

**Working  
together  
towards a  
leprosy-free  
world**

‡ **SFLG** ST FRANCIS LEPROSY GUILD

**ANNUAL REVIEW 2019**

# Ending leprosy for good

**We believe** that a leprosy-free world is finally within sight – if not today, then soon.

**We are determined** to build on our 124-year legacy, working to alleviate the suffering caused by leprosy. By lending our support to around 50 leprosy centres around the world we will play our part in caring for those affected by the disease, and work towards eradicating leprosy once and for all.

**We support** leprosy centres that are making an important contribution to finding, monitoring, diagnosing and treating new leprosy cases. That way we can stop the disease in its tracks and prevent untold suffering.

**We care** for people who have been marginalised by leprosy and whose disabilities have robbed them of their livelihoods. Through our compassion and practical support we help them sustain life for themselves and their families, and we restore hope.



## A message from the President

In many ways the fight against leprosy is a victim of its own success. Most new cases are now concentrated in remote and marginalised communities, far from the public gaze. Therefore, it can be a challenge to raise funds to support our mission when many believe that leprosy is already a thing of the past.

That's why I would like to pay special thanks to the continuing commitment of our team of trustees and to all of our loyal supporters, so many of whom have been donating to our work over many years. You are the very lifeblood of the Guild.

I must also thank all those people who have responded to our recent fundraising campaign. Having you on board is both an inspiration and a blessing, and I hope we can all continue to work together to eradicate leprosy once and for all.

At our annual benefactors' mass, held on 4th October 2018 at Farm Street Church in London, we remembered all who have supported us and prayed for our late supporters who have provided for us in their wills. Their kind legacies will play an invaluable role in enabling us to win the battle against leprosy.

Every year, we help aspiring doctors to visit leprosy centres across the globe. One of last year's electives, Dr Cajetan Skowronski, witnessed both the triumphs and the significant challenges still remaining in preventing the spread of leprosy, and he spoke movingly of his experiences at the reception after the mass.

While millions have been cured of the disease, there is a frightening possibility that we could see the resurgence of leprosy in some countries of the world unless urgent action is taken to detect and treat people's symptoms, as soon as they emerge. A leprosy-free world is tantalisingly in sight. Working with our partners and supporters, the Guild is determined to play its part.



Michael Forbes Smith, President.

***"We've reached an important crossroads in the fight against leprosy. Now is the time to forge ahead."***

# The end of leprosy is closer now, than ever.

In 1895, when St Francis Leprosy Guild was first established, there was no cure for leprosy. It was the scourge of poverty-stricken communities across the world, leaving millions of people excluded from their communities and so severely disabled that they were unable to fend for themselves or their families. Many religious sisters, brothers and priests made it their life's vocation to care for the people whom no one else was prepared to move amongst.

Even a few decades ago, more than five million people were being diagnosed with leprosy every year. However, since the multi-drug therapy became available in the 1980s, as many as 16 million people have been cured of the disease. In 1995, the World Health Organisation made the drugs freely available and the number of people developing leprosy has reduced very significantly since then.

Yet over 200,000 new cases are still being reported to the World Health Organisation each year. This is likely to be an underestimate since leprosy tends to be confined to isolated communities and many leprosy sufferers fear the stigma and will try to hide their symptoms until their disabilities can no longer be disguised.

This means accurate monitoring and reporting can be challenging.

Nevertheless, for the first time ever, we believe a leprosy-free world is possible and the key to total eradication is having trained local health workers who can seek out and monitor new cases, and provide prompt diagnosis and treatment. Not only will this help to prevent further transmission of the disease, but it will also save individuals from ever having to suffer the severe disabilities and indignities that leprosy can cause.

## We're winning the battle...

- **1980s – some 5.2 million cases of leprosy reported annually.**
- **1995 – World Health Organisation extends free access to leprosy treatments.**
- **16 million people cured of leprosy in the past 20 years.**
- **Today, around 200,000 new cases diagnosed annually, worldwide.**
- **Early diagnosis and treatment are key to total eradication.**

# Supporting leprosy centres across the globe

Grants awarded by St Francis Leprosy Guild in 2018 to 60 leprosy centres enabled us to help more than 238,259 people affected by leprosy. This includes patients treated at a centre, as outpatients or in their own home, as well as dependent families.

Country	People helped
Bangladesh	6,256
China	281
India	22,524
Myanmar	736
Nepal	2,587
Pakistan	58,523
Sri Lanka	500
Thailand	459
Vietnam	1,838

India & South East Asia  
Over **93,704** people helped

South America  
Over **20,565** people helped

Country	People helped
Brazil	20,565

Africa  
Over **123,990** people helped

Country	People helped
DRC Congo	Unavailable due to civil unrest
Egypt	1,801
Ghana	527
Liberia	1,164
Madagascar	286
Nigeria	3,332
Tanzania	104
Uganda	115,706
Zambia	31
Zimbabwe	1,039

# Caring for marginalised people in Myanmar

Leprosy is still endemic in Myanmar (formerly Burma), where as recently as 2015, the World Health Organisation reported some 1,000 new cases each year. Those affected by leprosy and their families frequently become outcasts, rejected by the rest of society.

