



NEWSLETTER



CARITAS VALVUTHAYAM - MANNAR
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Caritas Valvuthayam Celebrates Its Anniversary - 44 Years of Hope and Service



May 28, 2025, marks the 44th Anniversary of Caritas Valvuthayam, a beacon of compassion, justice, and holistic development in the Diocese of Mannar. This milestone offers a moment to reflect on a rich journey that began with a shared dream and has grown into a lifeline for thousands.

Humble Beginnings Rooted in Gospel Values

The vision of forming an institution dedicated to the service of the poor and marginalized was first shared by both clergy and laity in early 1981. This noble idea found strength and structure with the support of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Sri Lanka, channeled through the Socio-Economic Development and Educational Centre (SEDEC) in Colombo.

On May 28th, 1981, this vision came to life. Caritas Valvuthayam began its humble operations at Madhu Church, later relocating to its current premises as its mission expanded across the civil districts of Mannar and Vavuniya.

Over the decades, under the devoted leadership of bishops, directors, and staff, Caritas Valvuthayam has grown from a small initiative to a comprehensive, service-oriented organization deeply embedded in the lives of the people it serves.

Serving the Most Vulnerable with Compassion and Commitment

Throughout the years, Caritas Valvuthayam has remained committed to uplifting the most vulnerable those affected by war, poverty, and disability through a wide range of humanitarian and development services:

Humanitarian Services: Monthly medical aid, dry rations, educational support, and emergency relief.

Centre for Disabled: Assistive devices, therapy, and psychosocial support for persons and children with disabilities.

Food Security: School gardens, farmer training, and nutrition programs.

SSEP & OHOB Projects: Environmental protection and agro-based livelihoods through model farms and sapling distribution.

Educational Assistance: Supporting 225+ students monthly.

Vocational Training: NVQ Level III ICT course for youth empowerment.

Peace & Reconciliation: Mental well-being and women-led development through SHGs.

Village Animation: Uplifting women-headed and marginalized families.

"We do not serve for praise, but for purpose — to be the heart and hands of Christ among His people."

Educational Assistances

Empowering Young Minds: Caritas Valvuthayam's Educational Support - May 2025

Caritas Valvuthayam continues to champion the right to education for every child and youth, especially those from war-affected and economically marginalized backgrounds. Through our Monthly Educational Assistance Program, we aim to ensure that no student is left behind due to financial constraints.

Ongoing Monthly Educational Assistance

As of May 2025, Caritas Valvuthayam is providing consistent financial support to a total of 225 students, enabling them to continue their academic journey with dignity and hope:

- 78 school children from underprivileged families, receiving monthly support for transportation, stationery, and other basic school needs.
- 147 university students who are courageously pursuing higher education despite facing financial and social challenges.

This long-term investment in education is a powerful step toward breaking the cycle of poverty and fostering future leaders rooted in values and community service.

Preschool Teachers and Coordinators Support

Recognizing the foundational importance of early childhood education, Caritas Valvuthayam continues to support preschool educators who serve some of the most rural and underserved communities in the region.

In May 2025, we extended monthly allowances to:

- 20 preschool teachers working across 18 rural villages in Mannar and Vavuniya districts, ensuring stability and motivation in delivering early childhood education.
- 4 preschool coordinators across 4 Divisional Secretariat (DS) divisions, tasked with mentoring, supervising, and guiding the preschool network.

These efforts aim to strengthen the early education system and provide young children with a nurturing and engaging start in life.



Through our education-focused initiatives, Caritas Valvuthayam remains steadfast in its mission to build a just, educated, and empowered society—one student, one teacher, and one community at a time.

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” – Nelson Mandela

Humanitarian Services

Caritas Valvuthayam Delivers Lifesaving Humanitarian Support in May 2025

Caritas Valvuthayam continues to uphold its mission of compassion and service by reaching out to the most vulnerable communities in the Mannar and Vavuniya districts. Through its internally funded Humanitarian Assistance Program, a total of 103 individuals and families received support in May 2025, addressing a wide range of urgent needs.

