



NEWS LETTER
CHRISTMAS - 2024
For Private Circulation Only

VANI



Spirit of Divine Love Province - India South



Hope
is Born

as we await the blessed hope, the appearance of the glory of
the great God and of our savior JESUS CHRIST. - Titus 2:13

Hearty Congratulations

New Provincial Leadership Team of INS (2024 – 2027)



Thank You!





Entering 2025 as Pilgrims of Hope

As we stand at the threshold of 2025, we prepare to close the chapter of 2024, a year that, for many, has been a time of grace and gratitude. Yet, for others, it has been a year marked by challenges, struggles, and moments of disappointment. As we reflect on our personal journeys, we also look at the broader canvas of society, where despair, conflict, war, injustice, corruption, and the relentless effects of climate change have left deep imprints.

In the face of such uncertainty, Pope Francis extends an invitation to embark on a journey of hope as we enter the Jubilee Year 2025, which begins on December 25, 2024. Anchored in the theme “*Pilgrims of Hope*”, the Jubilee reminds us to look to the future with renewed optimism and faith. In a world that often seems to be slipping into hopelessness, the message of hope is both a beacon and a call to action.

Hope is not mere wishful thinking. It is a driving force that calls us to act decisively, uprooting the evils that plague society and building bridges of unity, compassion, and justice. Hope transforms despair into possibility and opens our hearts to the promise of a better future.

In every human heart, hope resides as the expectation of good things to come, even amidst uncertainty. Our lives, much like the Jubilee pilgrimage, are a journey toward a promised land – a future filled with possibilities. It is a journey we must undertake not with complaints, but with purpose, focusing on those who often find themselves on the margins: the hopeless, the marginalized, migrants, and the disadvantaged.

As we begin 2025, let us allow the Star of Bethlehem to illuminate our path, reminding us that hope is not just a feeling but a call to live with faith and action. Let this Jubilee Year inspire us to transform our lives and communities into places of hope and renewal.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a hope-filled New Year 2025!

Sr. Reena D Souza SSps
Ekamba



My dear Sisters and Friends,

This time of the year finds us busy with parties, decorations, exchanging gifts, shopping for new clothes, and preparing festive snacks. We also make efforts to remember those who are less fortunate, those suffering, and those in pain, reaching out to them with compassion. However, we must pause and reflect, as every feast today seems to be commercialized, we often fail to recognise its significance and importance. Christmas has, for many, become a yearly routine, leaving little impact on our personal or spiritual lives.

The world we live in today challenges us constantly. We are surrounded by war, hatred, violence, and retaliation. In Gaza, over 40,300 people have been killed since the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7, 2023. Israeli attacks on neighboring Lebanon have escalated in recent months. Russia continues its bombardment of Ukraine. In Sudan, the conflict between the army and paramilitary rebels has claimed over 60,000 lives and displaced millions since April 2023. Myanmar remains mired in civil war since 2021. Closer to home, we are confronted with poverty, unemployment, caste discrimination, gender inequality, and many other challenges.

In our secure and comfortable lives, how do we truly understand and respond to these pressing realities?

Dear Sisters, let us not close our eyes or ears to the world around us. Let us grow in sensitivity and allow our hearts to be moved by compassion. As Jesus brought peace to the world through His birth, let us become messengers of peace, hope, and joy to everyone we encounter—during this Christmas season and throughout the coming year.

Wishing you all a very joyful Christmas and a hope-filled New Year 2025!

Sr. Ida Lobo, SSps
Provincial Leader, INS





Christmas: The Gift of Letting Go and Caring for Creation

Sr. Ranita, SSpS
Jeevandata, Mumbai

Christmas is often seen as a time of streaming lights of joy, ringing bells of hope, and singing carols of salvation. Yet, Christmas also invites us to embrace the profound aspect of “letting go.”

In the stillness of a silent night, as the world lay in slumber, the Almighty Word descended from His royal throne in heaven and entered our fragile, broken world. He let go of His heavenly glory and chose a humble manger in a dark, cold stable as His earthly throne.

