

A Life Restored: Gouri's Journey from the Streets to Sanctuary

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In every corner of Asha Bhavan, our sisters' "House of Hope" in Bangalore, India, there is a story of quiet suffering that has been transformed by hope. One of those stories belongs to Gouri, a woman whose life has been marked by pain, loss, and abandonment—but also by healing and compassion.

You can read more about the mission and healing ministry performed at Asha Bhavan in an article in the Fall 2025 issue of our congregation's *Alive* magazine. The article is available online on our website's Publication page: <https://www.sssf.org/SSSF/Media-Room/Publications.htm>

Gouri arrived at Asha Bhavan in February 2005. Her early life had been filled with hardship. She suffered from epilepsy during her childhood and was married at the young age of 16. Her marriage brought no comfort, though, and she faced abuse and mistreatment in her in-laws' home, even as she became pregnant.

When it came time for her to give birth, she was taken to a hospital for the delivery, but her in-laws arranged to have the child sold without her consent. Traumatized and overwhelmed by this devastating loss, Gouri ran away from the hospital and began living on the streets, begging and living in unsafe conditions. In her vulnerable state, many people took advantage of her, and her mental health deteriorated further.

Gouri's life began to change when a priest working with Prison Ministry India was alerted to her circumstances. He offered her food, medical treatment, and counselling, and over time, he gained Gouri's trust. He arranged for her to be brought to Asha Bhavan to receive the long-term care and stability that she needed.

In her two decades at Asha Bhavan, Gouri has found peace. She still requires medication to sleep and often struggles emotionally, but she is comforted to live in safety, surrounded by people who care deeply for her. The sisters have offered her counseling, encouragement, and emotional support, helping her regain her sense of dignity.

Years after her arrival, a group of workers who visited Asha Bhavan's grounds recognized Gouri and let her family know of her whereabouts. Her mother and one of her sisters came to visit her for a brief reunion. The visit stirred up many memories, but Gouri settled back into the rhythm of life at Asha Bhavan without dwelling on the past. She now finds purpose by helping others, especially women who are bedridden or mentally disturbed. She has found a true home at Asha Bhavan, and compassionate nature is a blessing to the entire community.