



International Sanctuary Ministries

PO Box 2238
Abilene, TX 79604

*Helping orphans and widows in
their distress, and spreading the
gospel and the love of Christ.*

website: www.sanctuaryministries.org

email: www.sanctuaryministries.org

Dear Friend,

As we begin the year, I'd like to share with you a nonprofit organization that I've been excited about ever since I learned of it. It's one that is based in Abilene, but you may have not heard of it before. In that case, I'm super delighted to introduce you to **International Sanctuary Ministries** (AKA Sanctuary Home for Children). Here's a quick story about how I stumbled upon this wonderful ministry and have been involved with it ever since.

About eleven years ago, my wife and I felt led by the Spirit to share our financial blessings more than we had done in the past. Because of that conviction, I started to research charities that we might like to donate to. In my heart, I wanted to find a ministry that matched closely to the Bible's definition of "true religion," by helping orphans and widows in their distress (James 1:27). I also wanted to find an organization that was following the Great Commission to spread the Gospel that Jesus gave in Matthew 28:19-20. At the time of my search, I thought I might be looking at three different charities in order to fit my criteria. Additionally, I wanted to be assured the nonprofit organization(s) I found, were using their resources wisely, and that a large portion of my donations would actually go to helping the people in need.

After many hours of searching through the internet, I came across a charity that I could truly be supportive of. It was called Sanctuary Home for Children (eventually renamed International Sanctuary Ministries). I did not find out until later that this organization was based in my hometown of Abilene. At that realization, I felt that God had led me in my search.

My wife and I were thrilled to sponsor a child at the orphanage and to donate to help widows. One thing led to another, and we both became board members, found more ways to invest in this ministry, and eventually travelled to India to see the work being done for ourselves. Witnessing the efforts of the ministry during that first trip—meeting the loving, dedicated individuals who were doing the work in India, seeing the faces of the children, walking among the people in the slums, encouraging evangelists, worshipping with the Christians in various villages—was what cemented our commitment and made us believe 100 percent that we had chosen the right charity for us to invest our money and time.

Here are six main reasons my wife and I embraced International Sanctuary Ministries, and why it is still dear to our hearts today. I'm sharing this with you in hopes that you might see what we see, and in hopes that you will join us in supporting this great organization now and in the coming years as well.

1. Foreign Christian Mission Based in Abilene: Sanctuary Ministries is a Christian ministry based in Abilene, supporting existing, struggling Christians and bringing the message of salvation through Christ alone to lost souls in India, where Hindu idolatry is entrenched in society and where Christianity is a foreign idea.

2. Donations Go to Where the Need Is: Nobody on this side of the ocean gets paid, resulting in low overhead costs. Those of us working in the United States on behalf of the ministry are all volunteers, so every penny possible can be sent to support the work in India. We have an extremely high percentage—averaging above 97% for the last 5 years—of expenditures going directly to India, where the actual need is. (A 2012 study showed the average charity in the US spent 36.9% of their expenditures on overhead.)

3. Doing So Many Great Things in the Name of Christ: Sanctuary Ministries helps orphans, widows, and a colony of Christians with leprosy. We provide a school and meals for children living in a slum area. We support evangelists who travel the area to reach lost souls in India and to encourage the Christian communities there. We drill water wells to provide clean water for villagers, while using the wells as a tool for evangelism. When we see other needs, we try to help when we are able.

4. Our Efforts Center Around Helping the Poorest of the Poor in India: India's Hindu culture is built on a caste system, and our efforts are centered around helping people who are stuck, simply by the nature of their birth, in some of the lowest castes in their society.

5. You Can Designate the Use of Your Donation: While we always have a need for replenishing our general fund, and greatly appreciate those donations, you can choose to be specific with your donation if you prefer.

6. The Opportunity Exists to Travel to India: One of the most fulfilling adventures for us was actually going to India to see firsthand the work that is being done there in the name of Christ and participating in those efforts. While travel may not be feasible for everyone, it really gave my wife and I a chance to affirm that Sanctuary Ministries is an organization that we feel totally comfortable in supporting with our time and money.

If you've gotten this far, then thank you for taking the time to read about this exciting ministry. There is so much more I could share as well.

Contact me: If you would like to explore giving options (including the opportunity to sponsor a child or an evangelist), or if you would like to learn more about the ministry, please feel free to email me at office@sanctuaryministries.org, or visit our website at www.sanctuaryministries.org. Alternatively, you may send a donation by mail or to correspond in any way. Our address is **PO Box 2238, Abilene, TX 79604**.

"...God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Corinthians 9:7)

May He bless you in your giving.

Sincerely,

Matt Merritt, President

International Sanctuary Ministries

PS: Below are three scriptures we hold close to our hearts in carrying out the efforts of International Sanctuary Ministries.

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world. (James 1:27)

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19)

If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth. (1 John 3:17-18)