Mary and Joseph presented the baby Jesus in the temple, where the upright and devout Simeon and the prophetess Anna awaited. Simeon held the child in his arms, and in that moment, Jesus let go of the warmth of His mother's embrace to extend His love to all men and women through Simeon's arms and Anna's prophecy.

As Kris Kringle once said, *“Christmas isn't just a day; it's a frame of mind.”*

Jesus continued to let go throughout His life. Mary and Joseph fled to Egypt with Him, seeking refuge in a foreign land. For a time, Jesus let go of His identity as a Nazarene to live as a refugee, embodying humility and solidarity with the marginalized.

When we exchange Christmas gifts in His name, let us remember the boundless gifts He has given us: the sun, the moon, the stars, and our precious Earth with its forests, mountains, oceans, and all forms of life. Now, it is our turn to let go of our egoistic tendencies and destructive behaviors toward Mother Earth.

As we journey through this season of prayer, song, music, joy, and praise, let us emulate the shepherds' adoration and the Magi's offering of gifts. Let us give the most vital gift of care and concern for our planet, relinquishing self-centered gratification to preserve and protect Earth for generations to come.

This is the gift our world so desperately needs today.



Embodying the Spirit of Christmas: A Journey of Service, Faith, and Love

Sr. Vasanthi Varghese SSps
Jeevandata, Mumbai

As a member of the Holy Spirit Congregation, my life often mirrors the Christmas story - a narrative of quiet acts of love, fervent prayer, and an unwavering commitment to bringing hope to those in need. Each day begins with heartfelt prayer, seeking the grace to embody Christ's light in all that I do. The hospital where I serve is like the humble manger; a place where miracles of healing and peace unfold amid the struggles and pains of life.

In the hospital, I encounter individuals burdened by illness, fear, and uncertainty, much like the weary travelers who sought refuge in Bethlehem on that holy night. Each face reflects a story of longing, and as I attend to their needs, I am reminded of Mary's tender care for the Christ Child. A soothing word, a gentle touch, or a reassuring smile often becomes a profound gift of love; akin to the gifts of the Magi bringing comfort and hope to those in despair.

Working with the youth is akin to sharing the joyous proclamation of the angels on Christmas night. Their enthusiasm and curiosity ignite my spirit, much like the star of Bethlehem guided the shepherds and the wise men. Through youth ministry, I encourage them to discover their faith and embrace the unique purpose God has for their lives. In moments of prayer and honest conversations, I witness their faith growing, like a candle's flame spreading warmth and hope in the darkness.

Small Christian Community meetings remind me of the shepherds gathered around the manger, united in faith and wonder. In these gatherings, we pray together, share God's Word, and support one another in joy and sorrow. It is here, in the simplicity of shared faith, that I see Emmanuel; God with us, manifest in the hearts of His people.

As Christmas approaches, I reflect on the profound humility of the nativity. The Christ Child came into the world not in grandeur, but in simplicity, teaching us the true essence of love and sacrifice. Inspired by this, I aim to spread the message of Christmas through consistent acts of kindness, compassion, and service, rather than grand gestures. It is in these small but meaningful acts that the light of Christ continues to shine brightly.

This journey of service fills my heart with immense gratitude, much like the joy experienced by the shepherds on the first Christmas night. It is not merely about the tasks I undertake, but about the lives I touch and the love I share. Every prayer, every encounter, and every act of care becomes my offering to God, an echo of the angels' song of peace and goodwill to all.

As I continue this journey, I am inspired to guide others, especially the youth, to hear the gentle call of the divine. May they too find joy and fulfillment in serving others and living out their faith. As we celebrate this season of love and hope, I carry the firm belief that through acts of service, healing, and prayer, we can all embody the spirit of Christmas and make the world a reflection of God's everlasting grace.



A Grace-Filled Journey of Tertiate: Discovering God Within and Renewing Mission

Sr. Shruti SSpS
Anugraha, Mumbai



I am deeply grateful to God and my congregation for granting me the opportunity to attend the international Tertiate program for three months. This experience has been transformative, enriching my spiritual journey and broadening my understanding of our mission. I sincerely thank each of you for your prayerful support and accompaniment during this time. It was truly a joyful and grace-filled period.

