



SCHOOL FOR DALITS, MANGAMANUTHU, SOUTHERN INDIA **Education for All**

In August 2005, a new Marist secondary school was opened in the village of Mangamanuthu in Southern India. It is still in its first year of operation. Currently three Indian Marist Brothers form the community there and the Brothers also work in the local parish primary school. Br Paul Turner from Sydney offers support from Trichy.

The new school has been built on infertile agricultural land purchased from the local community with International Marist Solidarity Funds (BIS). The two schools serve six neighbouring villages where there are many Catholic families without access to education and many students in this region have been ceasing education at the end of primary school or even before this.

Most of the Mangamanuthu villagers belong to the group now known as Dalits (in the former caste system in India they were known as 'Untouchables'). While the caste system is illegal today, the culture of South India is still prejudicial towards this minority and thus since 1999 the Marists have chosen to work among these people and extend their families' educational opportunities.

The building of the school has been facilitated by BIS in Rome. Australian Marists will contribute to the furnishing and supply of school facilities in 2006.



Primary School Children in Tamil Nadu, India