

Prayer Notes

"Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks." – Thessalonians 5:16

May 2023

Pema's journey to church - disability inclusion

Pema*, a single woman in her early sixties, lives with her parents in Palungtar, Chyangli-8.

She migrated from Dhading District during her adulthood, and her parents became Christian after relocating to Chyangli. Pema converted to Christianity when she was in her early thirties, however, due to a disability that impacted her ability to walk, Pema has never been able to attend church.

INF Nepal began their work in Palungtar, Gorkha by forming a Self Help Group and providing training, workshops, and orientation on disability. They also initiated a Bible study course called "Church Bar-None," which focuses on disability.

Through continuous education on disability, the Self Help Group members and the church community started showing more compassion towards people with disabilities and began actively helping them.

The church began realising the importance of every member's presence during worship services and started considering Pema as a valued member. They investigated ways they could help Pema attend church, arranging a motorbike rider to help Pema get to and from Saturday services.



Pema is being supported to attend her local church

Taking personal responsibility for Pema's transport, the Self Help Group and church pay NPR 200 and 300 to the bike rider for this responsibility.

"Pema didi [sister] gets ready by 8:30am and waits for me to arrive", the bike rider said. "She becomes sad if I don't show up there before 9:15 am."

Pema expressed her happiness to be part of the church service after 60 years of being unable to attend. She is delighted to fellowship with others and says she has been blessed to be part of the church community.

"I am so happy that my church has changed and started valuing even people with disabilities," she says.

"I'm sure there are many more like me who would appreciate this opportunity to take part."

Story by INF Nepal Communications Officer, Anil Rai. Pema's name has been changed to protect her identity.

Please pray...

There are many people with disability throughout the communities in which INF Nepal and other partners work. Traditionally there have been strong links between illness and wrongdoing, and so the stigma of disability is difficult to overcome. Our partners also have to work creatively to find practical solutions to the problems their members face in terms of transport and access.

Please pray that communities will continue to learn and include those who have often been excluded, and that the resources will be found to enable people with disability to take part in all aspects of community life.

Please pray with us



International Nepal Fellowship Nepal

Give thanks that INF Nepal's Zero Leprosy Strategy implementation phase has begun which will support the Government's National Roadmap for Zero Leprosy (2021-30).

Give thanks also for the leprosy patients who are benefitting from the new Eileen and Betty Center at Green Pastures Hospital. Please pray for cooperation from the construction company as final building fixes take place.

Pray for the success of the three outreach camps planned in the communities of Banke and Bardiya districts. INF Nepal asks for guidance and wisdom for the outreach teams as they work to identify and treat those affected by leprosy.

Please pray for Kalikot's WASH and IRH project teams who are implementing critical water and sanitation activities in communities. Please pray that better coordination and cooperation can be built between INF Nepal staff and local stakeholders.

Pray for the Disaster Relief and Recovery team as they prepare and develop Monsoon Preparedness and Response Plans. Monsoon rains create a significant risk to many remote communities; pray that the plans to mitigate disaster will be thorough and implemented with confidence by local community members.

Mahili Milijuli - Women Working Together (MM)

Give thanks for recent livelihood training workshops in Nepalgunj, where our partner MM work with women and people from disadvantaged areas to improve their prospects of making a living. The recent training workshops brought together women to learn about sewing and making handicrafts including cushions and soft toy animals.

Please pray for the team and their outreach among communities where many households are led by women who are eager to learn new skills to increase their incomes.

WACT - Welfare Association for Children Tikapur

Give thanks for the success of a recent "Ask Me Anything" session with young people from one of WACT's Adolescent Leadership Groups and supporters from here in Australia. The young people proudly showed their homes and talked about their hopes for the future as part of WACT's training groups.

Pray that new initiatives to help the young people make use of social media to share their own stories with a broader audience will continue to inspire them in their efforts to tackle challenges within their communities and families.

Ming Poon

Give thanks for the new leprosy coordinator, with whom Ming is working to implement the Zero Leprosy Strategy. There are many meetings and logistical issues to work out - pray for wisdom and strength especially as the onset of the monsoon season takes its toll on energy and health.

Please pray for leprosy awareness training sessions that Ming is undertaking with the Government at Green Pastures Hospital during May. This is an opportunity for INF Nepal to showcase its work and help support government strategy.

Caryn and Peter Kneale

Give thanks that Caryn has officially started work in her role as a dietician with Green Pastures Hospital. She'll be spending time assessing current nutrition resources available to people and will use her experience to advise patients with diabetes and chronic health problems.

Please pray for the process of collaboration with staff (existing and new) and for wisdom and guidance as new programs are implemented.

Pray also for Peter, who is working full time teaching the children of expat workers at the local school. Both Peter and Caryn have very much enjoyed time at the INF Nepal team retreat and have valued recent trips to visit communities. They particularly ask for prayer for more remote communities, where they noted the absence of young people who are working or studying abroad, leaving older people, children and women to manage life on what family members are able to send home in remittances.

Women at the Well - Streams and Sources of Transformation

INF Australia is holding a special gathering of supporters at on June 17, 12-3pm at St Paul's Anglican Church Chatswood.

The event will include lunch, speakers from our projects in Nepal especially focussing on women, and an opportunity to pray together.

We'd love to see you there! Easy parking on site or a ten minute walk from Chatswood Station; warm tasty Nepalese food and good company :)

If you'd like to come along, please rsvp by phone on 02 9411 1195 or email us at ausoffice@inf.org.au before June 10.

The event will also be livestreamed on Facebook, so if you don't already follow us online, now is a great time to do so. Details are available on our website at www.inf.org.au/events