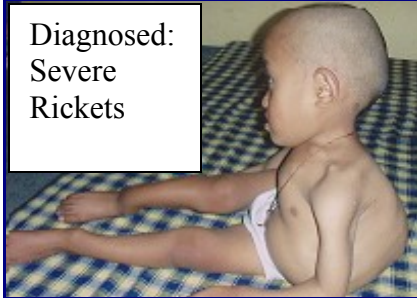


Dear Friends,

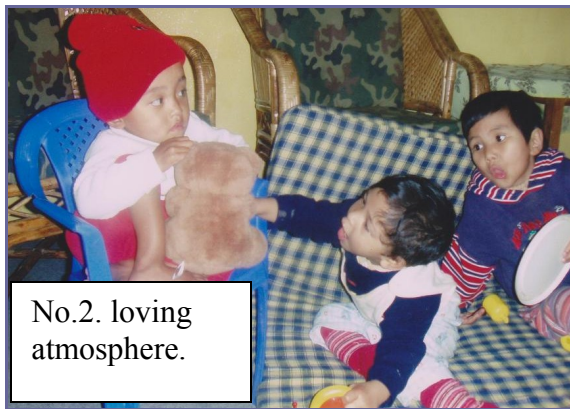
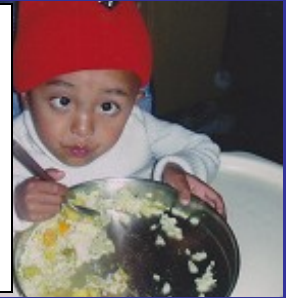
It was one of those heaviest monsoon days of which my mother would say that in such weather you won't find on the road even a dog with broken leg. I was genuinely engaged in work and from morning confused which work I should start with (sometimes at night I simply pray that my mind remains sane for another couple of years **a t l e a s t**), when the bell rang.

I thought to myself- *'Whoever it is, can't wait until this rain stops?!'* I went to open (not with angelic face to say least) and behold there was Richal soaked-wet and her mother. We run inside the house before even any conversation.

Diagnosed:  
Severe  
Rickets

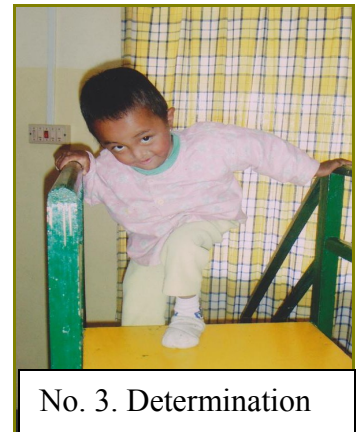


No.1  
Good  
food +  
medical  
treatme  
nt



No.2. loving  
atmosphere.

**"Poor cannot wait"**  
used to say John Paul II. Ironically they are the ones usually made to wait. But thank God and thanks to you, we and the poor under our care are not made to wait, and if, that's only for a short time. Their condition urgently knocks to the door of our



No. 3. Determination

hearts, as urgently as Richal knocked to our door. What conversation could I expect from these two soaked creatures except a typical desperate cry: "No food to eat and Richal wants to go to school". I understand the mother- how she can send a child to school and where is that school??? Richal comes from the very remote area called Chimney. Up there in the mountains there is a chimney from British times after which the place is named. The condition of the weather just added to the desperation. So Richal is back in our house, happy as child can be. The picture will bring your memory back- a child of about 3yrs. with severe rickets. Good food, proper medical treatment, loving environment and her own determination, all these 'ingredients' brought remarkable result. Within 6 months she began to walk! Certain deformities however couldn't be reversed but what is important- she improved so much that eventually she was able to go back to her house, walking on her legs. We convinced her mother to

Happy to be back with old friends. Just compare the little children (No.2) and now little 'ladies'.



take the child back. I always believe that whenever possible the child should stay with the parents. So Richal stayed in her house for couple of years. But how can we refuse the child's cry. As she is growing so the longing in her heart is growing- to have a chance like other children to go to school, to play, to have friends. I am happy that she did not forget our home. She kept on asking her mother to take her to our home and so finally the mother turn up to us in this horrific monsoon day.

