



The Raoul Follereau Foundation (Malta) - The Order of Charity  
is a registered NGO [No. VO/0980]  
administered by the  
Grand Priory of the Maltese Islands  
of the  
Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem

September 2016

RAOUL FOLLEREAU FOUNDATION (MALTA): NGO NO. VO/0980

# Order of Charity Newsletter

## EDITORJAL

### Kemm hi komuni l-marda tal-lebbra?

Fl-istorja tal-bniedem il-marda tal-lebbra kkaġunat ħafna tbatija. Anke wara l-iskoperta li għamel Hansen, il-marda baqgħet tgħolli rasha f'ħafna postijiet tad-dinja. Fl-1991 il-World Health Organisation bdiet kampanja dinjija biex tnaqqas kemm tista' n-numru ta' kaži tal-lebbra. Għaxar snin wara, il-WHO ħabbret li kien irnexxiela tasal iżda stmat li kien għad fadal bejn 600,000 u 750,000 kaži madwar id-dinja.

Il-marda hija komuni l-izjed fir-reġjonijiet tropikali u fl-2001 baqgħet problema kbira fil-Brażil, l-Indja, il-Madagaskar, il-Mozambik, in-Nepal u Myanmar. Il-lebbra hija l-iktar komuni fejn teżisti popolazzjoni densa

b'nuqqas ta' iġjene u kura tas-saħħa. It-tfal għandhom riskju ħafna ikbar minn tal-kbar li jkollhom din il-marda. Fl-Istati Uniti tal-Amerka jiġu rrapurtati mal-mija u ħamsin kaž ġdid kull sena, ħafna minnhom ta' nies li jkunu għadhom kif waslu fil-pajjiż. Madwar sebat elef ruħ fil-pajjiż ġew ikkurati mill-marda

Il-lebbra tibqa' marda endemika f'dawk il-pajjiżi tad-dinja li huma kkunsidrati fqar. Fl-2006 kien hemm rapporti ta' madwar 260,000 każijiet godda madwar id-dinja.

L-Indja għandha madwar 54% tal-każijiet godda tal-lebbra fid-dinja, il-Brażil 17% u l-Indoneża madwar 7%. Fost il-pajjiżi li kellhom iktar minn elf kaž ġdid fis-sena 2006 kienn hemm: iċ-Ċina, il-Congo, in-Nepal, in-Niġerja u l-Filippini.

L-impatt tal-marda mhuwiex biss fin-

numru ta' kaži godda li jiġu magħrufa u li jingħataw kura. Ħafna minn dawk li jfieuqu minn din il-marda jkollhom jgħixu l-kumpliment ta' ħajjithom bil-konsegwenzi tal-lebbra. Huwa stmat li madwar tliet miljun ruħ qed jgħixu b'xi diżabbiltà permanenti minħabba l-lebbra

### Chev. Tony C. Cutajar

#### Inside this issue:

Editorjal	1
Still suffering from Leprosy	2
Kif tista' titfejjaq il-lebbra?	3
Dr Ruth Pfau: Light to Pakistan's lepers	4
cont....Light to Pakistan's Lepers	5
Lepra-Tackling leprosy in Odisha, India	6
Conventual Franciscan Friars	7
Kif tista int tgħin ix-xogħol tal-Ordni tal-Karità	8

## Still suffering from Leprosy stigma

“My parents locked me in a small house,” former leprosy sufferers tell Vatican they still suffer from stigma around the disease years after they have been cured.

- Former leprosy sufferers testify about the stigma

around the disease

- They told a conference in the Vatican City they are still fighting exclusion

### Still suffering from Leprosy stigma

- Disease largely eradicated but affects around 200,000 people per year
- But victims say they are still being driven away from their families

Former leprosy sufferers have testified about the stigma linked to the disease and about their attempts to fight exclusion. They appeared at a conference in the Vatican City to raise awareness of discrimination they still receive in some sections of society. Although it has been eradicated almost

globally through treatments developed in the 1980s, leprosy still affects 200,000 people a year, particularly in India, Indonesia and Brazil.

And the stigma attached goes on long after sufferers have been cured.

