email: [gillian.whitley@leprosymission.org.nz](mailto:gillian.whitley@leprosymission.org.nz)

She would love to hear from you!



# The Leprosy Mission Prayer:

*Almighty Father, the giver of life and health, look mercifully on those who suffer from leprosy.  
Stretch out your hand to touch and heal them as Jesus did during his earthly life.  
Grant wisdom and insight to those who are seeking the prevention and cure of the disease;  
Give skill and sympathy to those who minister to the patients;  
Reunite the separated ones with their families and friends;  
And inspire your people with the task set before the Leprosy Mission,  
That it may never lack either the staff or the means to carry on its healing work.  
In accordance with your will, and to the glory of your holy name,  
We ask this for the sake of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Amen.*

Thank you so much for standing with us in prayer.

If you wish to receive Prayer & Praise diaries, please contact Ruth on 0800 862 873, or [ruth.ejiwale@leprosymission.org.nz](mailto:ruth.ejiwale@leprosymission.org.nz)

## The lasting legacy of bequests

We are extremely grateful to the following supporters who remembered the work of The Leprosy Mission New Zealand in their Will.

Mabel Lawrence Garrity	Wellington
Eustace Jack O'Carroll	New Plymouth
Patricia Teulon	Christchurch
U V L Jones	Hamilton
Betty Joyce Kitchingman	Paraparaumu
Ainslie Wood	Auckland
Thelma May Howison	Dunedin
Elizabeth Mary Reid	Dunedin
Pauline June Williamson	Tauranga
Elizabeth McKee-Benbow	Nelson
Marg Lesley Burt	Invercargill
Noel D R Price	Greymouth
George Henry Dear	Tararua

Gillian would love to answer your bequest questions, either on the phone or, even better, over a friendly cup of tea.

She will also send you a fascinating leaflet about bequests. It tells a beautiful story of how a lasting gift like yours can restore hope and family to those affected by leprosy.

If you would like to include a bequest in your Will, please contact Gillian on 0800 862 873 or at [gillian.whitley@leprosymission.org.nz](mailto:gillian.whitley@leprosymission.org.nz)

## Books



### Hope for Each Day

These 365 Devotions offer encouraging stories and biblical truths in child-friendly language. Ideal for parents and children to read together, one page a day, enabling the whole family to spend time with God daily.

**\$40 includes P&H**



### Diana: Her True Story - In Her Own Words

In this fully revised volume of his groundbreaking biography, Morton presents the new material from the astonishing tapes and goes on to consider her legacy and relevance to the royal family today.

**\$38 includes P&H**

## Buy a book and help end leprosy

Buy an inspirational book today for yourself or as a gift, and help transform the lives of individuals and families affected by leprosy. The funds raised through our book sales go directly to supporting the poorest of the poor in the countries where the Leprosy Mission works.

**The above are only a sample of the books available for purchase.**

To view all books, please visit [www.leprosymission.org.nz/book-store](http://www.leprosymission.org.nz/book-store) Alternatively, contact Carolyn Currie on 0800 862 873 or [carolyn.currie@leprosymission.org.nz](mailto:carolyn.currie@leprosymission.org.nz)

Free postage throughout New Zealand.



# "I am willing"

## Use your Will to do God's Will



A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, "Lord, if you are willing, make me clean." Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. (Matthew 8:2-3)

During your lifetime, the number of people affected by leprosy has fallen tremendously. Yet many remain. God cares for them deeply and we know you do too.

Use your Will to make sure there will be hope, light and life for those still affected by leprosy after your lifetime.

Your bequest costs nothing now, but in the future will have great power to transform the lives of the most wounded, rejected and poverty-stricken.

### Call Gillian about your bequest

Gillian Whitley would love to answer your bequest questions, either on the phone or even better, over a friendly cup of tea.

Gillian will also send you a fascinating leaflet about bequests. It tells a beautiful story of how a lasting gift like yours can restore hope and family to those affected by leprosy. The easy process of including the Leprosy Mission New Zealand in your Will is also explained.

**Call Gillian now on 0800 862 873 or**  
email: [gillian.whitley@leprosymission.org.nz](mailto:gillian.whitley@leprosymission.org.nz)