Assistance Highlights – May 2025:

- **Dry Ration Distribution – 33 families**

Provided essential food items to families struggling with food insecurity, particularly those affected by poverty, unemployment, or illness.

- **Medical Support – 68 individuals**

Extended timely medical aid for treatments, medications, and diagnostic services for patients with chronic illnesses and critical health needs.

- **Business Startup Support – 01 beneficiary**

Empowered one vulnerable individual with the resources and guidance needed to start a small income-generating business, fostering self-reliance and dignity.

- **Cadjan Distribution – 01 family**

Provided roofing material (cadjan leaves) to a family living in precarious housing conditions, improving their shelter and living environment.



Empowering Lives through Livelihood, Medical, and Educational Support – A Beacon of Hope from the Murcott Family

Caritas Valvuthayam, with the generous support of Mr. L. E. Murcott and family, continues to uplift the most vulnerable through holistic assistance focused on education, healthcare, and sustainable livelihood.

As part of this compassionate initiative, 24 deserving families are receiving monthly cash assistance to meet critical educational and medical needs. Among them, 8 families with members battling cancer are supported through regular medical aid, while others receive essential educational assistance—especially children preparing for their GCE Advanced Level examinations.

In a significant step towards economic empowerment, poultry farming units were provided to 12 families of schoolchildren and 3 families of cancer patients. This initiative promotes self-reliance, nutritional wellbeing, and household income generation. Furthermore, 4 families grappling with serious medical conditions received additional financial support tailored to their needs.

This heartfelt program is a shining example of how compassion and solidarity can transform lives.

We express our deepest gratitude to the Murcott family for their unwavering commitment to building a more hopeful and dignified future for those in need.



Caritas Valvuthayam's Vocational Training Institute

Milestone Achieved: Valvuthayam ICTT Students Complete Final NVQ Assessment

Caritas Valvuthayam's Vocational Training Centre proudly marked a key milestone in May 2025, as students from the first batch of the Information and Communication Technology Technician (ICTT) - NVQ Level 3 Course completed their final assessments.

The assessments were successfully conducted on:

- 10th & 11th May in Mannar (20 students)
- 30th May in Vavuniya (12 students)



In total, 32 students demonstrated the knowledge and skills they have developed over months of dedicated training. This achievement reflects not only their hard work but also the tireless commitment of the Valvuthayam training team in nurturing employable skills and empowering youth for a brighter future.

"Every assessment passed is a door opened — toward dignity, opportunity, and hope."

Empowered Women – Peaceful Communities through a Family-Centered Approach

Caritas Valvuthayam continues to invest in youth empowerment and employability through its Vocational Training Institute, with a strong focus on Information and Communication Technology (ICT). In line with our vision of equipping young people in Mannar diocese with practical, marketable skills, we are proud to share the latest milestones in our ICT Technician (NVQ Level III) program.

Family-Based Mental Health and Well-being Session – Madhukarai

On 20th May 2025, Caritas Valvuthayam successfully conducted a Family-Based Mental Health and Well-being Session in Madhukarai, facilitated by Mrs. Valentina. The session brought together 30 women from local Self-Help Groups (SHGs) for a day of reflection, learning, and support.

Key focus areas included:

- Stress management techniques
- Building emotional resilience
- Strengthening family support systems

Participants actively engaged in mindfulness exercises, shared personal experiences related to stress, and discussed healthy coping strategies. The session concluded with a group sharing circle, fostering empathy, connection, and mutual encouragement.

Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive, with many requesting more regular sessions to support their emotional and family well-being.



Self-Help Group Meeting – Maruthamadhu

On 23rd May 2025, the Maruthamadhu SHG held a follow-up meeting to review ongoing challenges and plan actionable responses.