Yuan Yahua, who was born into a poor farming family in China, said: “At 14, I was diagnosed with leprosy. My parents loved me and to prevent me from being hurt or burned by others, they locked me in a small house.”

Vagavathali Narsappa, an Indian who leads an association for former sufferers, was driven out by his parents, and he only reunited with his sister when she learned he and his children were healthy.

Japanese Natsuko Tominaga, 80, stayed at a leper colony for 60 years despite being cured aged 18, so he

could support fellow sufferers, who he considered family. More than 200 people, including victims of the disease and researchers, took part in the congress.

“Exclusion still exists,” the chief executive of the Follereau Foundation Michel Recipon said, adding that testimonies from sufferers was invaluable in changing perceptions in areas of the world still fearful of leprosy.

“When they are no longer afraid, they begin to defend themselves' and fellow victims.

“They are the ones who began forming associations and telling us 'this is what should be done,’” he said.

Some 20,000 sick or disabled people, including the leprosy sufferers, flocked to Rome for a series of Vatican events which wind up with a mass led by Pope Francis in Saint Peter's Square.



## Kif tista' titfejjaq il-lebbra?

Minkejja sekli sħaħ li l-morda bil-lebbra kienu izolati anke mill-familja, imwarrba mis-soċjetà u mkasbra, m'hemmx bżonn li dawn il-morda jiġu separati mill-kumplament tas-soċjetà biex il-marda ma tixteridtx. Il-kura li tingħata llum hija ħafna iktar effettiva u umanitarja. Barra minn dan, l-istudji juru li l-lebbra ftit li xejn titttieħed. Biex żgur jitwarrab il-periklu, huwa importanti ħafna jintuża d-

### Kif tista' titfejjaq il-lebbra?

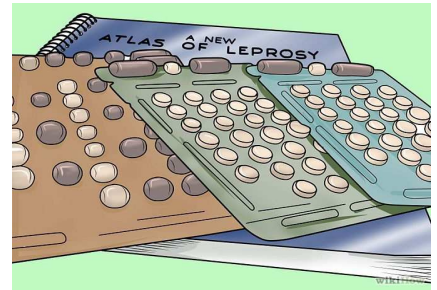
dizinfettant, jinħaslu l-idejn u nevitaw kuntatti intimi.

Bejn l-1995 u l-1999, il-WHO ipprezentat lill-pajjiżi endemiċi b'kura b'xejn permezz tal-ministeri tas-saħħa. Dan sar ukoll fis-snin 2000 u 2005 u se jibqa' jsir mill-inqas sal-2015, permezz ta' ftehim li sar bejn il-WHO u n-Nippon Foundation.

Huwa importanti ħafna li l-ewwel sinjali tal-marda jiġu investigati mill-ewwel qabel issir ħsara li tista' ddum biex

titfejjaq. Il-medikamenti jistgħu jnaqqsu r-riskju li dawk li jgħixu mal-lebbruzi milli jittieħdu u dawk li jiġu f'kuntatt magħhom barra d-dar. Però, jeżistu każi ta' rezistenza u ta' nuqqas ta' tagħrif li xejn ma jagħmlu ġid. Għalhekk, il-WHO tirakkomanda li dawk li jgħixu fl-istess dar jiġu eżaminati għal-lebbra u jingħataw il-kura jekk jidhru xi sintomi.

L-eliminazzjoni tal-lebbra hija problema ta' saħħa pubblika. Kien fl-1991 li l-WHO għaddiet rezoluzzjoni li telimina l-lebbra mas-sena elfejn. L-eliminazzjoni tal-marda hija definita bħala inqas minn każ wieħed għal kull 10,000 persuna. Dan l-għan ġie milħuq fil-ħin u l-marda naqset b'mod drammatiku.



F'dawn l-aħħar għoxrin sena, iktar minn erbatax-il miljun pazjent bil-lebbra ġew imfejqa, erba' miljun minnhom mis-sena elfejn. Il-prevalenza tal-marda niżlet b'90%, minn 21.1 kull għaxart elef persuna għal inqas minn 1 kull għaxart elef persuna fis-sena elfejn. Il-lebbra ġie meqruda għalkollox f'119-il pajjiż minn 122 fejn il-marda kienet kunsidrata problema tas-saħħa pubblika fl-1985.