Throughout the tertiate, I was invited on an inner journey of transformation through intimacy with the Trinity, becoming a melody of compassion. This sacred time provided me with the space and opportunity to step away from the demands of daily life and delve deeply into my spiritual core. I would like to share some meaningful insights and graces from this three-month journey.

Finding God Within: The program centered around contemplative retreats, centering prayer, classes on inner self, reflections on our congregation's roots, and listening to the cry of the poor. I deeply appreciate the efforts and coordination of Srs. Maria Jose and Aloisia Teti, whose wisdom and guidance made this experience both insightful and peaceful. These elements led me to a quiet and serene space where I encountered God within the depths of my being.

Centering prayer, a method of resting in God's presence, allowed me to experience profound peace and a closer connection with the God who is ever-present. The contemplative retreat, with its invitation to stillness and solitude, heightened my awareness that God is not distant but dwells within, speaking to my heart. This deepened my understanding of prayer as a loving relationship with God - beyond words and thoughts rooted in trust and surrender.

Immersed in silence and reflection, I encountered a sacred sense of peace and felt a connection to the divine space within. The practice of centering prayer helped attune me to the inner voice of God, not only within myself but also in creation. Each moment spent in centering prayer became a sacred time of spiritual growth, awakening me to the truth that the divine presence I had longed for had always been quietly present in the depths of my heart.

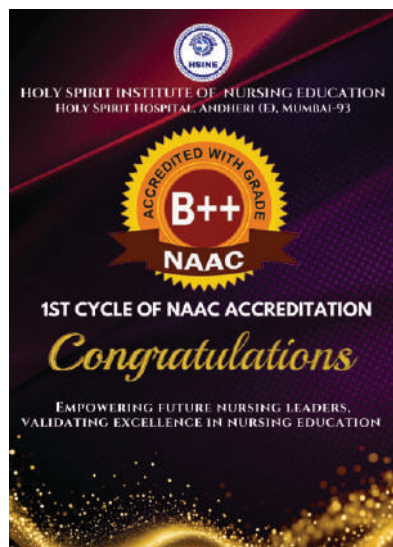
Life Unexamined Is Not Worth Living: Reflecting on my past experiences during this time was an eye-opening and humbling process. I confronted and embraced my vulnerabilities, recognizing areas in my life that needed healing and growth. This introspection allowed me to let go of mental and emotional burdens, experiencing a deeper sense of peace and contentment.

Returning to Our Roots: Walking in the footsteps of our founding generation, reconnected me with the charism and mission that shape our congregation. This was a profound experience of renewal and transformation, equipping me with a deeper understanding of our call as Servants of the Spirit. I now carry a strengthened missionary zeal and a revitalized commitment to our congregation's spirituality and mission.

The Gift of Centering Prayer: Beginning each day with centering prayer has become a vital practice for me. It anchors me in God's presence, helping me surrender to the present moment and trust in the quiet movement of grace. As I continue this practice twice daily, I have noticed shifts within myself. The anxieties and busyness of life, along with the constant stream of inner noise, have quieted, allowing me to feel more grounded and at home with my own being.

This growing awareness of the sacredness in all things has deepened my connection to God and my true self. As I return to my daily responsibilities, I carry with me a renewed spirit, a quieter mind, an open heart, and a deeper connection to the divine mystery that moves through all things.

Conclusion: This tertiate experience has been a transformative journey, fostering spiritual growth and a renewed commitment to our mission. I am deeply grateful for this grace-filled period and for the support of my congregation. May the insights and practices I have embraced continue to bear fruit in my life and ministry.



Congratulations! **HOLY SPIRIT INSTITUTE OF** **NURSING EDUCATION (HSINE)**

Sr. Lalitha Rosali, SSps
Jeevandata, Mumbai



National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) accreditation is crucial for colleges because it signifies a recognized standard of quality in education, indicating that the institution meets established benchmarks across various aspects like curriculum, teaching, research, infrastructure, and student support, thereby enhancing the college's credibility, attracting more students, and improving the employability of its graduates for employers who value quality education.