Key issues identified:

- **Landlessness:** The group resolved to engage local authorities in advocating for land rights for affected families.
- **School Dropouts:** Members developed strategies to address this concern through awareness programs and mentorship initiatives, aiming to keep children in school and support their educational success.

• Plans were also initiated for Sirmadatha (volunteer service) activities, demonstrating the group's strong commitment to community development and solidarity.



These initiatives are part of Caritas Valvuthayam's broader efforts to promote peace, healing, and empowerment at the grassroots level—especially by uplifting women as catalysts for positive change in their families and communities.

"When women are empowered, families thrive—and where families thrive, peace follows."

Centre for Disabled

Restoring Dignity Through Mobility: Centre for Disabled Supports 38 Beneficiaries

Throughout May 2025, the Centre for Disabled at Caritas Valvuthayam remained unwavering in its mission to promote mobility, dignity, and independence for persons with disabilities. In a compassionate response to the needs of the community, the Centre provided vital services to 38 individuals, enabling them to regain functional ability and confidence in their daily lives.

Assessments for Assistive Devices - 26 Beneficiaries

Each assessment was carried out by trained specialists to ensure appropriate and personalized solutions:

- Hearing Aid Assessments - 10 individuals
- Wheelchair Assessments - 6 individuals
- Orthotic Device Assessments - 9 individuals
- Prosthetic Device Assessment - 1 individual

Provision of Orthotic Devices - 7 Beneficiaries

Custom orthotic devices were provided, supporting better posture, movement, and daily functionality.

Repairs to Mobility and Assistive Devices - 5 Beneficiaries

Essential repairs ensured the continued usability and safety of existing mobility aids, preserving both mobility and confidence.

These services have *greatly enhanced the quality of life* for all beneficiaries by fostering *greater independence*, improving *physical* access, and supporting *psychosocial well-being*.

“Every step forward, no matter how small, is a victory when dignity and care are at the heart of the journey.”

The Centre for Disabled reaffirms its deep commitment to *inclusion, compassion, and respect*, ensuring that every person with a disability is given the support they need to live a *full, dignified life*.



Food Security Project – May 2025

Building Resilience Through Agriculture and Nutrition: Food Security Project – May 2025

In May 2025, Caritas Valvuthayam actively advanced its Food Security Project with a wide range of impactful programs across several villages. These efforts aimed to strengthen sustainable agriculture, improve household nutrition, and empower rural communities through education, skills development, and organizational support.

School-Based Agricultural Training

- Conducted at Adankulam RCTMV and Vinayakar Vidhyalayam
- Reached 176 students
- Focus: Sustainable farming techniques and food cultivation awareness among youth



Nutrition Training for Mothers

- 5 sessions held in Manipuram, Joseph Vaz Nagar, Thamaraiikulam, and Kayanagar
- 122 mothers participated
- Emphasized child nutrition, meal planning, and affordable, healthy diets



Family Nutrition Awareness Sessions

- Held in Koorai and Asikulam
- Benefited 46 mothers
- Promoted nutritious home-cooked meals and balanced diets



Farmer Training Programs

- 4 sessions conducted in Kumanayankulam, Maligaithiddal, Kayanagar, and Koorai
- 99 farmers trained
- Topics: Climate-smart agriculture, crop diversification, and soil health



Livestock Production Training

- Conducted in Pallakamam, Alavakkai, and Thoddaveli
- Engaged 73 participants
- Focused on animal health, breeding practices, and income generation

Crop Clinic Programs

- Held in Thoddaveli, Samayapuram, and Sundrapuram
- Benefited 99 participants
- Included expert guidance on pest control, plant diseases, and crop management



Compost Fertilizer Training

- 2 eco-friendly sessions in Kumanayankulam and Kayanagar
- 29 beneficiaries trained in organic compost production techniques

Liquid Fertilizer Production Training

- 3 sessions in Thoddaveli, Koorai, and Puthukulam
- 53 participants gained knowledge on natural liquid fertilizer preparation and usage

Self-Help Group (SHG) Strengthening

- SHG formation and reactivation in 5 villages
- Empowered 67 members, especially women, with tools for income generation and collective decision-making

Community-Based Organization (CBO) Strengthening

- A CBO planning and leadership meeting in Maligaithiddal
- 16 members participated in strategy development and resource planning



These diverse, community-rooted interventions reflect Caritas Valvuthayam's commitment to food security, rural empowerment, and sustainable livelihoods across the Vanni region.