## ***Dr Ruth Pfau: Light to Pakistan's lepers***

(<http://www.dawn.com/news/1094184>)

At first glance, the exceedingly soft-spoken Dr Ruth Pfau appears to be a fragile octogenarian. It is only when she recalls the lives altered, vivid and crisp, that you realise hers is a story of no ordinary love — a love charted from Skardu to Gwadar.

During my short interview with her at the Qissa Khwani event at PACC, one thing was for sure, I had met my hero.

However, a curtailed encounter with her left me in want of a deeper look into the life of the woman, who has devoted over 50 years of her life fighting leprosy in Pakistan. Dr Ruth Pfau speaking at the Qissa Khwani talk at the PACC. — Photo by Mahjabeen Mankani.

Inside the hospital, we were led towards the winding staircase of the administration building, where pictures of Dr Pfau lined the wall. Captivated by the strong images, I stumbled twice. That made me look forward to being in her presence even more, I realised many such instances filled with wonder lay in wait and so, I quickened my pace. I sensed the deep commitment of the people who work at this hospital, as I looked around at the pristine surroundings.

On finally arriving in Dr Pfau's

private chamber, we were asked to wait. We took this opportunity to prepare the space for the interview. During the preparations, I stole a quick peek at her room. Taken aback by the diminutive space that housed only a single bed and a tiny desk, I, at once, felt ashamed for ever complaining about the matchbox-sized student dorm room I once lived in.

A few minutes later, Dr Pfau emerged, wearing a turquoise blue and white shalwar kameez that complemented her petite frame and short silver hair. I couldn't hide my smile when she decided to trade her turquoise blue dupatta with a darker blue one, prepping for the video interview.

Once settled in her seat,

we began talking about her early days in Germany during World War II and how she came to Pakistan. With frequent pauses, where she would recollect her memory, she spoke about how the Daughters of the Heart of Mary, a congregation of nuns that she is a member of, sent her here in 1960 for a medical service for students. Her intention at the time was to go on to India but fate had other plans. When she saw the severe suffering of the leprosy patients in Pakistan, she knew this was home.

Dr Pfau travelled to various parts of Pakistan to medically facilitate leprosy patients, a journey she tremendously enjoyed because a marked difference in the patients' condition began to appear overtime. In 1996, the World Health Organisation declared Pakistan, one of the first countries in Asia to have controlled leprosy.



Every patient is a life story, and we enjoyed helping them all," she said.

When asked if given the choice, would she prefer another country to work in, she was quick to respond: "No. In my life, if there was one correction that I could make, it would be to come to Pakistan three years earlier than I did."

Talking about her life in Pakistan, I couldn't overlook just how hopeful she was for the country, a refreshing change from the negative narrative that thrives in the living rooms these days.

But contrary to her optimistic outlook about Pakistan, we later discovered over tea with Mr Haider, one of the employees at the MALC, that there had been occasions when Dr Pfau had not been welcomed. She would travel to far off areas of the country, where there were no medical facilities for leprosy patients only to be threatened by men with batons when checking up on female patients.

Mr Haider also stated that there had been tough times at the MALC when Dr Pfau would sell some of her awards in exchange for money for her patients. Quoting Dr Pfau, he added that the

awards meant nothing to her if her patients were suffering.

Walking through this space, never would I have imagined the foundations of a building made from concrete to compound so much compassion.

The hospital comprises of an eye care ward, while specialising also in treatment for tuberculosis, where cure and medication are both provided for free. There is also a social de-



partment, where people come to seek financial help.

To cater to the most pertinent phase of the healing process of leprosy, the MALC has initiated a rehabilitation program, where families of leprosy patients are counselled and advised. Here, the focus is placed on creating awareness and understanding about the disease.

Dr Pfau has preferred to employ some of her leprosy patients at the hospital, incorporating a sense of normalcy in their lives; the kitchen manager and a guard at the MALC are a testimony to this.