Key reasons why NAAC accreditation is important for colleges are for **quality assurance, student confidence, employer recognition, funding and grants, institutional improvement, and national reputation**. Indeed, we are overjoyed to declare that on November 15, 2024, the Holy Spirit Institute of Nursing Education (HSINE) has been **awarded NAAC Accreditation with a B++ grade!** This achievement demonstrates the vision and kindness of the management, years of commitment, devotion, and hard work of teachers and students required to maintain the highest standards in nursing education.

Yes, our goal to deliver high-quality instruction, encourage creative learning, and mould the next generation of healthcare professionals is reaffirmed by this honour. Graduates of HSINE are prepared to contribute positively to the healthcare industry thanks to its emphasis on fostering all-around growth, with particular attention paid to academic enlightenment, enduring discipline, social commitment, emotional balance, and spiritual inspiration.

Sincere gratitude is extended to Sr. Lissy and the management, Sr. Felcy, former principal and team, Dr. Supriya Mane, NAAC Coordinator, and teachers, students, staff of HSH, stakeholders, and alumni who helped make this accomplishment possible! Together, we keep pushing nursing excellence forward! This accreditation has paved the way towards additional newness, need, and necessity of accommodating technology, structure, in-depth innovation, and exchange programs. We guarantee that students will have a top-notch education that equips them for prosperous nursing employment to serve the society with love and commitment. Yes, service in love.

As we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the light of the world, we are filled with joy and gratitude for the gift of NAAC accreditation, shining a light on the excellence of the Holy Spirit Institute of Nursing Education. May this accreditation be a beacon of hope and quality education, illuminating the path for our students to become compassionate and skilled nursing professionals, just as Jesus healed and cared for those in need.

Thank you one and all.



Faith, Service, and Discovery: A Transformative Journey in Ekamba

**Aspirant, Supriya Deepa Hore
CHS, Bangalore**

As I reflect on the past month, vivid memories come to mind, reminding me of how I was guided by the living Spirit throughout my journey. It was God's will for me to encounter His mission, and so He sent me to Ekamba. My mission experience began the moment I started my journey from CHS to Ekamba. While traveling by train, I saw beautiful cotton plants covering the fields, as if Mother Nature was warmly welcoming me to North Karnataka.

Coming to Ekamba was a new experience for me. The people, language and culture were quite different. However, during my time in Ekamba, the sisters, especially Sr. Reena, provided us with many opportunities to grow and learn. I came to know about the neighboring villages of Ekamba that are part of the parish, such as Savargaon, Chimegaon, Belkuni, Dongargaon, and Karkyal. These areas are known for their cultivation. While visiting these villages, I observed that most houses are built with stones and tin sheet, a stark contrast to the homes in my place.

One evening, we visited some Catholic families. It was my first time meeting them, and I felt pity for a family living in a single room with a small kitchen. I was taken aback, and a question arose in my heart: "What if I were in their situation? How would I deal with it?" Despite their hardships, these families welcomed us warmly and shared their lives with the sisters. I noticed that although there are few Catholics in these villages, their faith in Christ is growing. I was particularly inspired by the children, who were active, smart and talented in playing musical instruments. Initially I did not enjoy bhajans, but over time, I began to like them and even learned a few.

One day, I met a very elderly grandmother who deeply touched me with her faith. Although she lived alone, she was happy to see us and shared some grains of wheat with us, showing her gratitude and love. Experiences like this helped me grow in compassion and understanding. Living with the sisters in the community taught me to adjust and embrace new experiences. At first, it was challenging, but not impossible. I gradually learned about the sisters' ministry and their passion for the mission. I saw their dedication, from waking up early to prepare meals, collecting water, to working tirelessly throughout the day. Their selfless service and hard work deeply inspired me. Despite their busy schedules, they always found time for prayer, which reminded me of my own vocation and the importance of giving priority to God.