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With your help, the Guild provides grants for St Joseph Cottolengo Leprosy Centre in Loilem district, known locally as the Hohkai Leprosy Shelter. Founded originally in 1938 by Fr. Rocco Parego, an Italian priest, the shelter now supports around 750 people who live in villages surrounding the shelter, including those affected by leprosy and their families. Currently, 86 leprosy patients are also being cared for at the shelter itself.

Fr. Tarcisio Kyaw Aye runs the shelter, supported by three sisters. Together, they minister to people's physical, emotional and spiritual needs. The shelter provides free drug treatments and ensures that patients who need operations, specialist treatments or artificial limbs have access to the public hospital at Loilem.



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© St Joseph Cottolengo Leprosy Centre

Since people who live in and around the shelter have been excluded from society, they have no means to support themselves. Your donations help to provide them with the basics, such as simple foodstuffs, clothing and hygiene products like soap, shampoo and toothpaste.

Fr. Tarcisio and the sisters are also making sure that the children and grandchildren of leprosy sufferers have the opportunity to thrive in the future by providing them with nursery, primary and secondary education, while older students are transported to the local High School six miles away. Students who prove capable of going on to university receive help with their fees, and education and training is also provided for parents to help improve their life chances.

In addition, people at the shelter and from the surrounding villages are learning agricultural skills so they can become self-supporting in the longer term.

# NEPAL 2017



St Francis Leprosy Guild provides grants for medical students to visit leprosy centres around the world. We hope the students we help will be inspired to continue fighting the disease in the future, and we have received 10 grant applications so far this year - more than ever before. Junior doctor, Cajetan Skowronski, reflects on his student experience in Nepal, in 2017.

“I witnessed amazing care during my visit to the Leprosy Mission at Anandaban Hospital in Nepal, while shadowing medical staff, attending outpatient clinics and assisting with surgical operations. It was inspiring to witness the breadth of the doctors’ skills in dealing with patients with very differing needs.



## A junior doctor reflects on his visit to Nepal



Anandaban Hospital in Nepal



Surgery to help patients regain limb function

The hospital's patients are fortunate to receive such holistic care, from first diagnosis and treatment to surgical procedures, prosthetics and physiotherapy to help them regain limb function. Education and occupational therapy are also provided to help people take care of their limbs, while rehabilitation services and job training restores hope among those for whom supporting themselves and their families is both a priority and an important source of personal pride.



Here's me all scrubbed up!



A new surgical block under construction

It was also heartening to see the emotional and spiritual support offered by the staff. Weekly prayer reinforces the fact that, as children of God, all patients are valued. I saw the vital difference this made to the self-esteem of those who had sadly been rejected by both their families and their communities.

I will always remember a 16-year-old boy whose family had paid enormous sums of money to get a diagnosis for his illness, only to reject him when it turned out to be leprosy. He had been living at Anandaban Hospital since age 13 and hospital social workers were doing their best to reunite him with his family. Should this fail the teenager felt life wouldn't be worth living, but staff at the hospital were working to provide him with a grant and training so he could open a shop and build a future for himself.

I'd like to thank the Guild's supporters for giving me this fantastic opportunity and for supporting leprosy centres across the world. I am considering becoming a GP, specialising in dermatology and would very much like to play a part in the accurate diagnosis of leprosy cases in the future.”



A busy clinic in Patan

# Preventing the spread of leprosy in Mumbai

In last year's Annual Review, we highlighted the Bombay Leprosy Project as one worthy of your support. This year, we're pleased to report back on their activities, which are making an important contribution to the eradication of leprosy in the city and surrounding area.

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In 1976, eminent Leprologist, Dr R Ganapati established the Bombay Leprosy Project in the belief that, to beat leprosy, diagnosis and treatment should be conducted in the community rather than focusing solely on hospital treatment. This community approach not only means that leprosy patients can continue to live with their families but it also helps to eliminate the stigma that they frequently endure.



halt its transmission to other members of their communities.

As well as monitoring people who are showing early symptoms of leprosy and providing prompt diagnosis and treatment, paramedics and community health volunteers also follow up previous leprosy cases to check for clinical problems, such as nerve damage. Once again, this is helping to prevent potential disabilities and to ensure that patients who may be experiencing a recurrence of the disease are picked up quickly.



Using a network of doctors, paramedics and community health volunteers, the Bombay Leprosy Project serves Greater Mumbai, which includes one of the largest slum districts in Asia. Last year, using house-to-house and school surveys, and community awareness programmes, the project detected 53 new leprosy cases in Mumbai, and a further 108 in rural communities outside the city. These people are now receiving free multi-drug treatments to help cure them of the disease, prevent severe, life-changing disabilities and to

Through its Referral Centre and satellite clinics in the community, Bombay Leprosy Project also supports those people who may have already suffered disabilities, providing appropriate aids or prosthetics to improve their mobility and help them lead more active lives.

As well as the excellent preventative work that Dr Ganapati and his team are doing on the ground in Mumbai, the Bombay Leprosy Project is renowned for its contribution to leprosy research, having published 350 scientific papers in both Indian and international journals.