"From farm to family table, we plant the seeds of self-reliance, health, and hope."

SSEP & OHOB Projects

Sustainable Agriculture in Action: Model Farm and Coconut Sapling Distribution

As part of its ongoing commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainable livelihoods, Caritas Valvuthayam has made significant progress under the SSEP (Stepping Stone to Safeguarding Sri Lanka's Natural Resources) and OHOB (One Heart One Body) projects during May 2025.

Model Farm Development – Kadkadanthakulam, Mannar

A Model Farm is currently being established in Kadkadanthakulam, Mannar, with 50% of the groundwork already completed. This initiative is aimed at promoting sustainable agriculture practices, biodiversity, and food security in the region.

This valuable land was generously provided by the Bishop of Mannar Diocese, who also serves as the Chairman of Caritas Valvuthayam. In a symbolic show of encouragement, the Bishop, along with the Director of Caritas Valvuthayam and representatives from the SSEP National Team (SEDEC), visited the site to assess its progress and offer their blessings.

The implementation of this model farm is being guided by a team of expert mentors under the direct leadership of the Director of Caritas Valvuthayam.



Coconut Sapling Distribution for Livelihood Enhancement

In a parallel effort to boost rural livelihoods and promote agro-based income sources, a total of 3,328 coconut saplings were distributed in May through the OHOB and SSEP projects:

- Under the OHOB project:
1,920 coconut saplings were distributed to 30 beneficiaries.
- Under the SSEP project:
1,408 coconut saplings were distributed to 22 beneficiaries.

This joint initiative strengthens community resilience by encouraging long-term cultivation, environmental restoration, and self-sufficiency. Beneficiaries are being closely guided on proper planting and maintenance practices to ensure healthy growth and productivity of the trees.



Honoring a Faithful Shepherd



Ordination Anniversary of Rev. Fr. G.A. Arulraj Croos

On 18th May 2025, Caritas Valvuthayam joyfully celebrated the ordination anniversary of our beloved Director, Rev. Fr. G.A. Arulraj Croos. The occasion was marked with heartfelt wishes, prayers, and gratitude for his unwavering dedication to his priestly mission and compassionate service to the poor and vulnerable.

We give thanks to God for Fr. Arulraj's inspiring leadership, his deep commitment to social justice, and his tireless efforts in guiding Caritas Valvuthayam's mission. His journey as a priest continues to be a beacon of faith, hope, and love to all those he serves. "May the Lord continue to bless you abundantly, grant you good health, and fill your days with the joy of serving His people."



International Visitors from the Netherlands

Caritas Valvuthayam was pleased to welcome two international students, Miss Yara Vogels and Miss Josien Mulders from the Netherlands, for a month-long exposure visit during May 2025.

During their stay, they actively engaged with our humanitarian and development programs, visited several project areas, and participated in key events and community activities. Their presence brought fresh perspectives and meaningful cross-cultural exchanges that were warmly appreciated by our staff and beneficiaries.

We thank Yara and Josien for their interest in our mission and for their respectful engagement with the people we serve. Their visit reflects the spirit of global solidarity and shared commitment to building a more compassionate and inclusive world.

"Your time with us made a difference — we hope the experience inspired you as much as your presence inspired us!"