A memorable moment was our visit to the sacred place of Bhalki. It was a time of self-preparation for my mission, filled with adoration and healing. I was honoured to read the Word of God during the Bhalki Jatra, which was a wonderful experience. I also spent time in the school, teaching and learning from the students. They were welcoming and eager to learn, making it easy for me to connect with them. Toward the end of my time in Ekamba, we had an outing to Bidar, where we visited the Bidar Fort and the Gurudwara. I learned about the history of these places and was impressed by the Sikhs' discipline, faith, and practice of washing oneself before entering their place of worship. Living in the Ekamba community was a beautiful and enriching experience. It taught me valuable lessons about faith, service, and community living. I am truly grateful for this time and will cherish these memories forever.



Childlike Wisdom: A Reflection on the Gift of Motherhood

Sr. Nirmala Mendonca SSps

Asha Deep, Indapur

Children possess an innocence that allows them to view life with clarity and simplicity, a perspective we often lose as adults. Recently, I experienced such a moment of childlike wisdom through Jeslynn, a young child whose words left me deeply reflective about the profound role of mothers, both earthly and heavenly. What began as a playful interaction turned into a moment of insight, reminding me of the precious gift of motherhood.

It all started casually. I was teasing Jeslynn by gently pulling her hair clip, touching her bag, and asking for the items she carried. We laughed and joked, our playful exchange drawing smiles from those around us. While enjoying the attention, Jeslynn was also a little hesitant to part with her belongings.

With a gleam in her eye, she eagerly insisted, “You should join me in UKG (Upper Kindergarten). In UKG, we have so many friends, and they give a lot of gifts. We have so much fun!” Her excitement was infectious, as if UKG was a magical place filled with endless joy, friendships, and generosity.

At one point, I playfully tugged at one of her colorful hair clips and asked if I could have one. Jeslynn stopped, looked at me with wide, curious eyes, and asked earnestly, **“Don't you have a mother who gives you things when you need them?”**

For a moment, I was speechless. Her innocent question struck me deeply, opening my heart to reflect on the essence of motherhood. To a child, a mother is not just a parent; she is a protector, a provider, and a constant source of comfort and care. In a child's eyes, a mother is someone who ensures their needs are met even before they ask. For Jeslynn, the presence of a mother symbolized having everything she could ever need, a source of endless security and love.

This encounter also drew my thoughts to Mother Mary. At Christmas, Mary embraced her divine role as the mother of Jesus, welcoming Him into the world. Through her motherhood, she also embraces each of us, offering her love and guidance as our heavenly mother. Just as a child trusts their earthly mother implicitly, so too can we find comfort and strength in Mary's maternal care.

Jeslynn's innocent wisdom renewed my appreciation for the gift of motherhood. Her simple question unveiled the depth of a mother's love - a love that knows no bounds and provides without hesitation. As I left that encounter, I carried with me a renewed gratitude for both the earthly and heavenly mothers in our lives, whose love shapes and sustain us.



I am happy to share my experience of the "Bhalki Jatra". Being in the Ekamba community as an aspirant, I had many opportunities to attend programs and share my love and joy with the people. One of the greatest experiences I had was during the "Bhalki Jatra."

The Bhalki Jatra is an annual festival celebrated at the Infant Jesus Shrine in Bhalki, part of the Diocese of Gulbarga. Every November, people of various faiths gather at this sacred site to pray and deepen their faith in Jesus. During the Jatra, the Infant Jesus is honored and adored by the faithful in a spirit of devotion and unity. I feel truly privileged to have participated in this special occasion as part of my community experience in Ekamba.

The Jatra began on the 8th of November 2024 with a procession of Infant Jesus at 3 p.m. The procession was creatively prepared with dances, songs, and prayers. Many believers gathered for the procession, which was filled with devotion. As we proceeded, various programs were held continuously, and all three days were packed with activities conducted by different mission centre teams. These included bhajans, songs, dances, Bible readings, and skits. These competitions provided people with an opportunity to showcase their talents.