# Relieving suffering in Mangalore

Sheila Pereira, Administrator at St Francis Leprosy Guild, reports on her visit St Joseph's Leprosy Hospital in Mangalore, India, which the Guild has supported since 1901.

"I first decided to visit St Joseph's Hospital while on a family holiday to Mangalore in 2017. On that first visit, I met Charlie, a leprosy patient who, despite being a resident of the hospital for around 50 years, felt no bitterness or rancour. Rather, he expressed only fulsome praise for the care he had received and felt fortunate to have free access to food and medicines, with no danger of being abandoned. His room was in direct view of the chapel, which he used to clean and look after until, sadly, disabilities caused by his leprosy prevented him from doing so.



Charlie, a long-term patient.

In March 2019, I returned to St Joseph's and was re-united with 81-year-old Charlie and also had the privilege to meet Bennybai on the women's ward, a resident of some 60 years. She too was at pains to tell me how well she



Sheila meeting with Bennybai.

was being looked after and grateful for all the care she was receiving. Meeting them both taught me much of what it means to "embrace" a leper, both in the physical as well as metaphorical sense as St Francis of Assisi did.

St Joseph's Leprosy Hospital is part of the Father Muller Charitable Institutions and Director, Rev Fr Richard Aloysius Coelho, described the outreach work they were doing in visiting schools, for example, where the children are taught –

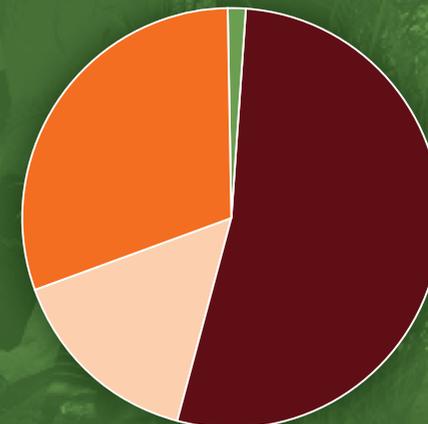
and tested – for leprosy. He was cautiously optimistic about new cases of leprosy being on the decline, which I'm delighted to say was borne out on the ward."

# Financial summary

The following charts show the Guild's voluntary income for the year 2018-2019 and also how that income was used to provide grants to leprosy centres across the world.

## Voluntary income 2018

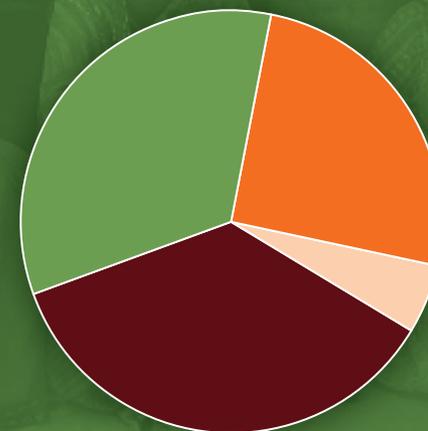
- Donations
- Church collections and donations
- Legacies
- Trust income



Total voluntary income 2018: £258,944

## Grants awarded 2018

- India
- South East Asia
- South America
- Africa



Total grants awarded in 2018: £221,500

Support costs, governance and fundraising: £89,057

Total resources expended in 2018: £310,557  
(made possible by drawing on income from previous years)

Full accounts are available on the Guild website [www.stfrancisleprosy.org](http://www.stfrancisleprosy.org) and on the Charity Commission website [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission) charity number 208741

# Help create a leprosy-free world with a gift in your Will



“When we come to make or change our Will, it is also a good time to consider how we can help make the world a better place by including a gift for the causes we care about.”

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Most of us will want to pass on at least some of what we own to the people we care about and the best way to do this is by making a Will and keeping it up to date. But when we come to make or change our Will, it is also a good time to consider how we can help make the world a better place by including a gift for the causes we care about.



Whatever size of gift you leave in the future, it will be invaluable to our work – even a 1% share of your estate can make a huge difference. Your gift could help to train more local health workers. It could promise rapid diagnosis and treatment for a community still plagued by leprosy. And it will continue our legacy of compassion and care for those affected by leprosy, and their families.



Remembering St Francis Leprosy Guild in your Will costs nothing during your lifetime, but your special gift will enable us to be there for as long as it takes to beat leprosy, for good. We hope it will also bring you comfort to know that, when that momentous day finally arrives, you will have played your part.

The end of leprosy is closer than ever before, but we have to plan for the fact that it may still be decades away. A gift in your Will means that people across the world can still rely on the Guild's support long into the future.

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If you would like to know how to leave a gift, please contact Sheila Pereira, Administrator, on 020 8969 1345 or email [administrator@stfrancisleprosy.org](mailto:administrator@stfrancisleprosy.org)

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**Donate at [www.justgiving.com/stfrancisleprosyguild](http://www.justgiving.com/stfrancisleprosyguild)**

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Children who have family members affected by leprosy are given the opportunity to receive an education at St Joseph Cottolengo Leprosy Centre in Loilem, Myanmar.