And there is another family that is spared from waiting, always thanks to God and your generosity and that is Prodip's family. Prodip is the boy living close by to our Maranatha house. He is half paralyzed but able to walk. Right now we help him with the study, as I mentioned to you sometimes ago. The other day we went to visit his 'house'. It was raining and as we walked we met one elderly men struggling with his umbrella. Just to 'make friendship' we asked him, where he is going in this rain. What he answered really pierced my heart- I go to the shop to wait till rain stops because in my house I cannot sit- everywhere leaks. What is the purpose of the house? It is precisely this, to shelter you from cold, rain etc



Prodip's hut.

We reached Prodip's dwelling- same condition- everywhere water as the hut they live in is a shack. As I looked around the little compound I noticed a structure, not completed, hardly began. I got interested. Looks like if family wanted to build a small house but couldn't complete. We were taught in Novitiate – the temptation starts with a look. But Mother Teresa comes to my excuse for lack of modesty. Mother in her instructions to us used to say “*sisters, keep custody of the eyes inside your compound*

*but when you are on the street look around for the poor*”. I followed that and inevitably I fell into a ‘trap’ but mind, sinless. I read the other day interesting finding by Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen. He writes that we have more temptations to be good than we have to be bad. Then he goes on: “ how many times have you been tempted to help a poor family and how often have you felt sad if you did not and happy if you did? How often were you tempted to give up bad habits, to ‘see what is in the Bible’, to be kinder to your spouse, more gentle to your children, less cranky with your employees, less sarcastic to your neighbor, to try praying, to share your wealth with the hungry...”

When we stop for a while and think about our inner self we find surprisingly that we **are** often tempted to do good but we repress the ‘temptation’. We are not that quick to repress the ‘bad’ temptation as we are quick to repress the ‘good’ temptation. Falling into ‘good temptation’ brings us joy; even though for a first moment we don’t see joy in renouncing ourselves something; falling into ‘bad temptation’ brings us sadness, even if at first glimpse it promises us joy.

Coming back to Prodip's family.

After some more questions to the family we got needed information that the little land is their own. That is all we need in this compound, besides needing you. So we are raising the structure and making it into a house for Prodip's family. Our prayers are that we complete it.

In many cases our handicapped children were considered a burden to the family. But once we start helping them they become a blessing instead. In the first place, obviously, it is because when we



Going to be a nice room, fulfilling the purpose of the house- to shelter the dweller from rain, cold, heat...



help the child the whole family profits. We give to the family food rations and/or money for daily living. For most of them this is the only 'income' they have, the whole family.

There is still a deeper blessing that handicapped child brings to the entire family but often it is 'buried' by the first physical needs and we cannot blame anyone.

For us these children **are** the blessing because they offer us the opportunity to exercise our faith, our active love for God.

As you know every weekend we go to Siliguri (Maranatha), to be together. Last weekend as we reached, children run, whoever could run and the rest followed crawling, straight from the car to the garden because it's season for guava. Even though it's not yet ripe, what can we do?!- **'Poor cannot wait!'** - This weekend we had someone who 'couldn't wait' for our arrival- Serfraj.



Serfraj on his own.



Little bit more and you will not believe that ours are disable children.

After the last visit to doctor we were told by him that Serfraj has to walk and walk and walk. Coming to our school doesn't provide that much opportunity because once in the school he has to sit in his bench. Back at his home there is no space for even one 'walk' and certainly not for 'walk and walk and walk....' His family is a Muslim and they got certain rules, especially regarding food, that put obstacles on eating with others of different religions. For that reason the family did not allow Serfraj to stay with us. But that was OK as long as Serfraj remained in bed. Now he should walk and where to walk? On the bed? Besides, one week past since his father is not returning home and they don't know where he is. So the mother yielded to our request, all the more because she herself is sick and needing surgery on her stomach. We say: 'misery likes companions'. The family got many. But Serfraj is so happy and walks better and better, using for protection the walker.

These are the last of the news and soon we will be back with more. With loving wishes from all of us



I can't promise you even one guava- it too, cannot wait.

*The Flame of Hope family*