We also had Mass for three days, celebrated by different bishops. Although the Mass was in Kannada, which I did not fully understand, I still enjoyed it because of the beautiful bhajans and songs. The most touching and memorable experience for me was serving as a seller at the religious stall during the Jatra. For three days, we prepared and sold religious articles, which had been given to us for this purpose. Each mission centre had different activities to manage, and we were privileged to serve as

sellers of Holy articles.

There I had a great experience working alongside the sisters and my companions. It was truly a memorable time for me, as I had never attended a program like this before. Only God knows whether I will have such an opportunity again, but I am deeply grateful for this one month of community experience.

I would like to thank all the sisters of the Ekamba community, especially Sr. Reena, for guiding me and making this experience possible. Through her support, I was able to enjoy and appreciate the many feelings and blessings that came with this event. I pray for all the sisters of the Ekamba community and ask for the blessings of the Holy Spirit to be upon them so that they may continue to believe in Jesus and guide others in faith.



Celebrating Children's Day: A Tribute to the Stars of Tomorrow

Sr. Vinisha Mal SSps
Ekamba

Every child is a star, and Children's Day is their time to shine. In India, Children's Day is celebrated on November 14th to honor the birth anniversary of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, for his deep affection for children. This day brings joy, laughter, and a sense of celebration across the nation as people come together to cherish the innocence and promise of children.

On the 30th, we celebrated Children's Day in Gram Panchayat Ekamba with great enthusiasm and spirit. The program commenced at 2:00 p.m. with an awareness rally on cleanliness, emphasizing the importance of maintaining a clean and healthy environment. Following the rally, we began the cultural program.

The event was graced by our chief guest, Shri Emalappa, CDPO of Aurad Taluk, and 12 other dignitaries, including teachers and members of the Panchayat. Students from five schools participated in the program: namely 1. Government School, Jamalpur, 2. Government School, Ekamba, 3. Government School, Duduknal, 4. Government Urdu School, Ekamba, 5. St. Paul School, Ekamba.

The program began with the recitation of the Preamble of Indian Constitution. Thereafter the guests were welcomed with shawls and beautiful handcrafted flowers made by the children. In her introductory remarks, Sr. Reena highlighted that this event was a collaborative effort between Gram Panchayat, Streevani, and the government schools in and around Ekamba village. She emphasized how such programs provide children an opportunity to showcase their talents, express their love for society, and learn about their rights and duties.

The activities were the heart of the program, starting with a speech competition where 12 students confidently shared inspiring messages. This was followed by vibrant group dances and a skit that entertained nearly 200 attendees. Prizes were awarded to the winners of these competitions and other games held earlier, bringing smiles and a sense of achievement to the children.

Additionally, certificates were distributed to the tailoring, computer, and beauty parlor trainees from Streevani Centre, celebrating their accomplishments and encouraging them to continue their journey of growth and learning.

The program concluded with a vote of thanks and the National Anthem, leaving everyone inspired and uplifted. This celebration was not just an event but a heartfelt reminder of our shared responsibility to nurture and support the stars of tomorrow. Let us continue working together to create a brighter, better world for our children.



Renewal in Spirit: A Journey of Reflection, Rejuvenation, and Recommitment

Sr. Jennifer Vas SSpS
Valigonda



Profession Batch of 2008 had the Renewal program from 23-28 November 2024. The first three days, we stayed in the Provincial House, Indore and continued in the Nimad region.

The gathering began with a warm welcome accorded by Sr. Manju Lakra, Provincial of INC along with the Community. Sr Preethi Thomas, National Formation Coordinator systematically planned the program, which included prayer, sharing, relaxation, recreation, pilgrimage and visits to communities. For five consecutive days, she guided the group to reflect, rejuvenate and recommit ourselves. The sixteen fruitful years in various communities and ministries was shared in length. It contained *Joyful memories*, *Challenging blocks* and *Aspiration* of oneself for the next decade being a missionary. It captured moments of learning, discernment, growth, commitment and sacrifice. It was very inspiring to listen to the stories of faith, endurance, courage and indomitable spirit in different situations. Along with sharing, we had a refreshing outing to the lawn of Somanipuram. As a Batch together in Indore, we had many grace filled moments to recapture and relive the novitiate journey of two years along with sisters and novices and visiting SSps & SVD communities in the vicinity.

