

In October 1998, I, Johanna, travelled to India for the first time, where I also got to know Gideon Jacob. From the time I met him, I was moved and inspired by the revolutionary conviction, vision and amazing dedication he had in standing up for the cause of the “unwanted” girls and for the poor people of society in general. From then on, I visited the “MoseMinistries-Home” over a long period of time at various intervals. The last time I could see the girls was in October 2015 and I have been very distressed to hear about the process of indignant accusations against Gideon Jacob and the incarceration of the girls!

My first impression of MoseMinistries in 1998 was that this is a place of acceptance and security for the girls. Even when the girls were still very small, they appeared to be very happy, fun-loving girls, and were well nourished and well looked after. From the beginning, each and every girl was given attention and each one was attended to in the best possible way.

The home was very well structured and the girls were divided into age groups in order to keep a good overview of the girls and to be able to help them to develop according to their ages.

The children appeared to come from very poor families mostly and showed signs of malnourishment. For this reason a lot of attention was given to their medical treatment. For many years a doctor came regularly to the home to attend to the medical needs of the girls. All the necessary immunizations were administered and every consultation was recorded in detail as far as possible. As more and more improved hospitals were established in the area, the girls were also treated there. Gideon Jacob also did not spare any cost for those girls who needed expensive operations, like Jasmin who needed a heart operation, or Pamela and Hanna who had cleft lips, or for those who needed expensive medicine, like Rebecca for Tbc, or Persis for HIV. Those girls who were already stigmatized were especially helped and given a better quality of life, even though they had already received the “death sentence” from doctors. Rebecca is the greatest and best testimony of this.

Persis was brought to the home by her parents when she was 6 months old. Just shortly afterwards she was diagnosed with HIV. The doctors gave her 3 years to live at the most, but she went on to live well for 9 years full of love and finally died, with a smile on her face, due to the inevitable effect of AIDS. Besides these girls mentioned above, every other one I met, was without question in very good condition and definitely did not show any sign of abuse etc.!

All the girls completed kindergarten/nursery school and were then placed in school. The girls’ homework sessions were facilitated by many helpers and they were divided into small groups to help assist them in the best possible way. Besides the regular staff who took care of their day to day needs, other teachers or students were employed to take care of the special individual needs of the girls. They went to a lot of effort and used a lot of creativity to help assist the girls’ strengths and weaknesses. Special needs children like Lynn, Raffaella und Pauline, who were not able to cope with main stream schooling, were placed in special schools at times. Besides school education, the girls were also given music lessons (violin, keyboard, drums, guitar, singing lessons) and were taught crafts and other creative activities. Some were taught how to cook and bake in order to take care of themselves in future, others were given lessons in how to manage accounts. They were even given the opportunity to learn another language (Hindi and English) as well as computer lessons for some, and many other opportunities.

A special highlight for some of the girls was the opportunity to travel to Germany, to visit friends of MoseMinistries, among whom I see myself as one. We were there to greet them as they arrived and

travelled with them for 4 weeks around the country in which time they were able to learn a lot about the culture and the “foreign ways” there. Meetings were arranged for the girls to participate with other children of their age, as a form of cultural exchange which they all thoroughly enjoyed. For this reason the girls learned Indian dances and loved the opportunity to share their beautiful Indian tradition with others. At no point was money ever exchanged for this, no begging took place! For the entire period of their stay, they had four German and two Indian female care takers who watched over them day and night. I myself was one of the care takers and can witness to the fact that, in contradiction to all the accusations, at no point in time was the girls’ overseas trip used for any abusive purpose. In comparison, the trip rather served to broaden their horizons in a big way, for both sides involved. All the girls were healthy, happy and returned home from their trip to MoseMinistries in sound condition.

In all phases of life that the girls have gone through, I have always been amazed at the way in which each is seen individually and how their strengths and weaknesses were recognised. The investment in each and every girl paid off and it was a great joy for me to see their inward and outward stages of development. This too is a clear indication that Gideon Jacob did not see these girls as worthless, or think about selling or abusing these girls to gain something from them!

As the girls were rejected by their own parents and never knew them, Gideon Jacob took on an important and trustworthy role as father for the girls. In all the years that I was able to visit the home, I never saw any of the parents visiting or even showing any interest in their own children.

Especially at the start of adolescence, many of the girls suffered with this fact that they had been rejected and had to go through a difficult process of forgiving and finding their own identity. Gideon Jacob, his wife and the entire team always counselled and encouraged them, showed them appreciation and gave them hope that, despite the degrading fact of being rejected because of their gender, there is a good plan for their lives. Against all odds, Gideon Jacob always stood by them, took a stand for their safety and well-being and so doing, carried out PM Modi’s campaign “beti bachao, beti padhao” very practically.

How can someone who has invested so much time, money, responsibility and attentiveness in these once “unwanted” girls, who values and supports them, have to answer in a court of law for being a human trafficker?

How can it be, that one does not believe these young women when they say that Gideon Jacob, who they have experienced and certified as being their advocate and trustworthy adviser, has never harmed them in any way?!

And how can it be, that they have to suffer this injustice in which they became victims to the authorities for two years already, having had their freedom and their close caregivers taken away from them?!

Should Gideon Jacob not be allowed to continue doing good for these girls, just as any mother or father would do!?

Johanna