## cont....Light to Pakistan's Lepers

Complimentary medicines are provided by major pharmaceutical companies, which the MALC then gives to their patients free of cost. And much to our surprise, it was a delight to learn that the KESC supplies free electricity to MALC. As we neared the end of the hospital tour, I came upon the realisation that true courage lay in pursuing convictions — the kind of convictions that made Dr Pfau choose to leave her home country and care for an unfamiliar, and sometimes hostile people, who were plunged in the depths of misery and isolation.

Her selfless work makes one question one's own commitment to mankind. How committed are we to caring for another? Truly, let us answer that today.

Is it enough to make us leave behind our homes and worldly comforts?

While that may be difficult to answer, what is easier to do is to be grateful for the ones who have, without a summoning, shown us that humanity thrives victorious under the cumbersome weight of apathy.

## LEPRA

The Indian state of Odisha, alone accounts for 5% of new leprosy cases worldwide. If diagnosed late or left untreated leprosy can cause severe disabilities, immobility and physical impairment. This requires wound care,, dressing and

### Tackling leprosy in Odisha, India

physiotherapy, services which are often unavailable to the poorest and those living in remote rural areas. Stigma and discrimination often prevent people seeking help early, if at all. Odisha reported more than 10,600 new leprosy cases in 2013—14. This is widely recognized as an under estimation of the real burden of leprosy, with many times those numbers going unreported. Low awareness levels, inadequate public health infrastructure and lack of access of information,

leads people to seek treatment from traditional healers or unqualified village doctors. Their fees push people further into poverty and the treatment is often inappropriate.

### Our new project to meet this need.

Our project combines advocacy, service delivery, as well as strengthening of existing public health facilities. The project will use a combined approach to the care and support of people living with leprosy and lymphatic filariasis,

both these diseases being neglected by health services and funding sources and affecting the same communities. This integrated approach makes the project more cost effective, helping more people with the resources available.



# Conventual Franciscan Friars India

The Order was established in India in 1981 in Kerala under Syro-Malabar Rite. Since then there was a steady and progressive growth and at present, we have become a Province with 85 Solemnly Professed Friars and around 200 total strength. Now the Province has arrived to take up certain creative steps in its apostolic ministry as Franciscans.

From the beginning of their presence in India as a social apostolate they were focusing on helping the poor by building houses for them and also educating the intelligent and economically backward children.



Prof. Joseph Udine  
Order of Charity,  
4, The Old Bakery  
Aberdeen Court,  
Zurich  
Switzerland

Wednesday 17th February, 2016

Dear Prof. Joseph Udine,  
Peace and all Good!

I thank you on behalf of our Maldivian Province for the very generous donation of EUR 5,000, 19897 Rs. that the Order of Charity has graciously donated to our Mission. The projects in India are varied and diverse, including the water supply of the culture and country in which, we are an Order of Developing and Ministry. Attached to this letter please find abstracts of our Social Projects in India.

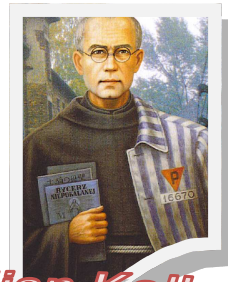
While we do not have yet a Legation Office of our own in India, we still end help in those areas where we have regular houses. In India, the Friars continue to build good relationships with the Bishops of India in the Legation, with Bishops, we hope that in the same future we would be carrying our own Legation Office.

We would mention, that our most developed Legation Office and Ministry is that of our Priests in India, which have dedicated a lot of their resources for this cause and good.

We will keep praying for your Maldivian and Order in the Order of Charity as that through your good work the Kingdom of God in India expanded in the World.

May God bless always.

Respectfully,  
*Indira*  
Fr. Colin Sumanth



**St Maximilian Kolbe**



## Il-bank tiegħek fil-qalb tal-komunità

L-HSBC huwa l-bank li jinsab fil-qalba tal-komunità tiegħek. B'gharfien internazzjonali u esperjenza lokali, ahna nistghu nghinuk tiehu hsieb ahjar il-finanzi tiegħek. Il-ferghat taghna huma miftuhin kuljum f'diversi lokalitajiet madwar Malta u Għawdex, b'xi whud mill-ferghat joffru wkoll servizz ta' filghaxija.

