



**Brother Gaston Dayanand** came to India in early seventies from Switzerland. He was a male nurse by profession. He felt an urge to dedicate himself for the uplift of the underprivileged. He decided to come to India. Brother Gaston started social work in Pilkhana, Howrah, where poorest of the poor live. Brother is the main character (Father Kovalasky) of Mr. Dominique Lapierre's book City of Joy. Brother is the moving spirit behind formation of SHIS.

He inspired **Mr. M. A. Wohab** - then the young secretary of Amaragori Gram Panchayat (village self-governance), in Howrah District of West Bengal - to go back to his village, Bhangar and start social development programme among the underprivileged. **Mr. Wohab** was so overwhelmed and inspired that he along with **Ms. Sabitri Pal**, another

local social worker, started a clinic on 30th October 1980 from a roofless tea stall at Bhangar. Brother Gaston often visits **SHIS** to guide SHIS activities.

### **TO ALL MY SISTERS AND BROTHERS OF SHIS, 08.10.2017**

First of all, receive my heartfelt blessings for your continuous endeavor since more than 35 years, when I got the privilege to contribute to the preliminary work of your NGO. I have always let know to all my comprehensive admiration for the hundred of projects you were creating years after years, and always with the sole aim to alleviate the sufferings or the poverty of our less privileged brothers and sisters. I was also the witness of your permanent keenness to keep intact the enthusiasm of the first days and to carry on your yeoman work with courage and joy.

Unhappily, since some years, the tragic accident of our beloved donor Dominique Dada, obliged us all to reduce our projects and rethink our never-ending hopes to create still more schemes. Funds started to slowdown, and even during those last two years, many of us had to Abandon even some key-projects. We have realized since the beginning that we will depend totally of the good-will of some donors, and that nobody can promise permanent work. In fact we have always lived on trust of God alone, and it is quite a miracle that I have witnessed so many NGOs still running after 45 or even 50 years, only through the grace of our Merciful and Loving Lord. Whatever we think or believe, we have to TRUST HIM, as Dominique Dada as trusted us to use his donations wisely. I well know that God will never refuse His help if we do His Will to serve the poor. So long we do it, so long He will remain with us. But let us understand that trials and difficulties will persist, for it is the invariable rule for those who depend on the charity of others. Accepting this is to show that we love those we serve, and we shall be able, in overcoming the difficulties, to carry on with joy and zeal our duties.

Let us never be afraid of the future. Only the present is important, and we have learnt through the past that we CAN RELY ON GOD. This is my belief and my prayer that I have often shared with you. We are only servants of Him who loves us, because we are devoted to those who live in distress and we want to help. We cannot afford to lose faith...Share with your staff and collaborators my sympathy, especially for those who cannot receive for the time being their proper and just allowances. It is a great test for them and their families. May Allah the Almighty and Beneficent bless them and reward them with peace .And may the "God of Peace" and our Lord Jesus-Christ keep them in the hope that one day, as always, things will improve and life will become once more happy and without too many worries. Permit me as your old elder brother to bless you all in His name and to urge you to have patience, because, who knows, within some months ,things can change for the best. With my deep gratitude for what you are doing, and my constant love for you and your labor of service .Be always happy whatever happens even in darkness, and the Light of Life will become brighter one day.

I remain your grandfather and Godfather who loves you, offering to God your desires and your hopes.

**Bro. Gaston Dayanand, ICOD the 10th October 2017.**