Strengthening Capacities in Fundraising and Resource Mobilization

Caritas Valvuthayam Participates in National Workshop at SEDEC, Colombo

Caritas Valvuthayam had the privilege of participating in the Follow-Up Fundraising and Resource Mobilization Workshop organized by Caritas Sri Lanka-SEDEC from 27th to 29th May 2025, at the New Auditorium of SEDEC.

This workshop brought together representatives from diocesan centres across the country and focused on equipping teams with practical skills to develop and implement integrated fundraising strategies, identify funding opportunities, and understand donor motivations, crowdfunding models, and private sector engagement.

The sessions provided valuable insights on:

Designing an effective and integrated fundraising plan

Steps in resource mobilization tailored for civil society organizations (CSOs)

Understanding different donor types and their expectations

Exploring innovative funding channels including crowdfunding

Building partnerships with the private sector

Caritas Valvuthayam was represented by a team of two staff members, who actively participated in the group discussions and skill-building activities. The workshop not only deepened our knowledge of sustainable fundraising methods but also allowed us to connect and share experiences with other diocesan centers working towards similar missions.

Accommodation and hospitality were graciously arranged by SEDEC, creating a comfortable and collaborative learning environment for all participants.

We extend our sincere thanks to Caritas Sri Lanka-SEDEC for organizing this timely and impactful workshop and for continuously supporting the capacity development of its diocesan partners.

This experience will undoubtedly help Caritas Valvuthayam strengthen its future fundraising initiatives to better serve the vulnerable communities in Mannar and Vavuniya.





Success story

Empowering Livelihoods: Mr. Peter Pohl's Journey from Struggle to Strength

"Hope, hard work, and the right support can change lives."

This statement rings true in the inspiring journey of Mr. Peter Pohl, a resilient young fisherman from Muththaripputhurai, a coastal village in the Mannar district. As a committed youth member of the Diocese of Mannar and a beneficiary of Caritas Valvuthayam's livelihood program, Mr. Pohl's story is a powerful reflection of transformation through opportunity.

Fishing has been Mr. Pohl's family's primary source of income for generations. However, limited equipment and lack of capital made it difficult for him to grow his business or stabilize his family's financial future. Despite these challenges, his determination to uplift his loved ones and create a better future remained unwavering.

Everything began to change when Caritas Valvuthayam, through the generous support of the IRASIL Foundation, extended a revolving loan of LKR 100,000 to Mr. Pohl under its sustainable livelihood initiative. With this assistance, he invested in new fishing equipment, upgraded his materials, and increased the efficiency of his work.

As a result, Mr. Pohl's daily catch improved significantly, enhancing his income and opening up new income streams for his household. His family's quality of life began to improve steadily better food, consistent schooling for his children, and renewed hope for a brighter tomorrow.

But Mr. Pohl's success does not end with his personal progress. Inspired by the support he received, he now plays an active role in motivating other youth in his village and parish. His success stands as a beacon of possibility for many others who are navigating hardship with limited resources.

"This support was more than a loan it was a chance to reclaim our dignity and secure our future," says Mr. Pohl with gratitude.

Caritas Valvuthayam, in collaboration with the IRASIL Foundation, celebrates Mr. Pohl's achievement as a testament to the impact of community-based empowerment models. His journey is a living example of what becomes possible when compassionate giving meets dedicated action.

"When one life is empowered, an entire community begins to rise."

Support Our Mission - Donate Now

Your generous donation to Caritas Valvuthayam helps us serve the most vulnerable in Sri Lanka.

Account Details: Caritas Mannar Valvuthayam

2154000726 Commercial Bank

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You may also specify a cause close to your heart (e.g., Centre ForDisabled Support, Education, Livelihood, Food Security, Emergency Relief, Vocational Training, Peacebuilding & more).

Every gift makes a difference. Thank you for your support!

Caritas Valvuthayam remains steadfast in our mission of love, service, and reconciliation. Together, as 'Pilgrims of Hope,' we look forward to a year of transformation and renewal.

Stay connected with Caritas Valvuthayam!

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