Għalhekk eja żurna u flimkien niddiskutu l-bżonnijiet bankarji tiegħek. L-impjegati taghna, kollha mharrġa fil-customer service u mmexxija minn branch manager b'esperjenza kbira fil-qasam bankarju jinsabu herqana biex ikunu ta' servizz għalik.

Ċempel **2380 2380**  
Żur **hsbc.com.mt**  
Mur **fl-oqreb fergha**



Approvat u mahruġ mill-HSBC Bank Malta p.l.c. 116, Triq l-Arcisqof, Valletta VLT1444.

**Raoul Follereau Foundation**  
[Malta]

Order of Charity,  
Catholic Institute,  
Floriana - Malta

E-mail: [tcutajar36@gmail.com](mailto:tcutajar36@gmail.com)  
[http://stlazarusmalta.org/aff\\_0oC.html](http://stlazarusmalta.org/aff_0oC.html)

The Raoul Follereau Foundation [Malta] - Order of Charity is a non-profit organisation set up in Malta in 1967 with the goal of collecting monetary support for the assistance of lepers throughout the World. It forms part of the international Raoul Follereau Foundation established in 1946 by the world famous anthropologist who died in 1977. The main aims of the Foundation are:

- to encourage social help to those suffering from leprosy;
- to ascertain that these people are treated as they should;
- to help lepers find their place in society;
- to give financial help to leprosaria and missions working with them.

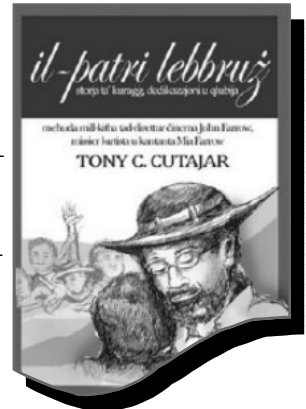


Raoul Follereau

*Help us help fight the scourge of  
leprosy*

## Kif tista int tghin ix-xoghol tal-Ordni tal-Karità

- Billi issir membru tal-għaqda—dan jiswa biss is-somma ta' €10 fis-sena. Li tkun membru jfisser li tircievi in-newsletter regolari b'mod elettroniku jew pubblikata.
- Billi tagħti donazzjoni b'kull ammont li tixtieq int. Sintendi kull donazzjoni tigi rikonnexuta b'ircevuata
- Billi tixtri il-ktieb *Il-Patri Lebbruz* li jipprezenta storja ta' kuraġġ, dedikazzjoni u qlubija tal-qaddis li gie ddikjarat il-patron tal-persuni morda bil-lebbra. Il-Patri Lebbruz Damjan ta' Molokai kien mar jahdem f'kolonja tal-lebbuzzi abbandunati minn kulhadd. Għalihom kien sacerdot, tabib, bennej, mexxej, habib, missier. Fi ftit kliem kien l-għajn tas-salvazzjoni u t-tama tagħhom. Jum fost l-oħrajn, beda l-omelija tiegħu bil-kliem: "Għeziez huti lebbuzzi..." biex hekk qasam mal-kompatrijotti tiegħu fuq il-Gzira ta' Molokaj, l-aħbar li hu wkoll kien ittied mill-marda. Miet ta' 49 sena. Huwa u gie ddikjarat qaddis sitt snin ilu mill-Papa Benedittu XVI. Il-Ktieb jinbiegħ €6.50 biss inkluss il-posta. Ibgħat cekk ta' €6.50 pagabbli lill-Ordni tal-Karita.



## Offerta mill-qalb

Jiena \_\_\_\_\_ Nru tal-ID \_\_\_\_\_ li noqgħod

\_\_\_\_\_ Kodiċi Postali \_\_\_\_\_,

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

⇒ qed nibgħat cekk nru \_\_\_\_\_ bhala donazzjoni bis-somma ta':

€5  €10  €15  €20  €25  donazzjoni libera € \_\_\_\_\_

⇒ Nixtieq insir membru tal-Ordni tal-Karità u nibdha nircievi in-newsletter regolarment...€10

⇒ Lest nircevi in-newsletter b'mod elettroniku.....

⇒ Nippreferi in-newsletter pubblikata.....

⇒ Nixtieq nixtri il-ktieb *Il-Patri Lebbruz*.....€6.50