

My name is Beate. I got to know Gideon Jacob in the 1990s through publications. I had the first opportunity in 1997 to visit Gideon in India and get to know a few areas of his widespread church ministry, MoseMinistries being one of them. Since then I have remained in contact with him and his wife Ute. Our travels and many experiences throughout India and Germany have strengthened our connection and formed a close friendship.

I have witnessed Gideon Jacob in different situations and contexts; but he always remained true to himself and to his convictions: His heart's desire is to build churches which will be a home for the poor, the suffering, the suppressed, the marginalized and the rejected – all of them should experience God's unlimited and healing love and care. Gideon is deeply moved when he encounters poverty and distress; he gets personally involved and commits himself to help the church and the weak with all means available to him. Gideon suffers in and under many difficult circumstances, yet he is neither discouraged nor bitter – on the contrary. He compensates for the hardships by singing and composing profound spiritual songs; he also never loses his wonderful personal sense of humor and recognizes easily the funny side of a situation. As an ambitious and passionate preacher who underlines the message of the Bible with love in action, he has inspired, touched and motivated thousands of people to act in India and Europe.

During my short term visits in India, both in 1997 and in 1998, I was also able to get to know MoseMinistries in Usilampatti. It was quite a small house in the middle of a residential area. A group of women cared for the rejected girls who had been brought to the home as newborns and toddlers with a lot of dedication and love, and with very basic means. In 1998 I was able to help in the home for a few weeks with the daily care. As a professional Children's nurse, I took special care of the weakest children. I was able to give advice because of my professional knowledge, but I was also totally amazed to see that every effort was made and no cost was spared to keep the smallest and weakest girls alive! Premature babies and babies with birth defects, who would usually be put in an incubator in Germany, were wrapped in blankets and put on a hot water bottle and were fed with high quality special food. A girl who underwent heart surgery was treated so carefully even still months after the surgery. Children who were suffering from diarrhea were treated with antibiotics. In the cooler season even the bath water was heated on an open fire. Even though the circumstances were so simple the children grew up with so much protection and care. They were cared for in such a way, so as no child would suffer any harm, and every child would become healthy and strong in order to lead an independent life as a woman one day. Even though there were several female helpers from Germany and Europe from time to time none of us or Gideon Jacob ever thought of using the children as a source of income!

At the end of 1998 the home appeared to be well established. More and more children were brought to the home within shorter spaces of time. The home seemed to burst at the seams (I even wondered to myself how it would be if it continued to grow). Therefore I was glad when I heard, that the whole project was going to be transferred to a bigger place in Tiruchy near the church building. They could then concentrate on the upbringing and education of the children who had been entrusted to the home up until then.

Between 2000 and 2008 I had the opportunity again and again to visit the girls at MoseMinistries. I was also able to witness certain stages of development; potty training, eating independently, writing the first spidery letters,... right up to the point where the older girls were able to speak and translate English fluently.

The housing conditions remained simple but were constantly being improved. The same was true for the daily care: The toddlers were given milk every day and vitamins to strengthen their immune system. Their meal plan always included a daily portion of vegetables. I was present when the two-story building on the MoseMinistries-ground was inaugurated. The girls were familiar with European visitors but they definitely identified themselves clearly with India. Gideon wanted them to become a self-confident generation of women for India. He was always concerned to protect and guard them

and only males who were trustworthy people were allowed on the premises. As he himself detests the act of abuse against girls, it was one of his greatest fears that he would not be able to protect the girls adequately. That he is now accused exactly this, is absolutely absurd!

The girls spent their day to day life together as a group and saw themselves as sisters who were integrated into the larger church family. As they grew older questions naturally arose concerning their identity: Who their parents are, why were they brought to the home? The Biblical story of Moses who had been abandoned in a small wicker basket in order to survive helped them a lot – the name MoseMinistries is based on that story. As far as I can tell none of the parents ever asked about their girls or demanded them back. The children never had contact to their biological parents or relatives. They always wanted to hear stories from me of their early childhood and asked me to describe what normal family life was like.

Gideon travelled twice to Germany with some of the girls. Even then he never thought of kidnapping or selling the children! All of them returned back safely to the other children and continued their simple life without European luxury. They had grown from the experience but were never arrogant about it.

As I got to know Gideon and his exceptional commitment for suppressed women and unwanted girls, I personally became more interested in this topic and also did more in-depth research. In several Indian magazines numerous articles and statistics were published which confirmed and substantiated Gideon's statements. Whereas, at the beginning of 2000, there were still many hidden advertisements for prenatal sex determination and thereafter abortion, I was very glad to see more and more signs and campaigns with the slogan "save the girl child". Female infanticide is no longer a hushed topic! That was and is exactly Gideon's ambition.

In addition to that, during my stay in Mumbai and Delhi, I was confronted over and over again with the issue of women caught in prostitution. These women are trafficked and forced to live a life without dignity. Gideon's ambition, even in this instance, is to help these women to be able to return to a life of dignity, restoration and appreciation. He would never support prostitution in any way, but on the contrary, fight for the women (and children) concerned. Gideon's fight for dignity and for the human rights of women and children inspired me personally, and I myself have been involved now for many years with volunteer work among prostitutes in Germany and Europe.

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