

## **The Diocese of Jammu – Srinagar, India.**

The diocese of Jammu-Srinagar is situated in the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh in North India. In 1986 the Prefecture Apostolic of Jammu and Kashmir was named The Diocese of Jammu Srinagar.

### **Basic Statistics of the Diocese**

Area of the Diocese: **2,22,236 sq. kms.** Civil districts:**22.** Population: **13.68** million. Catholics: **8500.** Diocesan priests:**54.** Religious priests & Sisters: **196.** Parishes and Mission Centers with Resident Priest:**36.** Substations/Mass Centers/ Without resident Priest: **12.** Villages in contact: **450.** Number of non-evangelized villages: **5300.** Religious Congregations working in the diocese:**24**

The inaccessibility, inhospitable climatic conditions and hilly terrains, illiteracy, militancy, constant international border tension between India Vs Pakistan/China and unemployment and underdeveloped regions are major challenges of our diocese. The main occupations of the people are agriculture, animal husbandry, tourism and daily wages.

### **Our ministries:**

The first and foremost concern of the Diocese of Jammu-Srinagar is to preach the Gospel. The greatest dream of the Diocese of Jammu-Srinagar is to reach out to all the villages that have not yet heard the Good News. The diocese engages in its various social and educational ministries through the diocesan educational society and Catholic Social Service Society.

We believe in integral evangelization, which embraces every aspect of human life. In order to achieve our goal of integral evangelization, we conduct formal and non-formal education, skill development programs, health camps, Bible conventions, home visits, Small Christian Community prayer meetings, support to other denominations, housing project for the homeless people, hostel for the poor and disadvantaged children, tuition classes in the remote villages, shelter home for the disabled and elderly people, women empowerment activities, care for terminally ill.

The diocese runs 4 rehabilitation centers for the old, terminally ill, mentally and physically challenged people and two hostels for the poor and marginalized children. However, we are struggling to provide all the basic facilities to the inmates staying at these facilities.

We would like to continue extending our helping hand to these poor children in parishes and boardings to meet their expenses for text books, tuition fees and uniforms, mid-day meals, transportation to differently abled children, treatment of youth who are drug addicts, sponsoring the higher education of youth, meeting the medical expenses of the sick and terminally ill patients who are below poverty line.

### **Needs of the Time:**

Evangelization of non-Christians and deepening the faith of the people and sharing the Gospel with all.

Training Catechists and other lay leaders for the work of Evangelization.

Constructing small functional mission churches.

Fostering vocations for priesthood and religious life.

Promoting dialogue and understanding among Christians and others.

Though we are rich in human resources, we lack financial resources and depend on the generosity of the friends, sponsors and kind benefactors like you for evangelization and to establish a sincere dialogue with our numerous brothers and sisters of other faiths. So that, doors are opened for them to know and hear the good news of the Gospel.

May God Bless

Fr. Alphonse Arulandu

Mission coordinator, USA