At the dawn of 26th November, we moved on a pilgrimage to Mary's Shrine at Kanjebeda and visited SSps communities in Nimad region - Aulia, Khandwa and Sirpur. We continued our sharing and concluded the program with a bonfire at Sirpur. Srs. Amrita Kindo, Julie Jangra, Sujata Ekka, Bertila Minz, Lilly Barla, Vanitha S, Rani Mutyala, Jenifer Vas, and Aruna Jonsi were the nine sisters who participated from four Indian Provinces.

We are indebted to Sr Manju Lakra, sisters at Provincial House and Sirpur communities who provided comfortable accommodation and all other communities of Khandwa and Indore region who collaborated in the logistics. We express our gratitude to the respective Provincial Teams and Communities. Kudos to Sr Preethi Thomas and the Renewal Batch of 2008, for we made it!



Christmas: A Global Celebration of Love and Togetherness

Srs. Lolita Toppo

Pavitratama Niketan, Vijayawada

Christmas is a well-known Christian holiday celebrated in December, recognized worldwide for its decorations and the iconic figure of Santa Claus. The word "Christmas" means "Feast day of Christ." It is a yearly celebration marking the birth of Jesus Christ, observed on the 25th of December as both a cultural and religious occasion by people across the globe. While Christmas is celebrated in all Christian countries, the customs and traditions vary by nation.

Christmas is a cultural festivity that involves extensive preparations. As a public holiday, people take a Christmas break to celebrate with their loved ones. Preparations typically start early so that the festivities can commence on Christmas Eve. These preparations include activities such as buying decorations, food, and gifts, especially for children and close friends. Some families even shop for matching Christmas outfits for everyone.

Common preparations include decorating homes with Christmas trees and lights. Before decorating, houses are often thoroughly cleaned to create a festive atmosphere. The Christmas tree, a symbol of the holiday, brings the Christmas spirit into homes. Wrapped presents are placed under the tree and are traditionally opened on Christmas Day.

Churches are also decorated beautifully for the special occasion. They are thoroughly cleaned, and programs such as songs and skits are prepared for Christmas Day. The celebration often involves significant expenses, so saving money early becomes an essential part of the planning process. Families may also plan trips to spend the holiday together.

People exchange cards to send holiday wishes and express love to friends and family. Christmas carols are played on radios and televisions, setting the mood for the celebration. Many families begin the day by attending Church services, where songs and performances mark the joyous occasion. Later, they gather with their loved ones to exchange gifts and celebrate with food and music. The happiness experienced during Christmas is unparalleled.

Homemade treats like traditional plum cakes, cupcakes, and muffins are special highlights of the celebration. Children are often showered with gifts and new clothes. They also delight in meeting "Santa Claus," who, dressed in a fluffy red and white costume, greets them with hugs and presents.

Christmas reminds us of the importance of giving and sharing with friends and family. It is a time to reflect on the birth of Jesus, which signifies the beginning of great things in the world. This festival is an opportunity to contemplate nature, our purpose, and the meaning of existence. Despite being a Christian festival, Christmas is celebrated worldwide by people of all religions and faiths. Its essence unites people, spreading joy and goodwill everywhere.

Congratulations
to the Newly Elected Provincial Leadership Teams



India Central



India East



India North East

A Christmas of Hope

**Beneath the star's eternal glow,
A light of hope begins to grow.
For those in shadows, lost, unseen,
A Savior comes to intervene.**

**In a world of tears and silent cries,
Beneath the cold and shadowed skies,
A child is born, a star ascends,
A sign of love that never ends.**

**For the weary migrant, seeking rest,
For the broken hearts, the dispossessed,
For victims of war, and those in despair,
Christmas whispers, "Hope is there."**

**For women silenced, hurt, oppressed,
For justice sought, for lives redressed,
For those in conflict, pain, and fear,
May Christmas bring a hope sincere.**

**O Child of Bethlehem, small yet strong,
To You all broken hearts belong.
This holy night, may healing start,**